MENTORSHIP
HANDBOOK

MENTORSHIP HANDBOOK

Sarajevo, 2019.

contents

Introduction

About the project and SEEYN

Hello dear reader! Before you start exploring this Handbook, it is important to know that it was created as part of the bigger project called **"Youth Work in Progress"** that was co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. With this project we wanted to raise the quality and sustainability of youth programs through different methods. We wanted to support our youth workers and youth organisations to be able to provide innovative, modern and quality youth work service. The project lasted for 2 years and its life was full of different activities such as training courses, constructive meetings, methodology development hub, practical activities, mentorship support, online handbook for digital tools and online learning in youth work and this very handbook you are reading.

The whole project was created in partnership between South East European Youth Network with Beyond Barriers Association from Albania, Youth Resource Centre Tuzla from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ideas Factory from Bulgaria, Local Democracy Agency Sisak from Croatia, Active Youths of Florina – OENEF from Greece, Association NUR from Italy, Association for Democratic Prosperity ZID from Montenegro, Youth Cultural Centre Bitola from North Macedonia, Creativitas from Lithuania, Vojvodina Environmental Movement and Educational Centre Krusevac from Serbia, Youth Centre BIT social enterprise from Slovenia and SAUSEM from Turkey.

The publisher of this handbook is **South East European Youth Network** (shortly known as SEEYN). This network exists and works for 20 years already and is a home for 22 youth organisations from the SEE region. The organizations that involve and engage people who truly care about stability in the region, reconciliation process, a bright future of our youth and who take this process very personally. We believe that we will reach our vision for a peaceful and prosperous region where young people have the opportunity to develop their full potential through four programmes: Community Development and Solidarity, Peace and Democracy Development, Youth Employability and Entrepreneurship, SEE Bridge.

Visit our web page www.seeyn.org or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/seeyn to learn more about us and get updated about many of our interesting activities and ideas.

About the authors

Biljana Vasilevska Trajkoska is a social and youth worker experienced in the field of social and youth in the area of improvement of access to social rights of young people, with particular focus on improvement of access to social rights of young people with fewer opportunities. Biljana is engaged in different processes related to youth work and young people, member of the National working group for development of youth work policies and is one of the people that were working on the National Standard of Qualification: youth worker in Macedonia, and one of the authors of the first National Quality Standards for Youth Work and the National Youth Work Portfolio. Biljana was also involved in the development of the Code of Ethics for youth workers. She has an extensive expertise in educating youth workers and in designing and undertaking research, analysis and interpretation of the results that are fed in development of various programs and policies as well as in a variety of non-formal education programs for youth workers.

Dragan Atanasov is an experienced youth worker and trainer in the context of non-formal education and international youth programs. Dragan has taken a university course of Leadership and Developmental Youth Work, as well as a number of training programs in the field of youth work. He is a founder of a youth organization and of one of the first open youth centers in the country. Dragan has been actively involved in preparing and implementing long-term training programs for youth workers, and was actively engaged in drafting the first vocational standard for youth workers and is a member of the National working group for development of youth work policies. He is one of the authors of the first National Quality Standards for Youth Work and National Youth Work Portfolio, and he is currently involved in drafting a Law for Youth Work.

Chief Editor of this Handbook is **Marinela Sumnjski**, Training Manager of South East European Youth Network, who strongly believes in powers of non-formal education, makes the best cookies and lives youth work.

Why this handbook

Very good question! It all started a few years ago when we decided to include component of mentorship in our youth work projects as a support mechanism for our youth workers and participants. We were very enthusiastic about it as something new and useful in the work of youth organisations, who give lots of efforts to build the capacities of their people on an everyday basis. That all sounded good in theory and on paper, but it turned out to be much more challenging in practice. We realised during that experience that there is really no systematic support for the mentors themselves in the youth work! It was not easy for them to establish the mentorship system or programme from scratch. It was very difficult and time-consuming to gather and process all the information, knowledge, models, methods and approaches of mentorship in the youth field. It appears that there are a lot of different resources around the world (which were overwhelming), but in fact not really specific ones focusing only on our youth field and youth work particularly in the sense of how we define it in Europe.

In that time we did our best, but we promised that if we get another chance, we will sit, think, gather the necessary expertise and develop as many support tools as possible for the future mentors, not only of youth workers, but also of young people in the organisations, to ensure that the mentorship will be done on high quality level. We strongly believe in mentorship to be very important, useful and wholesome support, empowerment and guidenice and this is especially impor-

tant for someone of young age or in development process. Therefore, the idea for a Mentorship Handbook was born! We have collected all experience, knowledge and values of the project consortium and other partners, we have collected and ''digested'' all the relevant resources and put this great mix of things in logical order thus creating this Handbook. We sincerely hope that it will be useful, educational and fun for you to read it!

You as a mentor

If you are reading these lines, chances are you are interested in learning how to mentor young people. That's fabulous, as the world needs more mentors – now maybe even more than ever before. Growing up and learning how to successfully manage as an adult in the society is becoming more and more challenging. Countless social, political, economic and cultural developments affect young people and put ever growing pressure on them. Despite all distractions and obstacles, youth are expected to choose the right career, graduate on time, gain work experience, find employment, establish family, be active and responsible citizens, keep healthy social relationships and perform other social roles and duties. Meanwhile, the world is becoming increasingly dynamic, communication is moving predominantly online, and young people find it easier to communicate with other individuals and groups. Consequently, often they engage with people that don't have good intentions, or that at least don't have young people's development on mind. Family, friends and teachers are far from being the only groups that impact young people nowadays. Thus, being a well-meaning, carrying and adequately trained adult who is willing to embrace the role of a youth mentor can make a huge difference in the life of many individuals.

It is not an over-exaggerating to say that supporting young people's development in today's world requires a set of super-powers. This handbook will make an effort to equip you with at least some of them. But before we introduce you to the skills you need to develop to be successful mentors, we need to establish the ground for this role. We will start by setting the frame for mentoring young people, by acquainting you to your target group, to mentoring as an approach, and to youth work and youth development, as the broader approaches that mentoring is part of. So, bear with us while we are going through these concepts, and then you will be ready to learn about the practical guidelines on how to actually mentor young people. It's like building a house – the knowledge about young people and youth work are our foundations, knowledge about mentoring is the walls, your skills are the columns that carry the weight, and the different parts of the process are the different rooms. Everything is important and related to everything else.

Things you need to know about young people

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1.1. Who are they?

Dear reader, welcome to the learning zone! At the beginning of your new journey as a developmental mentor of young people, it is good if we spend some time on discussing few things related to it. Let's start by introducing you to your mentees. One of the first questions that you probably need to ask yourself at this moment is: **"Who are "the young people" that I am going to mentor?"** Here is some food for thought.

"Youth" is best understood as a period of transition from the dependence of childhood to adulthood's independence and awareness of our interdependence as members of a community. So far, age has proven to be the most used and the easiest ways to define who the young people are, therefore, "young people" is often indicated as the group of people between the age where they may leave compulsory education, and the age at which they find their first employment[1]. The United Nations consider as young people the people between the ages of 15 and 24, but the UN also recognizes that this varies without prejudice to other age groups listed by member states such as 18–30/32. Other attempts to define youth based on their age – set youth in the period between 15 – 29 years.

However, scholars argue that these age-based definitions have not been consistent across cultures or times and emphasize that the attempt of finding a common definition of "young people", that will be comprehensive and acceptable for everyone, is a very difficult task because young people are not just fixed age-group but are a very fluid, heterogeneous and diverse category. These people have different psycho-social, economic, cultural, educational and other types of characteristics, interests, challenges and needs and due to that, they are transitioning to adulthood with their own dynamic, and in their own unique way and style, depending on variety of psycho-social and other factors.

Activity: Think of how young people are defined in your country. Until when are you considered a young person, legally and culturally? From a cultural point of view, what should the young person achieve to be considered an adult member of society?

1   http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/youth/youth-definition/

Despite the fact that youth is not easy to define, everyone agrees that young people are in a specific life position, having in mind that in this period of life, people are no longer children, but they are not yet adults. This means that, in this period of life people don't have the same rights nor do they need the same care and protection as they did when they were children, but because they still don't enjoy all the possibilities and benefits of being autonomous adults, they need specific support and protection by various "others". These "others" recognize young people as a category with an enormous potential in itself and a key resource for social progress, but also as a category with a particular vulnerability to socio-economic changes in society and therefore are there to help them to navigate through their youth.

One of these "others" who can have a highly important role in the life of young people, is YOU – the mentor! :) So, let's get you ready! We'll start by exploring the youth development, stages and characteristics.

1.2. Youth development stages and characteristics

Youth development in its broadest sense refers to the stages that all children go through to acquire the attitudes, competencies, values, and social skills they need to become adults. The transition to adulthood is considered as a significant developmental stage in a person's growth, a time when special risks and opportunities, exclusive to that period, surface. During their youth, people become aware of their individuality, reach the legal age for many privileges and responsibilities, prepare to leave and/or leave home, enter the workforce and/or higher education, try to form long-

term romantic relationships and families etc. Although not all new life roles may be significant for all young people, it is nevertheless important that in this period of life they all learn to recognize them and to be able to make independent, voluntarily and informed choice on which of those roles are relevant and important for their functioning in the society. Almost everything that happens in this transition period, is considered critical and highly important for the quality of the entire future life of the person. But what actually happens with people during their youth?

There are many psychologists and experts of related kind, who explored how an individual develops. In this handbook, in order to see what is happening in the life of one person and use that knowledge in understanding oru mentee and structuring our youth mentoring, we will introduce you to Erik *Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development*. The Erikson's Theory emphasizes the sociocultural determinants of development and presents them as eight stages of psychosocial conflicts (often known as Erikson's stages of psychosocial development) that all individuals must overcome or resolve successfully in order to adjust well to the environment. For Erikson, these crises are of a psychosocial nature because they involve psychological needs of the individual, conflicting with the needs of society. Successful completion of crisis results in a healthy personality and the acquisition of basic virtues. Basic virtues are characteristic strengths which the ego can use to resolve subsequent crises. Failure to successfully complete a stage can result in a reduced ability to complete further stages and therefore in an unhealthy personality and sense of self.

Understanding all developmental stages and the subsequent psychological conflicts is important for two main reasons. Firstly, some issues young people are facing during adolescence may be a direct consequence of inability to resolve earlier phases successfully. For example, for you as a mentor it might be important to know that a young person may feel inferior to others because in the preceding stage they thought they couldn't keep up with their peers in one or more fields – success at school, friendships or physical strength, to name a few. Distrusting others, self-doubt, or lack of initiative may also have roots in earlier unresolved psychological conflicts.

Secondly, in going through their developmental challenges, young people are not only affected by their own psychological conflicts, but by the ones of others too. Knowing the developmental stages and challenges of the main individuals in a young person's life may be helpful in assisting them resolve challenges in interpersonal relations. An obvious example of this is a young person's parents, who are going through a different phase than young people. But it also works the other way around, if the young person has children of their own.

However, stages 5 and 6 are the most relevant for you as a mentor, so that you have some awareness and understanding of the changes and challenges that your target group faces. But knowing that you are (probably) not a trained psychologist, it is important not to put too much pressure on having a deep understanding of the theoretical models. Your awareness of the challenges youth and others are facing can also be improved by observing what is, or has been happening to you and to others around you. Likewise, when mentoring young people it is important not to fall in the trap of providing them with psychotherapy – something that you are (probably) not trained in and that ultimately is not your role as a mentor. More on this in chapter 4, under what is not mentoring.

