

Mentoring

What is mentoring?



- Definition (review in Amelink 2008):
 - a series of meaningful interactions between a more experienced person and a protégé (mentee)
 - consistent interest in success/progress of mentee

Mentoring takes many "shapes"

- Two primary forms:
 - Career → focus only on professional development
 - Helping build resume
 - Providing networking
 - Psychosocial/Interpersonal Support → focus on sense of self and even empowerment
 - Build confidence
 - Self reflection
 - Can be both!



1st step in mentoring

 What did all of you do with your mentee at the Monday workshop?

 What are the goals? Deliverables? Expectations of the relationship?



 Challenge you: Using a metaphor – what does your ideal mentor-mentee relationship look like?

Types of Mentoring Relationships

- Transmission Framework (Storrs et al. 2008)
 - Mentees often envision this approach more than mentors
 - Characteristics:
 - Assumption that mentors are custodians of academic and professional expertise that is "transmitted" to mentee
 - Perception that only mentee gains from relationship
 - Power resides with mentor because of their experience



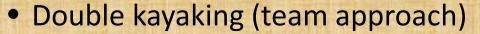
Types of Mentoring Relationships

- Transmission Framework (Storrs et al. 2008)
 - Mama bird and baby chick metaphor (parent-child)
 - Mama bird nurtures, provides food, shelter, protection
 - Imparts wisdom chick needs to know
 - Fledging = independence gained as a result of mentoring



Types of Mentoring Relationships

- Interdependent Framework (Storrs et al. 2008)
 - Envisioned by mentors more than mentees
 - Characteristics
 - Working collectively toward a common goal (or goals)
 - Equal and reciprocal relationship

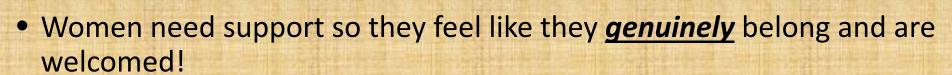


- More challenging than solo paddling
- It takes practice to synchronize but the outcomes are different than if you "do it alone" (new sites, stops, and help paddling the rapids)
- Canoe
 - Stern (back) controls direction
 - Bow (front) adds power and momentum



Challenges: Females in a male-dominated field

- Carnival Fun House (Storrs et al. 2008)
 - Gates welcome all but...
 - Limited access on rides (e.g., too short)
 - Women feel like they "sneak past the security officers"
 - Loneliness, outcast, chilly climate
 - Mirrors in fun house reflect this outcast image to all





Challenges

- Cross-gender mentoring relationships common but complicated
 - Hugely successful
 - Needed!
- But...
 - Need to find areas of identity overlap (something in common?)
 - Experiences/obstacles are different (e.g., loneliness, hobbies like hunting, raising children)
 - Perception of more transmission than interdependent relationship
 - Male mentors often are challenged by things like providing constructive criticism
 - Women don't need rescued → disempowering



Opportunities

- Mentors need to establish clear goals & understand mentee's needs
 - Reflective
 - Consider where/when you meet
 - Generational gaps and cross-gender challenges (dinner, drinks vs coffee shop, etc...)
 - Length of mentoring relationship (longer = better)



Opportunities

- Women need to see other women in STEM
 - But there are a limited number of female mentors
 - Be good examples but not all the mentoring can fall on women
 - Require male mentors
 - Tips/Advice
 - Athena Rising: How and Why Men Should Mentor Women (Johnson and Smith 2016)
 - Challenges and Supports for Women Conservation Leaders (Jones and Solomon 2019, Conservation Science and Practice)



What are women looking for in mentors?

- "I am a student and the outcome of a mentoring relationship I seek is to have a long lasting (positive) relationship with my mentor. I want to be able to discuss career/life choices with my mentor years after I have been under their supervision"
- "...a relationship that allows for continuous growth is the perfect outcome"

- Women often report a desire for mentoring that integrates career and interpersonal needs (Johnson and Smith 2016).
 - Mentor who "gets it" and "truly honors it"

What are women looking for in mentors?

- Connections/networking...I am super appreciative of the connections they can provide me and the introductions they can make. Those are invaluable in this field and would be tough to make without mentors.
- Feedback... I constantly want to know how I'm doing relative to my peers and I think mentors often have a good perspective on this.
 - They LISTEN and give constructive feedback
- Reassurance. It's nice to know you have someone on your side when field work is miserable or you're struggling with a tough analysis.

What does success look like?

- Passionate about gaining/distributing knowledge
- Compassionate and understanding
- Always honest ...being flexible, and adapting to new methods ...
- Encouraging and supportive
- Encourage collaboration
- They don't allow for toxic situations/relationships to form
- They are self aware and realize when mentees are stressed/stuck/unable to regroup on their own and employ assistance when needed.
- They realize that mental health is important and burn outs are real/detrimental
- They encourage a balanced life and try to lead by example

What does successful mentoring look like?

- Descriptions include (Amelink 2008, Johnson and Smith 2016):
 - Welcoming, communicating, trusting, accepting, affirming, forgiving, reframing, letting go, rejoicing, balancing, focusing, gracing
 - Good mentors:
 - Open doors, find opportunities, challenge mentees to grow, do it regardless of gender!

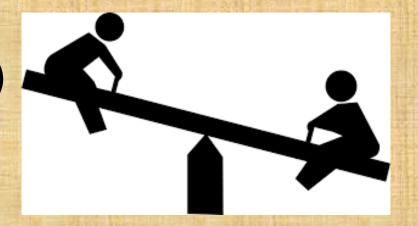






Mentees

- Mentees have responsibilities in relationship
- Patience, understanding (mentors are learning too)
- Clear expectations that <u>are communicated</u>



- Realistic expectations of availability and what mentor can do for them
- Consider multiple mentors and even peer mentos

What will you do with your mentor/mentee at this conference?

- Challenge you:
 - Create a metaphor what do you want this relationship to look like?
 - What are your goals?
 - What kind of mentoring are you seeking (mentee)?
 - What kind of mentor are you (mentor)?
 - Decide what are reasonable meeting expectations (how often can/should you meet).
 - Are you providing same opportunities to your mentees?



Thank You

- Organizers of Symposium
- Feedback from students and members of organizing committee
- All of our mentors and mentees
- All of you for being here!