The 8 developmental stages and their crisis and virtues involve:

AGE 0–1½

Psychological crisis:
Trust VS. Mistrust
Basic virtue: Hope

AGE 20–40

Psychological crisis:
Intimacy VS. Isolation
Basic virtue: Love

AGE 40–65

Psychological crisis:
Generativity VS. Stagnation
Basic virtue: Care

AGE 1½–3

Psychological crisis:
Autonomy VS. Shame
Basic virtue: Will

AGE 12–20

Psychological crisis:
Identity VS. Role Confusion
Basic virtue: Fidelity

AGE 65+

Psychological crisis:
Ego Integrity VS. Despair
Basic virtue: Wisdom

AGE 3–5

Psychological crisis:
Initiative VS. Guilt
Basic virtue: Purpose

AGE 5–12

Psychological crisis:
Industry VS Inferiority
Basic virtue: Competency

Trust vs. Mistrust

From their birth by the time they turn 1 year, infants are challenged to learn that adults can be trusted. As expected, the belief that one can trust the fellow adults occurs when the adults meet a child's basic needs for survival. Infants are highly dependent upon their caregivers, so caregivers who are responsive and sensitive to their infant's needs help their baby to develop a sense of trust; their baby will see the world as a safe, predictable place. Unresponsive caregivers who do not meet their baby's needs can engender feelings of anxiety, fear, and mistrust; their baby may see the world as unpredictable. If infants are treated cruelly or their needs are not met appropriately, they will likely grow up with a sense of mistrust for people in the world. Of course, no child is going to develop a sense of 100 percent trust or 100 percent doubt. Erikson believed that *successful development was all about striking a balance between the two opposing sides.* When this happens, children acquire hope, which Erikson described as an openness to experience tempered by some wariness that danger may be present.

Autonomy vs. Shame/Doubt

As toddlers (ages 1–3 years) begin to explore their world, they learn that they can control their actions and act on their environment to get results. They begin to show clear preferences for certain elements of the environment, such as food, toys, and clothing. A toddler's main task is to resolve the issue of *autonomy vs. shame and doubt* by working to establish independence. This is the **"me do it"** stage. For example, we might observe a budding sense of autonomy in a 2-year-old child who wants to choose her clothes and dress herself. Although her outfits might not be appropriate for the situation, her input in such basic decisions has an effect on her sense of independence. If denied the opportunity to act on her environment, she may begin to doubt her abilities, which could lead to low self-esteem and feelings of shame. Children who successfully complete this stage feel secure and confident, while those who do not are left with a sense of inadequacy and self-doubt. Erikson believed that achieving a balance between autonomy and shame and doubt would lead to will, which is the belief that children can act with intention, within reason and limits.

Initiative vs. Guilt

Once children reach the preschool stage (ages 3–6 years), they are capable of initiating activities and asserting control over their world through social interactions and play. According to Erikson, preschool children must resolve the task of *initiative vs. guilt.* By learning to plan and achieve goals while interacting with others, preschool children can master this task. Initiative, a sense of ambition and responsibility, occurs when parents allow a child to explore within limits and then support the child's choice. These children will develop self-confidence and feel a sense of purpose. Those who are unsuccessful at this stage—with their initiative misfiring or stifled by over-controlling parents—may develop feelings of guilt, self-doubt, and lack of initiative. When an ideal balance of individual initiative and a willingness to work with others is achieved, the ego quality known as purpose emerges.

Industry vs. Inferiority

During the elementary school stage (ages 6–12), children face the task of *industry vs. inferiority.* Children begin to compare themselves with their peers to see how they measure up. Through social interactions, children begin to develop a sense of pride in their accomplishments and abilities. They either develop a sense of pride and accomplishment in their schoolwork, sports, social activities, and family life, or they feel inferior and inadequate because they feel that they don't measure up. If children do not learn to get along with others or have negative experiences at home or with peers, an inferiority complex might develop into adolescence and adulthood. Successfully finding a balance at this stage of psychosocial development leads to the strength known as competence, in which children develop a belief in their abilities to handle the tasks set before them.
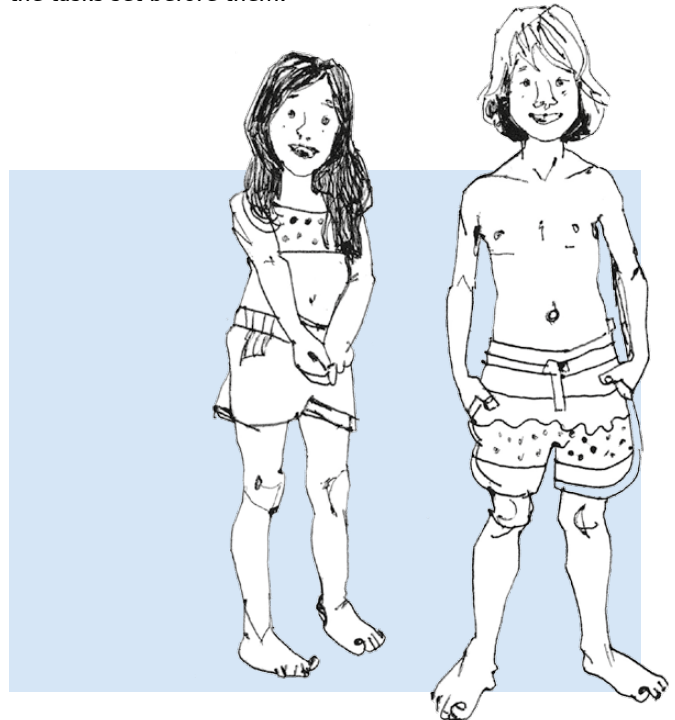
Identity vs. Role confusion

The fifth stage: **Identity vs. Role confusion**, occurs during adolescence, from about 12-20 years. When psychologists talk about identity, they are referring to all of the beliefs, ideals, and values that help shape and guide a person's behavior. While Erikson believed that each stage of psychosocial development was important, he placed a particular emphasis on the development of ego identity. Ego identity is the conscious sense of self that we develop through social interaction and becomes a central focus during the identity versus confusion stage of psychosocial development. According to Erikson, our ego identity constantly changes due to new experiences and information we acquire in our daily interactions with others. As we have new experiences, we also take on challenges that can help or hinder the development of identity. Our personal identity gives each of us an integrated and cohesive sense of self that endures through our lives. Our sense of personal identity is shaped by our experiences and interactions with others, and it is this identity that helps guide our actions, beliefs, and behaviors as we age.

During this stage, adolescents become aware of their uniqueness, their specific needs, characteristics etc. that must be integrated in their personal, gender and professional identity and with that, transition to the world of adults. During adolescence, the transition from childhood to adulthood is most important. In this period of life, people explore who they really are and are focused on forming their own identity[2]

2   Identity is our inner mental image of ourselves and our own specificity, a socio-psychological pattern that manifests itself in our entire behavior and existence, confirming our diversity in comparison with others. Identity implies an internal organization of human needs, instincts, abilities, socio-political beliefs, perception of oneself and their own personal history. If these elements are more developed and better organized, the person will be more aware of their own, unique characteristics, but also about the similarities it has with others, its strong, but also its not so strong sides. His formation begins in childhood, but is the most intense during adolescence.

based upon the outcome of their explorations. They face significant cognitive, emotional, social and other changes and needs such as the need to separate from their parents; redefine themselves and the relationships within the family and community in which they live; to reassess everything they have been taught to date and to develop their own values, attitudes, standards; to adapt to new roles; to develop new forms of behavior; to establish quality and stable relationships with peers; to balance being close with the family/community on one hand and being autonomous and independent of the other; to adapt to the increased demands and responsibilities related to life in different social systems etc. In line
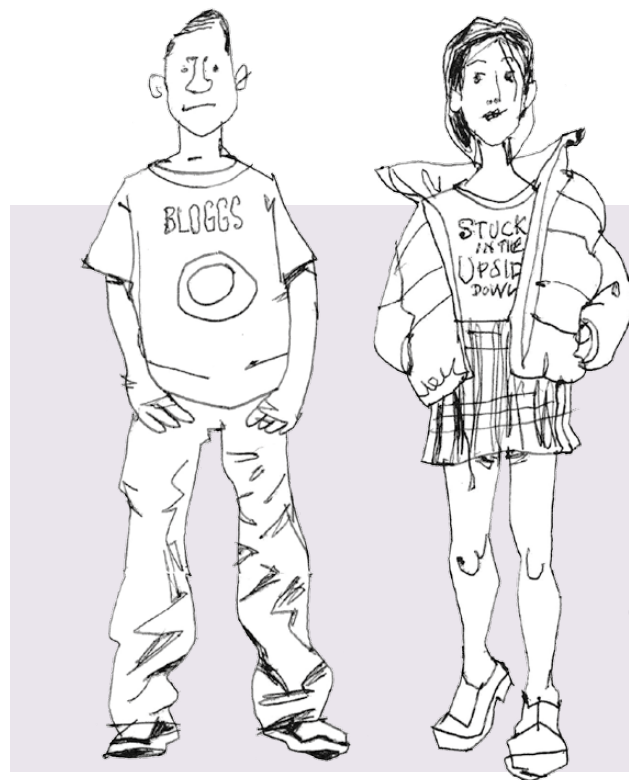
with all this, the most common questions that appear in this period are the questions like: *"Who am I?"*, *"What do I want to do?"* *"What makes me special?"*, *"How can I be noticed?"*, *"What do I believe in?"*, *"How do I fit in society?"* and so on.

Failure to establish a sense of identity within society (*"I don't know what I want to be when I grow up"*) can lead to role confusion. Role confusion involves the individual not being sure about themselves or their place in society. In response to role confusion or identity crisis, the young person may begin to experiment with different often risky lifestyles and may establish a negative identity followed by feeling of unhappiness. People with a negative image of themselves may encounter difficulties in communicating with others, difficulties in coping with stress and the challenges of life and might be unable to protect themselves. If such an image is formed in young people, it may have serious consequences on the quality of their lives and on their independence.

Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of fidelity. Fidelity involves being able to commit oneself to others on the basis of accepting others, even when there may be ideological differences.

Intimacy vs. isolation

People in early adulthood (20s through early 40s) are concerned with **intimacy vs. isolation**. After we have developed a sense of self in adolescence, we are ready to share our life with others. However, if other stages have not been successfully resolved, young adults may have trouble developing and maintaining successful relationships with others. Erikson said that we must have a strong sense of self before we can develop successful intimate relationships. Adults who do not develop a positive self-concept in adolescence may experience feelings of loneliness and emotional isolation. During this period, the major conflict centers on forming intimate, loving relationships with other people. People begin to share themselves more intimately with others. They explore relationships leading toward longer-term commitments with someone other than a family member.

Successful completion of this stage can result in happy relationships and a sense of commitment, safety, and care within a relationship. Avoiding intimacy, fearing commitment and relationships can lead to isolation, loneliness, and sometimes depression. Success in this stage will lead to the virtue of love. It is marked by the ability to form lasting, meaningful relationships with other people.
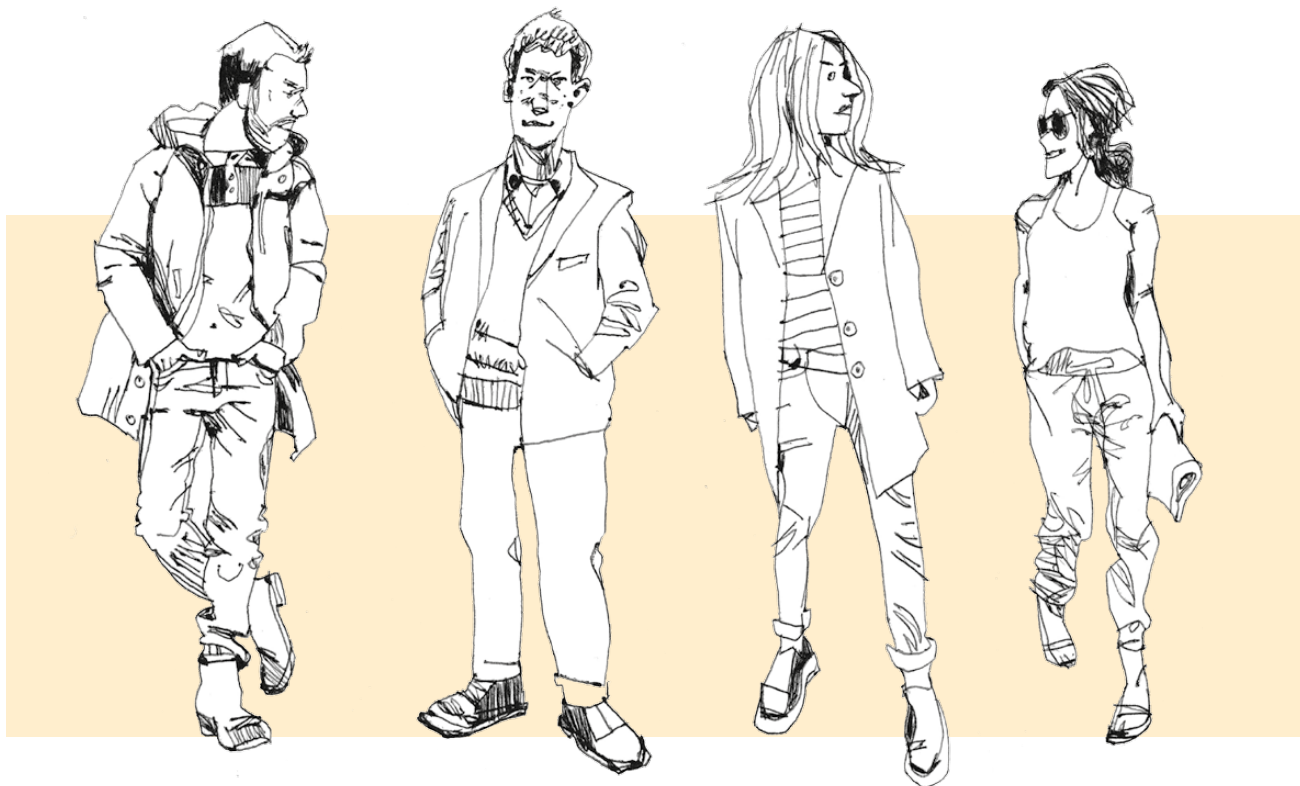
Generativity vs. Stagnation

When people reach their 40s, they enter the time known as middle adulthood, which extends to the mid-60s. The social task of middle adulthood is *generativity vs. stagnation.* Generativity involves finding your life's work and contributing to the development of others through activities such as volunteering, mentoring, and raising children. During this stage, middle-aged adults begin contributing to the next generation, often through childbirth and caring for others; they also engage in meaningful and productive work which contributes positively to society. Those who do not master this task may experience stagnation and feel as though they are not leaving a mark on the world in a meaningful way; they may have little connection with others and little interest in productivity and self-improvement.

Integrity vs. Despair

From the mid-60s to the end of life, we are in the period of development known as late adulthood. Erikson's task at this stage is called *integrity vs. despair.* He said that people in late adulthood reflect on their lives and feel either a sense of satisfaction or a sense of failure. People who feel proud of their accomplishments, feel a sense of integrity, and they can look back on their lives with few regrets. Being proud of your accomplishments, watching your children grow into adults, and developing a sense of unity with your life partner are important accomplishments of this stage. However, people who are not successful at this stage may feel as if their life has been wasted. They focus on what "would have", "should have" and "could have" been. They face the end of their lives with feelings of bitterness, depression, and despair.
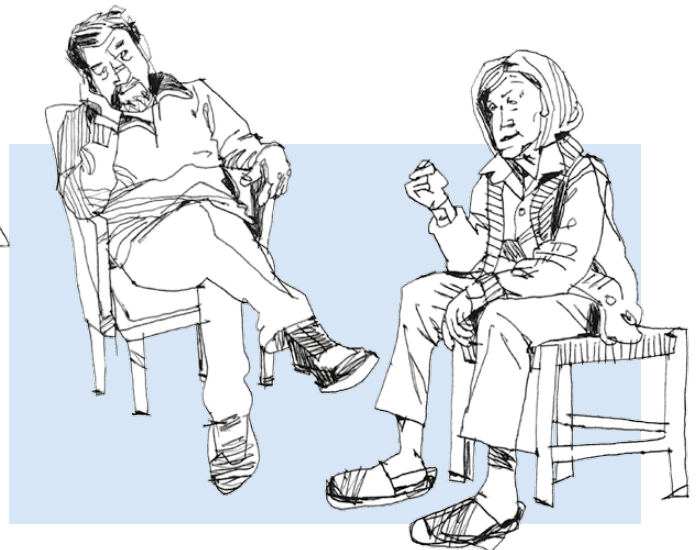
As already said, knowing all developmental phases is very important for the mentor, so that the person can fully understand what the mentee is going through, what the person needs to face and deal with, and where the person needs assistance and guidance, as well as to support the mentee to prepare better for what follows in life.

The five Cs of Positive youth development

The work of Erikson and other human development theorists has provided important foundations to the positive youth development approach to working with young people.[3] A variety of models has been developed to help practitioners, including youth mentors, in implementing youth development in their organizations and work, most of which have similar principles, goals, and strategies. Because youth development has the rather broad goal of helping youth make the transition to healthy adulthood, there is quite a range of what "success" looks like.

Most youth workers, mentors and educators consider economic independence, intellectual and social competence, personal satisfaction, and physical and psychological well-being to be significant measures. There is widespread agreement on five key outcomes for youth that are vital for their transition to adulthood. These are known as the "Five Cs":

The Five Cs of Positive Youth Development

"C"	Definition
Competence	A positive view of one's actions in specific areas, including social, academic, cognitive, health, and vocational
Confidence	An internal sense of overall positive self-worth and self-efficacy
Connection	Positive bonds with people and institutions that are reflected in exchanges between the individual and his or her peers, family, school, and community in which both parties contribute to the relationship
Character	Respect for societal and cultural norms, possession of standards for correct behaviors, a sense of right and wrong (morality), and integrity
Caring/ Compassion	A sense of sympathy and empathy for others

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3   Child Development Institute:
     http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/development/erickson

These five developmental outcomes can only be achieved with significant support from various actors and the entire society: individuals, families, schools, youth workers, faith organizations, community governance, business, and more.

By using a youth development approach in mentoring focused youth work, youth organizations provide services, opportunities, and support that enhances the young people's environment and increases their ability to reach these outcomes. The mentoring based youth work for youth development focuses more on activities that nurture developmental assets than on reducing particular risks or preventing specific problems. Its ultimate goal is to help youth become successful adults, not just problem- free, but fully prepared to be responsible, contributing and healthy adults. Bellow in this Handbook, you will see what mentors can do so as to support the development of each of these 5 Cs.

But, what is youth work? Who is/can be a youth worker? What does a youth worker do? How? Turn the next pages to find out.

Activity: As a youth worker, do you work on supporting these five areas of positive development in young people? What are concrete actions you take to assist them in competence development, confidence building, and the other Cs? What are some challenges young people are facing in each of them?

Youth work

2

2.1. What is youth work?

Not all countries have a definition of what exactly is youth work. Even the definitions that exist differ depending on the context where youth work is defined as well as on the preferences of the one who defines it. Different definitions emphasize different dimensions of youth work, different roles and/or target groups, but each one of them leaves room for agreement with the "European Union's Council Conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people", where youth work is defined as …

. . . .

"… a broad term covering a broad scope of activities of a social, cultural, educational or political nature by, with and for young people. Increasingly, such activities also include sport and services for young people. Youth work belongs to the area of 'out-of-school' education, as well as specific leisure time activities managed by professional or voluntary youth workers and youth leaders. Youth work is organised in different ways (by youth-led organisations, organisations for youth, informal groups or through youth services and public authorities). It is delivered in different forms and settings (e.g. open-access, group-based, programme-based, outreach and detached) and is given shape at local, regional, national and European level."[4]

. . . .

4   Council conclusions on the contribution of quality youth work to the development, well-being and social inclusion of young people (2013/C 168/03), 14.06.2013 Official Journal of the European Union

As it can be concluded by this broad definition, youth work can take many different shapes and approaches. There are countless different realities of youth work throughout Europe, which provide young people with a diverse range of non-formal and informal learning opportunities. Youth work provides young people with an opportunity to develop a wide range of personal and professional skills, ideally in an environment that is comfortable, safe and pleasant, free from pressure and stereotypes. Youth work helps the development of self-esteem, self-confidence and the socialization of the young people. It supports personal and social development and leads to empowerment of the young person, their emancipation, development of tolerance and strengthening of youth responsibility, active participation in the society; prevention of behavior which is risky for the health and safety of the young person; social inclusion and social cohesion etc. Regardless of how diverse youth work is across different countries and contexts, there are two basic and essential elements that are present in all its forms:

. . . .

¨Youth work offers developmental spaces and opportunities for all young people and ¨is based on non-formal and informal learning processes and on voluntary participation"

¨Youth work focuses on the personal and social development of young people…" [5]

So youth work offers activities that are based on the needs and interests of young people, using the methods of non-formal education, participatory, experiential learning, informing and counseling, mentoring and peer support that can take place in and out of institutions/organizations, in order to help the personal and social development of the young person. That said, it is important to also state that youth work should be comprised of actions that are directed to young people. This does not mean that young people are the only beneficiaries of youth work activities, or that young people are only beneficiaries of youth work, but that the main aim should be to support the personal and social development of young people. Ideally, young people themselves should also be co-creators and stakeholders in youth work, and young work should also encompass other generations and social groups – since youth are not an isolated island in the society.

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5 Report from the Expert Group on Youth Work Quality Systems in the EU Member States, youth work is a broad term covering a lot of different activities, programs and initiatives, EUROPEAN COMMISSION Directorate-General for Education and Culture Directorate C – Youth and Sport Unit C1 – Youth policy and programme, 2015

Source: https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-essentials

The Council of Europe explains that: …

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¨youth work is a collective expression for all educational methods relating to youths which are not initialized and taken responsibility of by the parents nor by other family members, but by youth workers. There seems to be a shared set of values and methods in youth work practices all around Europe. CoE further notes that youth work usually has the following characteristics:

Value-driven: *youth work tries to serve the higher purposes of inclusion and social cohesion*

Youth-centric: *youth work serves key needs and aspirations of youth, identified by young people themselves*

Voluntary: *youth work is not obligatory, and relies on the voluntary participation of young people*

Developmental: *youth work aims at the personal, social and ethical development of young people*

Self-reflective and critical: *youth work tries to make sure it is doing its best to live up to its mission*

Relational: *youth work seeks authentic communication with young people and to contribute to sustaining viable communities. Effective youth work should: offer quality of support which helps young people to progress and achieve; enable young people to influence decision makers at all levels; provide choices on a wide spectrum of personal and social development issues; promote social inclusion and combat disaffection*[6]

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6   https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-essentials

In order to be successful youth work should

be perceived as being attractive, bringing added value or joy in life

In order to be attractive youth work should

respond to the different needs, interests and experiences of young people as perceived by themselves

be actively inclusive; reach out to and welcome all groups of young people

In order to do this youth work should

be based on young people's voluntary and active participation, engagement and responsibility

In order to be this youth work should

have a holistic perspective and meet young people as capable individuals and resources

enhance young people's rights, personal and social development and autonomy

In order to do this youth work should

be designed, delivered and evaluated together with young people

be based on non-formal and informal learning

In order to be this youth work should

have a visible learning perspective and design its activities in accordance with clear learning objetives that are relevant to the young people participating

Youth work and positive youth development are not synonyms, but they are closely related. There are striking similarities in the language we use to explain them. And to no surprise, since both of them have to do with the personal development of young people. But the perspective is different – when we speak about positive youth development, we have in mind what all young people should develop. When we speak about youth work, we mean what can be done so that those competences and characteristics are developed. When applied properly, youth work supports positive youth development, it is the means to achieving the goal. By taking a youth development approach in youth work, we provide services and opportunities that create more enabling conditions for young people to develop and grow. Youth work is not always and not only about positive youth development, as it can have a wider scope. Similarly, not only youth work works on positive youth development, which is rather a joint effort of more social services, teachers, parents and many others in the society. But the value of youth work focusing on positive youth development is great.

TESTIMONIAL

In my opinion youth work is the way somebody who has some lifetime experiences is willing to transmit his/her knowledge to young people. It can also be someone who wants to motivate youth the best way with the best standards. Youth workers motivate and inspire youth in order to teach them how to be stronger, confident, and sociable but mostly how to take responsibilities and risks. I became a youth worker by accident! While I was on my first year of my studies I found out by my landlord the existence of youth work and volunteering. He trusted my cordial character and my promptness to work and donate to my society. Since then, I am a completely different person!

My tip to youth workers who act as mentors so young people is always be yourself! Never pretend a face personality in order to be congenial just because if you want it you can make it in the way you are. Also never show more interest in a specific ethnicity depreciating about other cultures just for any personal reason (it has happened to me a few times as a mentee).

Nikoleta Theodoridou, Greece

2.2. Typology of youth work

Given the range of activities that fall under the umbrella of youth work the study "Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union" prepared in 2014 by by Allison Dunne, Daniela Ulicna, Ilona Murphy, Maria Golubeva Checked by Daniela Ulicna, Margaret James for the European Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency, proposes a typology of youth work practice to capture the types of activities and the focus of youth work.

. . . .
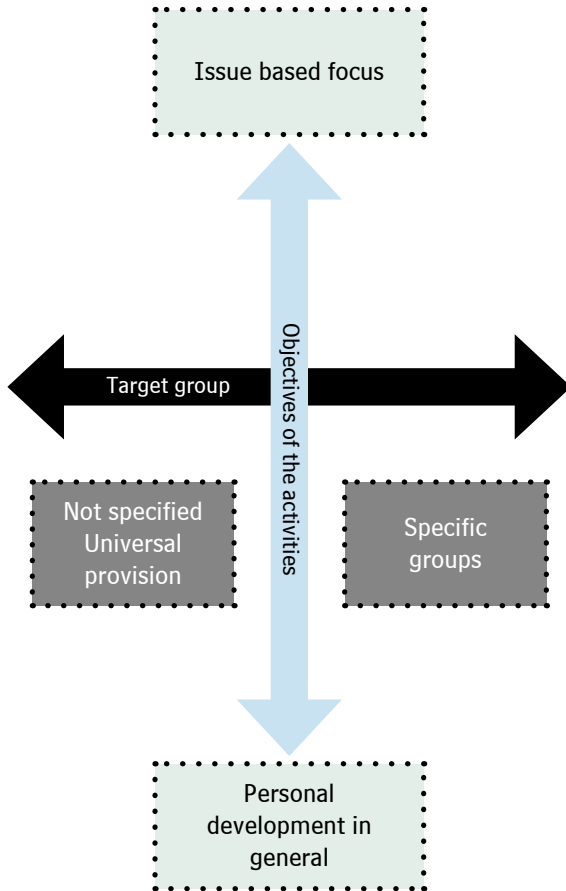
¨Their proposed typology consists of two axes distinguishing between the objectives and the target group of the youth work activity. Most youth work activities fall somewhere along the continuum of these axes. Youth work activities at one end of the target group axis are those that are universal (targeting all young people) and at the other end those which focus on specific target groups of young people. The other axis representing the objectives of youth work runs from youth work with a broad goal of personal development to youth work with very specific issues it wishes to address. Many organisations deliver some activities that have a specific target group focus and others that are open to all young people. The types of activities can be partially linked to the types of expected outcomes and therefore to the discussion of the value of youth work. This report shows a range of outcomes of youth work but not all 6 types of activities have the potential to result in the full

Issue based focus

Target group

Objectives of the activities

Not specified Universal provision

Specific groups

Personal development in general

Activity: What do you know about youth work in your country? How is it defined and what are its main characteristics?

range of outcomes. The typology together with the discussion on outcomes could be seen as a way to clarify the focus of a specific youth work activity and related expected outcomes."[7]

· ·

There are different criteria that can be used for classifying the different types of youth work. We can list different types of youth work according to the goal, theme, target group, location, etc. We can also speak about different types of methodology applied in youth work. This is where mentoring comes in, as one of the approaches in supporting positive youth development. Mentoring is not unique to youth work, as it can be applied to many other contexts. Similarly, youth work is not only about mentoring, as it uses a variety of other methodological approaches. Mentoring is just one way we can take in supporting young people, but one that can be very effective, particularly when working on positive youth development.

2.3. Who are the youth workers?

In line with the definitions of youth work, we can agree that youth workers are: People working in direct contact with young people, carrying out activities designed for supporting their personal and social development and their active participation in the life of the society, through non-formal and informal learning. Youth workers, in turn, might be professionals or volunteers and be civil servants or work for NGOs.

A youth worker is an independent person to whom the young people can turn to for nonjudgmental advice and support. Youth workers come from diverse backgrounds, engage in a variety of activities and methods and are employed in a variety of systems and settings, and as such, in certain contexts can be labelled as pedagogues, social workers, animators, etc.

However, there are some elements that can be described as assumptions which help to define the profile of the workforce:

• Youth workers undertake their activities primarily in non-compulsory educational and development settings;
• Youth workers carry out their work with young people who are participating on a voluntary basis.

Youth workers can be paid employees or can be involved in youth activities on a voluntary basis. Involvement can be full-time or part-time both among paid employees and volunteers. A rich variety of people are involved in youth practice, from specialist youth workers to social workers, including teachers, health workers, psychologists and many other backgrounds in between.

Activity: Now that you have read about the youth workers from different countries, take some time to think about the youth workers in your country. Do they exist? Who are they? What do they do? Where can you find them? … And yes, how can one become a youth worker?

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7   Allison Dunne, Daniela Ulicna, Ilona Murphy, Maria Golubeva Checked by Daniela Ulicna, Margaret James for the European Commission and the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency "Working with young people: the value of youth work in the European Union", 2014

2.4. What does a youth worker do?

A youth worker helps young people develop the skills to make positive changes in their lives. Often, they provide specific services to youth with particular problems. Services might include support in finding accommodation, choosing and finishing education, training, accessing employment, or counselling. A youth worker may also perform outreach work, run a community education and recreation programme for local governments, or advocate for young people on issues such as health. Youth workers are responsible for planning, organizing and overseeing community programs designed to redress inequalities and facilitate the personal, social and emotional development of young people. Typically, a youth worker:

- Assesses the needs of young people to correctly plan and deliver programs related to areas such as health, fitness, smoking, drugs, gangs, violence, relationships and bullying
- Helps young people to find their own way, to become involved and active
- Pursue a change in the community
- Inspires young people /to create ideas
- Gives young people the chance to explore the world
- Supports the development of young people's positive self-image
- Offers young people interesting things to do in their free time
- Acquires funding for projects
- Creates a strong link between youth work and the benefits to the whole community
- Opens young people's minds
- Offers Non-Formal Education and leisure time activities
- Offers space for self-development and being creative

- Is aware of young people's identity and supports them in finding their place in society
- Gives young people an active role – make them responsible
- Mentors and coaches young people encouraging greater social inclusion
- works in partnership with professionals from other organisations that support young people such as social care, health, police, education, youth offending teams and local authorities
- Gets involved in the young people's 'way of life', in order to design projects according to their own desires and needs
- Regularly monitors and reviews the quality of the local youth work provision
- Attends regular training and development opportunities to maintain an up-to-date knowledge of safeguarding, health and safety and local policy development
- Recruits, trains and manages staff, including volunteers
- Undertakes administrative tasks, maintain effective recording systems and respond to queries
- Works with parents and community groups to win support for improved provision and act as an advocate for young people's interest
- Identifies and pursues sources of funding for projects to improve services and/or resources for young people
- Draws up business plans, write reports and make formal presentations to funding bodies.

Youth workers work in a variety of contexts including schools, hospitals, social care institutions, youth refuges and community centers, drug and alcohol centers, with the youth organizations etc. While they frequently visit young people and other clients at a variety of locations, they also spend time in the office writing reports and applications for funding and organizing and reporting activities.

WHAT IS YOUTH WORK FOR?

ENABLING young people to do the things they want to do together and individually

Providing young people with opportunities to **EMANCIPATE** and gain autonomy

Providing young people with healthy and safe opportunities for leisure that they can **ENJOY**
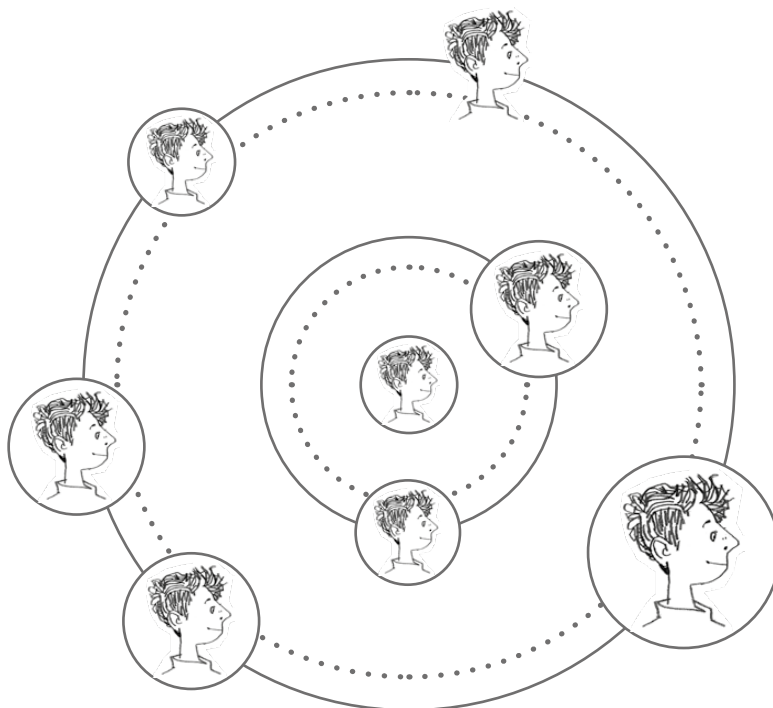
EMPOWERING young people to change things they think need to be changed in their immediate surroundings and society

Helping young people to **ENGAGE** with power and policy

Providing young people with relevant and engaging non-formal **EDUCATION** opportunities that improve their competencies

Source: https://www.coe.int/en/web/youth-portfolio/youth-work-essentials

2.5. How?

Youth work is complementary to formal education and is implemented by applying:

- non-formal education and informal / spontaneous learning;
- intercultural learning;
- sports, digital, artistic, cultural leisure time activities, etc. as tools for learning;
- mentoring and coaching;
- peer counseling and informing;
- advocacy and lobbying.

The youth worker implements the services of youth work in the open, within the institution and / or organization and / or on the Internet. The youth work activities have various target groups and goals for supporting youth development and active participation in the life of the society.
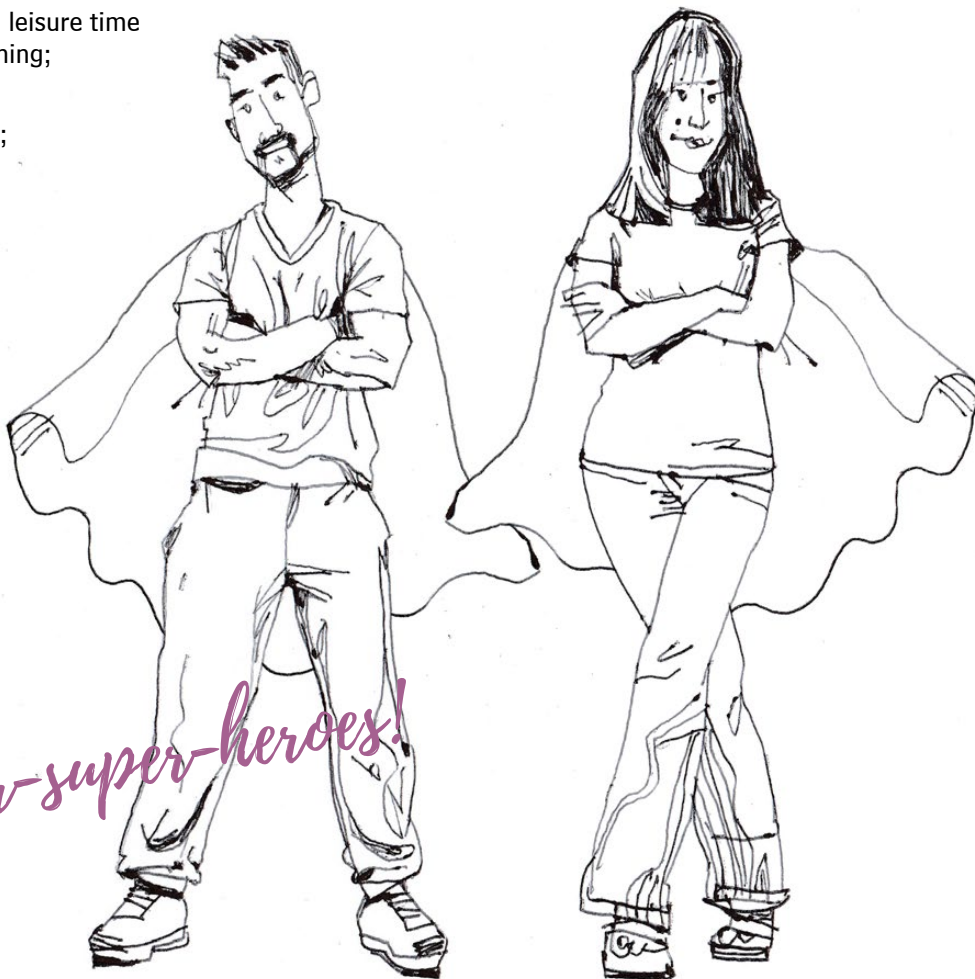
THE OVERALL FEELING

We are super-super-heroes!

Mentoring in youth work

3

3.1. What is mentoring?

. . . .

"Show me a successful individual and I'll show you someone who had real positive influences in his or her life. I don't care what you do for a living, if you do it well I'm sure there was someone cheering you on or showing the way. A mentor."

Denzel Washington

. . . .

All young people need someone caring in their lives. Although positive, sustained relationships with parents represent a critical resource for children and young people, other people can also provide support that can either be in addition to that provided by parents or in place of support that a parent refuses or is unable to give. For example, these ''others'' can provide financial assistance, enhance young people's learning skills, and help build their self-esteem and self-control. They can also provide emotional support, advice, and guidance about subjects that young people might feel uncomfortable, apprehensive, or fearful discussing with their parents. One of the ''supportive others' can be YOU – the Mentor!

Fun fact: In Greek mythology, Mentor was the son of Heracles and Asopis. In his old age Mentor was a friend of Odysseus, who had placed Mentor and Odysseus' foster-brother Eumaeus in charge of his son Telemachus, and Odysseus' palace, when Odysseus left for the Trojan War. When Athena visited Telemachus she took the disguise of Mentor to hide herself from the suitors of Telemachus's mother, Penelope. As Mentor, the goddess encouraged Telemachus to stand up against the suitors and go abroad to find out what happened to his father. When Odysseus returned to Ithaca, Athena appeared briefly in the form of Mentor again at Odysseus' palace. Because of Mentor's relationship with Telemachus, and the disguised Athena's encouragement and practical plans for dealing with personal dilemmas, the personal name Mentor has been adopted in English as a term meaning someone who imparts wisdom to and shares knowledge with a less experienced colleague.

Youth mentoring is a process of structured dialogue in which an experienced mentor guides and supports the development of young people's potentials and their active involvement in community life, in order to successfully prepare for and start a responsible, autonomous and independent life. It is a process of developing a trust-based relationship that includes support, guidance, education, identification and advocacy, through linking between a skilled person (mentor) and a less experienced person (mentee).

The authors of the Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, fourth edition in an attempt to define mentoring, write: *"Mentoring takes place between young persons (i.e., mentees) and older or more experienced persons (i.e., mentors) who are acting in a non-professional helping capacity to provide relationship-based support that benefits one or more areas of the mentee's development."* [8]

There are a variety of definitions on what mentoring really is, and almost all involve a caring someone supporting someone else in achieving, overcoming, reflecting on something and becoming an autonomous adult. In the context of youth work, mentoring is one of the key elements for working with young people and that carrying someone who is doing the mentoring, is a competent youth worker who gets into the role of mentor and provides opportunity for one – on – one learning, as part of different youth work programs. This is a relationship designed to build confidence and support the youth so they are able to take control of their own development and life.

Mentoring has been a form of informal education established well before the public education system was introduced. Mentoring originally meant to form an informal and private intergenerational relationship based on mutual trust. In this conception, ''achievement, nurturance, and generativity'' were considered the basic elements of mentoring relationships. A mentor takes the role of leading a young mentee to success by providing support and affection while teaching him/her traditional skills. A relationship of mutual trust is nurtured between the mentor and mentee[9] (Freedman, 1993, 34-35).

Mentoring is more than just 'giving advice', or passing on what your experience was in a particular area or situation. It's about motivating and empowering the young person to identify their own issues and goals, and helping them to find ways of resolving or reaching them – not by doing it for them, or expecting them to '*do it the way I did it*', but by understanding and respecting different ways of working. Mentoring clearly has the potential to constitute a set of relations between youth and their social world that enhances young peoples' life skills, provides opportunities for their making valued contributions to self and society, and promotes personal youth development.

A youth developmental mentor can be anyone skilled for that, a professional or a volunteer and that anyone can be YOU, the youth worker. When engaged in mentoring one needs to be aware that mentoring is not coaching, counselling or therapy, nor is friendship or parenting, though the mentor may help the mentee to access more specialized avenues of help if it becomes apparent that this would be the best way forward. The relation between mentoring, counselling, coaching, therapy etc. will be explored further in the text.

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8   Michael Garringer, MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership • Dr. Janis Kupersmidt, innovation Research & Training • Dr. Jean Rhodes, Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring, University of Massachusetts–Boston • Dr. Rebecca Stelter, innovation Research & Training • Tammy Tai, MENTOR: The National Mentoring Partnership, Elements of Effective Practice for Mentoring, fourth edition , 2015

9   M.Freedman, The Kindness of Strangers: Adult Mentors, Urban Youth, and the New Voluntarism. 1993

Mentoring, at its core, guarantees young people that there is someone who cares about them, assures them they are not alone in dealing with day-to-day challenges, and makes them feel like they matter. Research confirms that quality mentoring relationships have powerful positive effects on young people in a variety of personal, academic, and professional situations. Ultimately, mentoring connects a young person to personal growth and development. Through mentoring young people get assistance as they move through developmental stages and address difficulties they encounter along the way.

Running an effective mentoring is not easy, and there are many details that can have a big impact on outcomes for youth. Mentoring programs that are not well designed and lead, can actually have a negative impact on youth. Mentoring is very much worth doing, but it is imperative that programs implement proven, research-based best practices if they are to achieve their desired outcomes.

3.2. What makes mentoring – a process worth doing?

. . . .

"Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn."

Benjamin Franklin

. . . .

Mentoring has a positive impact on the lives of young people. Mentoring with a well-trained, caring mentor can change the trajectory of young people. Mentoring programs and mentors can support the development of young people and can help them to cope with serious challenges, reduce risks or damage caused by some of the difficulties or conditions, enhance their capacity to cope with the risks and difficulties in achieving their goals etc. Mentors may not be able to change how fast young person develops or force them to make certain decisions, but mentors can share their worldviews, experiences, knowledge, support and advice, as well as provide a positive influence. By introducing youth to new experiences and sharing positive values, mentors can help young people avoid negative behaviors and achieve success.

In order to explore and understand the developmental path and ways how youth end up in mentoring, we will present the work of Joseph Campbell, known as – ''The Hero's journey''. In books like The Hero with a Thousand Faces, The Power of Myth, and The Inner Reaches of Outer Space, Campbell reported on the synthesis he found while comparing the myths and legends of many cultures. The Hero's Journey was his all-embracing metaphor for the deep inner journey of transformation that heroes in every time and place seem

to share, a path that leads them through great movements of separation, descent, ordeal, and return.

According to Campbell, the Hero's journey has 12 steps that can be avoided, repeated, or shifted about depending upon the needs of the individual story. You will easily recognize the steps from many famous books and films. Despite the avoiding, repeating or shifting about some of the stages, the hero still follows this typical journey. And in each of those narratives, a mentor comes in the story. Hereby you can read about the first steps of the journey, the moment when the mentor appears and the type of impact they have on the hero.

Source: http://www.dopeame.com/blog/2016/5/16/the-heros-journey
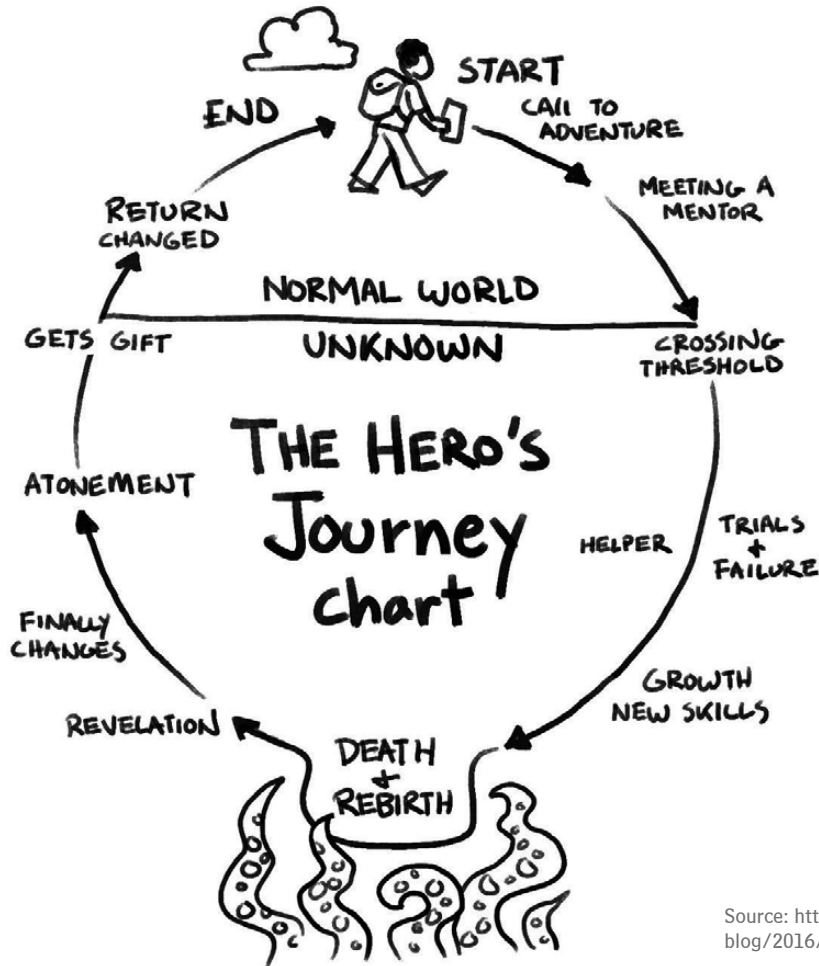
Ordinary World: This is the stage where the Hero's exists the journey and the adventures begins. It's his safe place. His everyday life where we learn crucial details about our Hero, his true nature, capabilities and outlook on life. This anchors the Hero as a human, just like you and me, and makes it easier for us to identify with him and hence later, empathize with his plight.

Call To Adventure: The Hero's adventure begins when he receives a call to action, such as a direct threat to his safety, his family, his way of life or to the peace of the community in which he lives etc. The call ultimately disrupts the comfort of the Hero's Ordinary World and presents a challenge or quest that must be undertaken.

Refusal Of The Call: Although the Hero may be eager to accept the quest, at this stage he will have fears that need overcoming. Second thoughts or even deep personal doubts as to whether or not he is up to the challenge. When this happens, the Hero will refuse the call and as a result may suffer somehow. The problem he faces may seem too much to handle and the comfort of home far more attractive than the perilous road ahead. This would also be our own response and once again helps us bond further with the reluctant Hero.

Meeting The Mentor: At this crucial turning point where the Hero desperately needs guidance he meets a mentor figure who gives him something he needs. He could be given an object of great importance, insight into the dilemma he faces, wise advice, practical training or even self-confidence. Whatever the mentor provides the Hero with it serves to dispel his doubts and fears and give him the strength and courage to begin his quest. The Hero Meets a Mentor to gain confidence, insight, advice, training, or magical gifts to overcome the initial fears and face the threshold of the adventure. A Hero may not wish to rush into a Special World blindly and, therefore, seeks the experience and wisdom of someone who has been there before. This Mentor has sur-

vived to provide the essential lessons and training needed to better face the Journey's Tests and Ordeals. The Mentor may be a physical person, or an object such as a map, a logbook, or hieroglyphics. In Westerns and Detective stories, the Hero may hold an Inner Mentor, a strong code of honor or justice that guides him through the Journey.

Crossing The Threshold: The Hero is now ready to act upon his call to adventure and truly begin his quest, whether it be physical, spiritual or emotional. He may go willingly or he may be pushed, but either way he finally crosses the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. It may be leaving home for the first time in his life or just doing something he has always been scared to do. However, the threshold presents itself, this action signifies the Hero's commitment to his journey whatever it may have in store for him.

You can read about the rest of the stages online. In this context, we used the first few stages to introduce the role of the mentor and to show the impact one makes on the hero's behavior.

Activity: Remember a book or a film that follows the Hero's journey. Identify the moment the mentor appears in hero's life. What is the role of the mentor? What kind of change does the one make in hero's life and journey? Can you compare this example with the role of mentors in real life?

The importance of mentors in this process cannot be overstated. A good mentor inspires you, stretches young people, connects them, develops their EQ, opens young people's minds and most importantly, doesn't judge. Mentoring provides a safe space to learn, experiment and ask questions, no matter how seemingly stupid. In short, Mentorship is a way to soak

up the wisdom of those who have gone before you, in a way that sticks. A mentor can provide guidance, support and space for youth to think.

When researching why young people need mentoring, we come across a variety of reasons that often involve the following:

- Mentors provide information and knowledge.
- Mentors can see where young people need to improve where they often cannot see for themselves
- Mentors find ways to stimulate young people's personal and professional growth.
- Mentors offer encouragement and help keep youth going.
- Mentors are disciplinarians that create necessary boundaries that cannot set for ourselves.
- Mentors are sounding boards so youth can bounce ideas off them for an unfiltered opinion
- Mentors are trusted advisers.
- Mentors can be connectors.
- Mentors have the experiences you can learn from to prevent making the same mistakes beginners make
- Mentors are free, which makes them priceless in more ways than one

In the words of Sir Isaac Newton, mentors extend vision, enable mentees to attain greater heights. In short, mentors provide undeniable counsel and resources that are not necessarily or readily available or accessible. Having a mentor is not a sign of weakness; it shows young people are smart enough and are driven enough to succeed.

The research of Susan M. Jekielek, M.A., Kristin A. Moore, Ph.D., Elizabeth C. Hair, Ph.D., and Harriet J. Scarupa, M.S., Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development, conducted in 2002 shows that mentoring is not always effective at enhancing youth development. Based on their findings, the researchers try to describe some of the characteristics of the mentoring relations and note that: the longer

the mentoring relationship, the better the outcome.[10] They further write that youth are more likely to benefit if mentors maintain frequent contact with them and know their families; young people who perceive high-quality relationships with

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10 For example, an analysis of Big Brothers/Big Sisters programs showed that, compared to non-mentored youth, "Little Brothers" and "Little Sisters" involved in mentoring relationships that lasted more than 12 months felt more confident about doing their schoolwork, skipped fewer school days, had higher grades, and were less likely to start using drugs or alcohol. Youth in one-on-one mentoring relationships of shorter duration (3-6 months) experienced no significant improvements in academic, social, and substance use outcomes. Those involved in relationships of even briefer duration actually felt less confident about doing their schoolwork and had a substantially lower sense of self-worth.

their mentors experience the best results and that overall, young people who are the most disadvantaged or at-risk seem to benefit the most from mentoring.

When it comes to program practices that enhance quality mentoring, the researchers underline that mentoring programs need structure and planning to facilitate high levels of interaction between young people and their mentors and that mentoring programs that are driven more by the needs and interests of youth, rather than the expectations of the adult volunteers – are more likely to succeed. Programmes based on a ''developmental'' approach to mentoring, instead of a ''prescriptive'' approach, tended to last longer and be more satisfying for both mentor and mentee. In the developmental approach, mentors spent a lot of time initially getting to know their mentees, were flexible in their expectations of the relationships, and took their cues about what activities they would engage in with their mentees from the youth themselves.

Young people with mentors: show greater self-esteem, have a clear idea of themselves and their own potentials and weaknesses, can set big, but realistic goals for themselves, they can put realistic expectations of themselves and other people around themselves. Additionally, research shows that behavior, attitudes, and relationships are improving when young people have a mentor. (Community Service Center CSC, 2016) [11] Mentored youth are likely to have fewer absences from school, have better attitudes towards school, are less vulnerable to substance abuse, have more positive attitudes and behavior etc. Mentoring enhances many aspects of young people's social and emotional development. Participating in mentoring promotes positive social attitudes and relationships.[12] But, it is important to remember that

mentoring does not offer an answer to all the challenges that young people face or will face in life, nor will one type or style of mentoring or a unified mentoring program fit all young people. Every young person has individual needs and is in a situation that is unique to him/her and no one else. The knowledge, advice, and resources a mentor shares depend on the format and goals of a specific mentoring relationship. A mentor may share with a mentee information about his or her own career path, as well as provide guidance, motivation, emotional support, and role modeling. A mentor may help with exploring careers, setting goals, developing contacts, and identifying resources.

The mentor role may change as the needs of the mentee change. Some mentoring relationships are part of structured programs that have specific expectations and guidelines: others are more informal. Keep in mind that mentoring can only be successful if it is flexible and if it is guided and created on the basis of the needs, rights, opportunities and specifics of each young person individually. So let's check out some of the styles and types of mentoring.

Activity: Think of your own experience as a mentee. At what point did the mentor appear in your life journey? When was a mentor the most beneficial for you, and/or when would you have appreciated support from a mentor figure?

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11 Community Service Center, The importance of youth mentorship, 2016,

12 Susan M. Jekielek, M.A., Kristin A. Moore, Ph.D., Elizabeth C. Hair, Ph.D., and Harriet J. Scarupa, M.S. Mentoring: A Promising Strategy   for Youth Development, 2002

TESTIMONIAL

When I started this project, I was in the phase of long-term depression. I had not socialized for a long time, and I used to. After the project, I have felt a responsibility for my mentor and I have been more active to share new things in my life. We have limited time, and the time passes quickly. For that reason, I have been more active in reading books which decreased during my disease. My mentor made me socialized. I had ideas but did not know where to start. We are learning IT programs now. We will study together.

(Female, International Trade, Istanbul Trade University, 20)

With this program, I had the opportunity to work with a mentor who has different fields of experience and who has built her own living space with her experiences. I would say that the experience of mentee is a very different and unique experience. My mentor and I discuss and experience different topics together. I think that my mentor helps me to build new things in my life. I can feel a different perspective for each goal, and I see that there are different ways. The fact that I have an example in front of me about how I can cross the intersection and breaking processes of my life with the mentoring program, and what I can put on it makes me feel comfortable, and I am not alone.

(Female, Youth Worker, Community Volunteer Foundations, 27)

From Community Volunteer Foundations (Toplum Gönüllüleri Vakfı/TOG)

3.3. Types of mentoring

Mentoring holds a potential for work with young people but it is not – a one size fits all – kind of practice. There are a variety of styles of mentoring which provide support that is acceptable to young people with respect to their differences. All mentoring programs aim to promote positive youth outcomes, but they all vary in their goals, emphasis, and structure. We can see that some programs have broad youth development goals, while others focus more narrowly on improving performance in specific field (I.e. in the field of education: helping youth stay in school, or in the field of employment: in preparing youth for a particular line of work, or in the field of health: reducing substance abuse and other anti-social behaviors etc.). Some programs are unstructured; others are highly structured. Mentoring can also be a short-term arrangement until the original reason for the partnership is fulfilled (or ceases), or it can last many years… etc. Usually, mentoring takes place through a series of face to face or internet/telephone/online based intentional, time-framed meetings with informative, educational, encouraging and motivating nature.

Although the concept of mentoring seems simple, its successful implementation can be a real challenge. Some of the differences between mentoring programs found in mentoring literature, include differences in:

- **The nature of the relations:**
  - mentoring through informal and / or spontaneous relationships
  - mentoring in formal relations
- **The objectives and the intentions of the mentoring:**
  - independence,
  - career development,
  - personal development,

- academic achievement,
- cultural or spiritual development,
- life skills development and skills for everyday functioning in the community etc.
- **The environment in which mentoring occurs**:
  - in a community,
  - at school,
  - in a youth organization
  - in a work environment,
  - via the Internet and other communication media, and the like. etc.
- **Number of mentees mentored by one mentor:**
  - individually or one-on-one mentoring, where a mentor mentors one young person,
  - team mentoring when a group of mentors is mentoring a group of young people, whereby the ratio should not be more than 1:4
  - group mentoring, when one mentor mentors from 2 to 4 young people.[13]

The University further explains following types of mentoring:

Informal Mentoring: Research suggests that up to 95% of mentoring relationships are informal, where the individual self, selects the person they would like to be mentored by. The relationship generally develops naturally and may not necessarily be identified as 'mentoring'. They tend to occur over a period of between three and six years, however some will last for a lifetime. The same tools used in formal mentoring programs are generally available to informal mentoring relationships (see Mentoring Tools). Informal mentors should

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13 Peggy Rennie, director of ''Prospect Research and Strategy, Big Brothers Big Sister'' – Canada, 2016, Guide to effective practice in mentoring for children and youth who are, or have been in receipt of child protection services

expect the mentee to be the lead in the development process. Both parties may agree on the mentoring outcomes either verbally or in writing. Informal mentoring activity should not conflict with the productivity of either the mentee or the mentor unless it has been sanctioned by the appropriate managers of the organisation/s. Costs of informal mentoring can be measured based on the amount of time that the mentee and mentor are engaged during normal work hours.

Formal Mentoring: A formal mentor is someone within an organisation who serves in a mentoring program sanctioned by the organisation and managed by a program coordinator, who facilitates the mentor-mentee relationships. The program is structured and measured regularly according to specific goals. Inclusion on the program may be by invitation or through a formal selection process. The relationship in this environment is more likely to be driven by the organisation than by the individual staff member. The mentor and mentee are matched based on the perception that the mentor can help accelerate the mentee's career. Both parties understand the value of the program and agree to work within the structure. A trial period is put into place to monitor the success of the matching process. A formal agreement is the baseline for the mentoring relationship. It provides guidance for the goals and objectives, frequency of meetings and meeting locations, timeframes and content prior to the beginning of the program. Formal training may be provided to both the mentor and the mentee to ensure roles and responsibilities are clearly understood and agreed to. Mentees participating in the program are monitored to assess the progress relative to the organisation's defined objectives. Mentors are provided an opportunity to be recognised and share their experiences about the success of their mentoring engagements. Feedback gained is used to continually improve the effectiveness of the program.

Formal mentoring programs vary in commitment. Research suggests that they generally last around $1-2$ years in length,

with mentors and mentees meeting approximately once a month. Costs associated with formal mentoring programs need to be considered as a long term organisational investment. Formal mentoring programs require appropriate funding to support program activities. Generally each mentor's department absorbs the cost of the mentor's time. There should be direct links between the cost of the program and the achievement of program outcomes.

Role Models A role model is someone whose behaviours, attitude, and strategies you can emulate to achieve success. It is a form of informal mentoring. You don't want to become a clone of anyone else. However, many people known to you, or observed from afar, have qualities that you can copy to your own advantage. No one is perfect and you may select the attributes that you want and ignore the less effective aspects. Using a role model involves identifying people you believe operate in positive and effective ways, noticing what they do and how they do it and practicing it yourself.

Developmental Mentoring Developmental Mentoring can be described as someone who listens, questions and enables you to set goals, create plans, make decisions and solve problems related to your career or professional growth. These people usually have a reputation as ''enablers''. They develop their own staff and are known to help others. They know and use sound techniques for decision-making and problem-solving. They have life experience that allows them to be authoritative (not authoritarian) and they will challenge your thinking and help you evaluate alternative strategies for getting what you want. They will help you clarify your vision, set goals and create practical plans to achieve them. They'll be around as you implement your plans so you can debrief and adjust your actions.

Reciprocal Mentoring Reciprocal Mentoring is a relationship where neither party is designated ''mentor''. Each is a confidante and resource to the other. You share goals

and encourage personal accountability. You each serve as a sounding board for ideas and a reality check for plans. Reciprocal mentoring is more than mutual reinforcement. Friends, relatives and spouses may lack the objectivity necessary for real mentoring. Mentoring can add stress to a relationship, so a professional colleague may be the best choice. You could find a peer at a conference or training course, through your membership in a professional association or a community group.

Peer Mentoring Peer to Peer Mentoring is another informal mentoring process which is usually initiated by management. It occurs when individuals with similar levels of responsibility partner to improve the effectiveness of one or the other. Peer mentoring provides an effective mechanism for sharing job related knowledge. When experienced staff mentor newer colleagues in a peer to peer relationship, they are exposed to some of the challenges and responsibilities as managers. They may have the opportunity to help a new staff member develop insight into performance expectations and career opportunities, based on their own personal experiences. A simple measure could be how soon the mentee becomes self-sufficient in their job responsibilities. Peer mentors and mentees use the job work flow as their guide for developing their working relationship. The mentor may provide more direction during the early stage of the relationship. During this time the mentee may shadow the mentor to see the experienced mentor in action. Then as a routine becomes established, the mentor is likely to be less involved on a day to day basis.

Reverse Mentoring In the reverse mentoring situation, the mentee has more overall experience (in terms of age, position or experience) than the mentor, but the mentor has more knowledge in a particular area. The relationship is reciprocal in nature. This type of mentoring may be used when executives need to understand operations or technology that can be shared by staff members currently undertaking the role or

tech-savvy employees who can share their knowledge with others. It can also be used to help encourage diversity such as appreciating multi generational or cross cultural perspectives. The key to success in reverse mentoring is the ability to create and maintain an attitude of openness to the experience and dissolve the barriers of status, power and position.

Group Mentoring Group Mentoring is the classic mastermind concept of tapping into collective wisdom and obtaining mutual support. Engaging a group takes the principle: "Two heads are better than one" to the next level. When a group of individuals operate in harmony and share their brain power the result is synergy – the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. In other words, the collective wisdom is available to each individual and shared ideas and information trigger additional possibilities that may never have been generated were each person working alone. Some professional associations use the mastermind concept and can set you up a group or mentoring circle. Access to mentoring circles gives mentees access to more mentors than a traditional one to one relationship. Generally, business-like meetings are held regularly and a formal agenda and discussion program is established. Guest speakers may also be invited to attend. They provide an opportunity for like-minded people to share issues and learn from one another."[14]

Activity: Having in mind the types of mentoring you read about, reflect about the type of mentoring you are (about to begin) providing. From all the types of mentoring described above, which ones are the closest to what you are doing? What are the main characteristics of your mentoring approach?

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14 Mentoring, The University of Melbourne, Published by: Human Resources CRICOS Code: 00116K Information correct as at 1 June 2012.

3.4. What is not mentoring?

COACHING, TEACHING, COUNSELLING… PARENTING… HANGING OUT… BEFRIENDING

Once we saw what mentoring can possibly be, let's spend some time on exploring what mentoring isn't. The difference between mentoring and other forms of development isn't a clear-cut. A mentor may draw on a number of approaches: teaching, coaching, and counselling. Indeed, it can be argued that these areas often occupy the same developmental space. Nonetheless, there are significant differences between mentoring and coaching and other forms of development. Let's have a closer look how professionals differentiate them.

3.4.1. Coaching

Both coaching and mentoring are development techniques that utilize the skills of listening, questioning, clarifying and reframing, and share one-to-one conversations as the main interaction technique in order to enhance an individuals' skills, knowledge or work performance This is a typical definition of coaching: *'Coaching is a developmental process by which an individual gets support while learning to achieve a specific personal or professional result or goal.'*

A coach focuses on specific skills and development goals by breaking them into concrete tasks to be completed within a specified period of time. By doing so, coaches help and guide young people clarify their vision. The coach is likely to set or suggest goals for the learner; measuring performance periodically as the learner develops new skills. This needs a good working relationship between learner and coach. A coach will assist, challenge and encourage rather than direct, advise

or teach. Coaching is a partnership that helps the individual work out what they need to do themselves to improve and, in the process, what motivates them and what gets in their way (attitudes, prejudices, preconceptions, assumptions). However, coaching is not directive and does not offer or provide any direct solutions.

A mentor, in simple words, is someone who offers their knowledge, expertise and advice to those with less experience. By leveraging their experience and skills, mentors guide mentees in the right direction. A mentor helps mentees consider opportunities for career growth, gain confidence and improve interpersonal skills. The support is based on the mentor's own experiences and learnings, which makes them more reliable figures in the eyes of the mentees.

Coaches use questioning and listening techniques to bring out the full potential of the individual, whereas mentors act as advisors, suggesting new paths for the individual to take. To mentor effectively, you must possess an in-depth appreciation and knowledge of the subject on which you are advising. Often the relational positions of mentor and individual being mentored are equivalent to that of teacher and pupil. In a coaching event, the positional relationship is much more on a par as the coach's role is to create an environment for the individual to learn for themselves.

It is important to know the difference because individuals respond differently to different learning interventions. Some people respond well to mentoring and others respond better to coaching. Some people like to hear your expertise, while others do not. If the wrong technique is applied, you will probably fail to achieve the performance or development results you are striving for.

The following chart might help you in understanding how coaching and mentoring differ.

Coaching	Mentoring
Task Oriented	Relationship Oriented
Short Term	Long Term
Performance Driven	Development Driven
Can be done as needed; no design necessary	Program design needed to create effective program
Manager directly involved	Manager involved only indirectly
More easily evaluated and measured for ROI	Less easy to measure for ROI
Reliance on performance management systems, e.g. reviews, 360's etc.	Not dependent upon performance management systems
Feedback by coach to manager about progress in development	No feedback by mentor to manager
Coach paid for services	Mentor receives no compensation
Coach operates independently	Mentors operate with assistance from the Mentoring Program Manager
No training of coachee needed	Mentors and mentorees trained
Focus is more on business issues than personal	Focus is on personal and professional development
Lower initial investment cost	Higher initial investment cost (lower over time)
Lends itself to online software	Management of the mentoring program lends itself to software but not the relationship itself
Coaches leave organization when done	Mentors and mentorees remain in the organization and can provide ongoing mentoring to others
Done by inside or outside content expert	Mentors are normally within the company
Can be done for remedial purposes	Never remedial
Internal politics not usually affected	Internal politics a consideration in program design
Cultural change may/may not occur	Mentoring is transformational and affects the culture
Diversity may or may not be included	Diversity is a component of mentoring
Coaching done 1-on-1	Mentoring most often is done 1-on-1 but other models may be used as well
Content expertise more important in coaching	Interpersonal skills more important in mentoring
Manager can be coach of own employee	Mentor is outside mentoree's direct supervisory line
Coaching is one-directional	Mentnring is bi-directional
Coaching is focused on the business person	Mentoring involves the whole person
Behavioral transformation	Personal transformation

3.4.2. Teaching

The focus of teaching is to impart **knowledge** and **information** through instruction and explanation. And the goal for the student is usually to pass a test. Teaching focuses on making an individual learn the basic concepts and key points to perform a certain process. Teaching must be given in an environment that allows the student to make mistakes without causing any harm to the project or organization. The teacher will focus his or her communication on the concepts, key points, examples and exercises that the student needs to learn and practice to perform in the real world. A mentor does not talk about concepts or key points. He or she encourages people to talk about their personal values, find emotional balance through their individuality, find meaning in life by creating a picture of the future so they can see who they want to become. A prerequisite for being a successful Mentor is to earn trust from your mentee. The mentee is the person who finds the mentor, not vice-versa. Let's sum up the several key differences pointed out in the mentoring literature:

Teaching Is About Knowledge

The role of the teacher is to share their knowledge through instruction and explanation. In the traditional sense, teaching involves formal lessons on a subject, often including a detailed lesson plan and methods of assessment.

Mentoring Is About Experience

Mentoring, on the other hand, is more informal and relational in nature. A mentor acts as an advisor, sharing knowledge based on their lived experience. There's more sharing between the two as mentors strive to help their mentees grow into peers.

Teaching Focuses On The How, Mentoring Focuses On The Why

Mentoring, focuses more on applying knowledge in practice. Not just **how** to do something, but **why** it's useful. Mentors impart their wisdom, practical insight, and creativity to encourage learners to express and develop their own skills.

A subtle but important difference distinguishes mentors and teachers. A teacher has greater knowledge than a student; a mentor has greater perspective. In this sense, a mentor is more like an editor—or the best kind of editor.

3.4.3. Counselling

The counsellor uses listening and questioning to build **self-awareness** and **self-confidence** in the client. The goal is to help the person deal with something difficult. Once again learning is one-way and the closeness of the relationship low.

Counseling seeks to explore the underlying dynamics of individuals and their relationships. Counselors as coaches, ask questions but counselors tend not to address tasks and performance. The goal for counseling is to promote self-understanding and self-acceptance.

The counseling profession, according to the American Counseling Association, seeks to address individuals' wellness, personal growth, and career development through various interventions and strategies (Hackney & Cormier, 2005). Counselors fit into a variety of specialized developmental areas, such as mental-health, marriage and family, school, pastoral/faith-based, and career counseling. Within a higher education context, mental health and career counseling are the most common developmental models used to address college student needs. The services provided by college mental-health counseling centers often include assessment

and diagnosis of mental-health disorders, treatment for anxiety and depression, substance-abuse treatment, addressing body image issues, support groups, and psycho-educational and prevention programs. As college students increasingly struggle with anxiety, depression, and other life and relationship stressors, they are turning to mental-health counseling resources on campus for support and assistance that other mentors, advisers, and faculty and staff might not be trained to provide (Kadison & DiGeronimo, 2004).

When talking about Counselling VS Mentoring, some authors start with a few things that are not the defining mark of what is different in these two types of relationships.

- **Topic of Conversation:** You can't make a list of subjects that should be ''mentored'' and a separate list of subjects that should be ''counseled''. Any life struggle that could benefit from counseling could also benefit from a mentor (if a good fit can be found)
- **Quality of Impact:** It is not that mentors are more effective than counselors, or vice versa. Either mentoring or counseling can be very effective (or non-effective).

Then, they define some important differences:

- **Type of Relationship:** Mentoring is an informal relationship. Counseling is a formal relationship. Youth meet with a mentor in a variety of settings (i.e., meals, phone calls, planned meetings). Sometimes there is an agenda (i.e., goal to set or problem to solve), while other times youth meet the mentors just as friends. Youth meet with a counselor by appointment, in an office, to discuss the next phase of accomplishing a particular goal(s).
- **Duration of Relationship:** Mentoring is intended to be a long-term relationship. Counseling is intended to be a short-term relationship. You select a mentor because you value their character and want their perspective on a variety of life challenges (both small and large). You select a counselor because they have a background in a particular area of life struggle. This difference accounts for the varying duration of the two relationships
- **Focus of Relationship:** Mentoring tends to be more holistic. Counseling tends to be more problem-focused. Due to the duration of the relationship, mentoring tends to focus on character formation represented in the challenges and choices discussed.
- **Basis of Advice:** Youth value the advice of a mentor because of their character. Youth know them personally and, therefore, admire how they care for their family or manage their professional-personal life balance. Youth value the advice of a counselor because of their training and the number of individuals in similar situations with whom they have worked.
- **Cost:** Counseling, in most settings, requires some form of compensation because it is the vocation of the counselor. Mentoring, as an informal relationship, is free.
- **Ease of Access:** You can get a referral to a counselor. It is harder to find a mentor. This may be the biggest reason why people elect to pursue counseling over a mentor. *If you wait until a crisis hits, it will feel impractical to try to identify a good mentor.* Finding a mentor tends to be either preventative care (before a crisis) or after-care (solidifying progress and preventing new crises).

3.4.4. Is mentoring the right approach?

This is an important question to be considered, before the mentoring process is initiated. As you have already seen, mentoring is just one of the approaches in youth work, and it is for sure not the right or the most effective tool in every situation. It is thus very important to consider all aspects and decide what kind of support to offer to the young person. This question has a few different components:

- **Does mentoring as a process respond to the developmental needs of the young person?** Maybe the young person faces a difficult situation that requires assistance from a professional counselor? Or perhaps the young person needs to make an important decision and can benefit from a few coaching sessions? Mentoring is a more all-encompassing process that does not focus on a narrow problem or task to be completed, so it is more suitable for needs that are not specific or imminent.

- **Is the young person prepared for a mentoring relationship?** While more informal compared to the other similar relationships, mentoring requires commitment over a longer period of time, and readiness to learn. It also requires that the young person is prepared to be mentored. If the young person is troubled by a pressing issue, or if the one needs to develop a skill real fast so to get an employment, maybe mentoring is not exactly what they need in their life at the particular moment.

- **Are you ready to be a mentor?** It is important to ask yourself the question if this is really the right role for you. It is probably a good idea to reflect on your motivation for engaging in a mentoring relationship, as well as to think about the time and energy that you have available before you commit yourself to this role.

If you have doubts whether mentoring is really for you, ask yourself if you like when others ask you for advice or guidance; if you enjoy sharing your knowledge and experience; if you find helping others rewarding; if you like to push yourself for your own future growth, and similar questions. If you answer more with "yes" than "no", then you should probably not doubt about yourself as a mentor.

Activity: What is the first potential mentoring relationship that comes to your mind when you think of yourself as a mentor? Why is mentoring an effective approach? What are the expectations of the young person from the mentoring, and what are the strengths that you are bringing to the relationship?

4.1. Essential elements of mentoring

Like most relationships, mentoring relationships progress through stages. Your formal mentoring dance will likely do four developmental key moves, with each move forming an inherent part of the next:

Preparation and building relationship

Planning

Doing – monitoring – revising ---- doing it again and so on ...

Prepare to close ... close
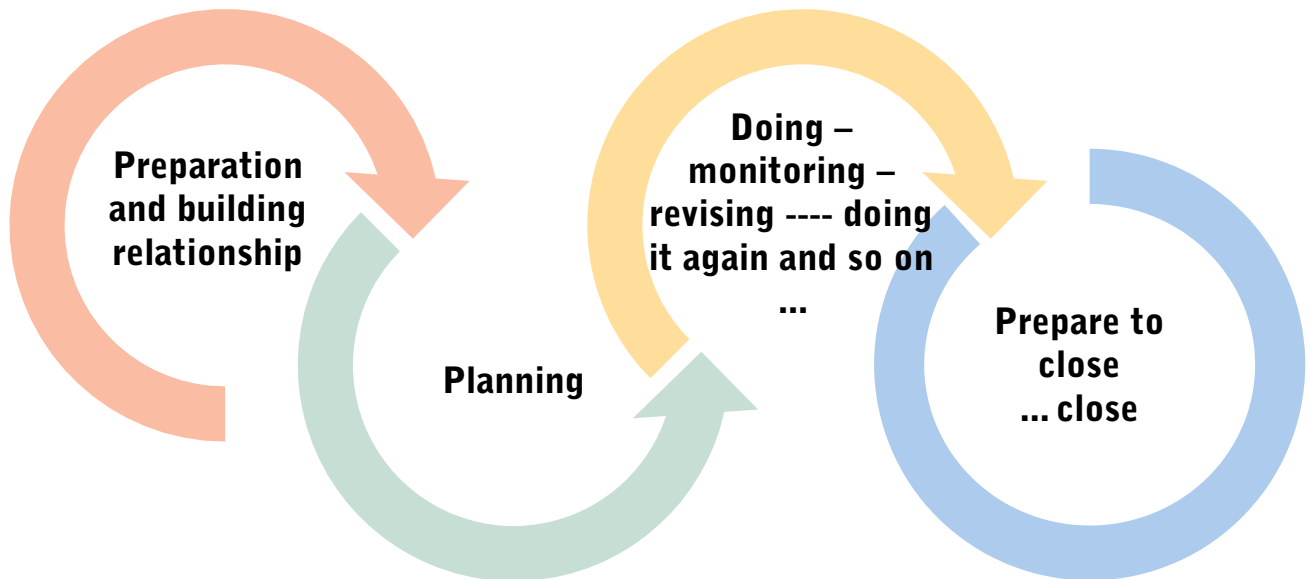
The movement through these steps follows a fluid, yet foreseeable dynamic, usually with overlaps between them. Let's learn the moves.

4.2. Move one: Preparation and establishing relationships

The dance starts when you get ready to meet and you meet your mentee. In this phase you usually check your own personal motivation and readiness to be a mentor, assess your skills and identify your own areas for learning and development… then you meet and get to know your mentee and work together on creating a context for the learning partnership.

This is the discovery moment. The "getting to know you" phase is the most critical stage of the relationship, so don't rush it. Building a trusting relationship requires sufficient time and dedicated effort. During this time, be curious, focus on introducing yourself to each other, share your background, experience, likes and interests, ideas, visions and expectations from the mentoring, assess the mentee's skills and identify areas for learning and development, lay some ground rules, start planning how your dance will look like.

For the development of a close relationship, sustained, escalating, reciprocal, personal self-disclosure is one of the most effective means. Keep in mind that the getting to know each other doesn't end here in this stage but will continue and last throughout the entire process and relationship with the mentee while you do other things. This is just that time – when you focus specifically on it so as to set the basis for the dance to continue.

Try not to look for chemistry when meeting a prospective mentoring partner. Chemistry is overrated. Instead ask yourself: "Can I work productively with this individual? Do I honestly feel that I can further this person's learning?" Don't only look for people that you find similar to yourself, and try to remain open for differences. When you are learning about the other person, try to understand, instead of judging. With the mentoring relationship you are not trying to "save" or "fix" anyone; you are simply guiding them on a development journey in the best of your abilities, not knowing upfront where the journey will end. And when starting a journey with somebody, it is kind of important that you know who your partner is – with all their assets and flows.

There are numerous things you can do in this phase to support the creation of a healthy relationship. You need to keep on mind that you, as the mentor, are the one who should be proactive about intentional getting to know each other and trust building. Here are some ideas of activities that can help these processes:

- **Do things together.** Mentoring does not need to consist only of formal and planned mentoring sessions. If you and your mentee engage in less structured activities, that can provide unexpected opportunities for learning. And if those activities are based on your mentees' or your own interests, they can help in deepening and developing the relationship. So, what about a hike or a bowling game?
- **Call unexpectedly.** The beauty of the mentoring relationship is that it is less structured and planned than the other forms, such as counselling. So why not use that opportunity and make a call to see how is your mentee doing and what is happening with them?
- **Cook together.** Probably nothing else brings together people better than food. Share your favourite recipe or ask your mentee to share one with you; or even better – experiment together with something completely new!
- **Invite them to social events.** If you are a person that organizes/attends social events and gatherings, then maybe that's a nice opportunity to see your mentee in a different setting. So next time you are planning to

attend a cultural event and you don't have company, perhaps you can consider inviting your mentee.

- **Exercise together.** If this is your thing, then why not doing it with a new partner? Whether it is going to a gym, Zumba class, jogging or a basketball game, doing a physical activity together will help you and your mentee create a stronger bond; not to even mention the promotion of healthy habits.

It is good to remember that the mentor and the mentee need to negotiate and set boundaries. The term "boundaries" refers to the rules, guidelines, limits and standards that are expected. Having healthy boundaries means "knowing and understanding what the limits are". Not having and respecting boundaries can significantly damage the relationship. It's also critical that mentors reciprocally honor the boundaries of their mentees and their mentees' guardians as they will likely have some boundaries of their own.

TESTIMONIAL

Tips on how to build mentoring relationships: Smile and a non-formal conversation always helps to break the barriers at the beginning and helps to build a foundation of a trustful relationship as a mentor-mentee. You can start by first observing, listening and then always giving examples based on your own experience. Setting boundaries in mentoring is difficult :) but as long it is really needed ... I become more definitive and do not involve emotionally (too emotionally - we are humans after all). Trying to be more empathic, to be present but not to get involved. When mentoring, see the potential, give examples from your own experience, tell stories from your life, show your own weakness and accept the difference. Be sincere. Get close, but not too close.

Simona Atanasova, Bulgaria

4.3. Move two: Setting up the plan

This is – let's get down to business move in your dance. During this stage you provide support to your mentee to set their goals and plan the ways they will achieve it. You both in partnership work on being SMART when specifying goals, set up a plan, time frame, and responsibilities and establish boundaries…

Even though mentoring is a relationship that is more on the informal side, you should still do some planning to have a meaningful and effective process. Planning in mentoring happens on two levels – planning of the overall process, and planning of the individual mentoring sessions.

Of course, you first need to start with the big picture. As you already saw, mentoring can take different shapes and the process can differ by a number of different criteria. At the same time, mentoring can be done in a variety of areas, for achieving different goals, and responding to different developmental needs. Hence, it is important to first clarify these aspects.

While you probably have a general idea of how the mentoring should look like (what kind of relationship you feel comfortable with, how much time you can commit etc.), this phase of the planning should happen together with the young person that you are about to mentor. It doesn't need to be done very formally, and it doesn't necessarily have to be the first topic for discussion. Feel free to start by getting to know each other, but think of how you can use that process as an opportunity to open the topic. For example, you can share past mentoring experiences that you have had either as a mentor or a mentee, and how they impacted you. Or you can talk about your own personal style as a mentor. In this way you will share some personal information about yourself, but you will also start setting expectations about how a mentoring relationship should look like.

When you see that the young person feels more comfortable with you, ask them about their expectations from the mentoring relationship. What are they hoping to get from it, and what motivates them to commit to such a relationship? Talk about their learning and developmental goals. On the one hand, that will help you understand the developmental needs that you will need to work on. On the other hand, it will help the young person define the goals that they want to work on. Try to define deliverables and desired outcomes. How will the two of you know if you are on the right path? How will the young person know if they are achieving anything? How will you know if you are helping them develop in the way they want to? Make sure you write these down, that will allow you to check progress and set new goals later on.

Once your mentee and you have a common idea of why you are engaging in a mentoring process, discuss about how that relationship should look like. Define types and frequency of the mentoring sessions. Share personal limitations and concerns, and make mitigation strategies around them. Discuss about personal learning styles and preferred ways and channels of communication. In simple words, agree on how you are going to be in this together. Mentoring is a type of relationship, and as far as relationships are concerned, the two sides should have a shared vision of how they should look like.

Everything so far was about the broad level, or big picture planning. Planning on a small scale refers to planning the mentoring sessions. As a mentor, you need to know what you are doing when you are meeting your mentee. Of course, it is not necessary (or even possible!) to know all the details, but you should have a general idea of what you are going to do or talk about, and how you are going to tackle the subject. Your approach should be appropriate for the theme and the objec-

tives you are trying to achieve. Consequently, the mentoring sessions will differ – some will be more conversation-based, others will be more practical; some will be more relaxed and fun, while others will be more structured. Applying a variety of approaches and activities works well for the mentoring process, as it keeps it more interesting and engaging. Don't forget that mentoring should also be fun – for both sides.

Finally, it is important to state that there is no one right way to plan mentoring, on a big scale or on the level of individual mentoring sessions. In principle, it is handy to have something written, so that you can monitor what you are doing without losing track. But the form that you use depends on your planning needs and habits. If you have a template that you are already used to applying for other purposes (for example, a session plan template), feel free to adapt it to the needs of a mentoring session. Check with your organization – maybe they already have a form that you can use. If not, then feel free to create your own, even if it's a simple document with few categories. As long as you know your objective, methods, activities and a draft timeline, you should be fine. Add to that contingency planning in case things don't go as wanted, and you are ready to go!

Activity: Consider different planning documents and approaches that you have used/seen and think about what works the best for you as a mentor. What kind of activities and approaches you feel most comfortable about? Also, what kind of planning would work for you as a mentor (more detailed or general; written on paper or just having a general idea on your mind, etc.)?

4.4. Move three: Doing, mentoring, revising, doing it again and so on

Mentoring is a long-term process. As such, it can constantly change, develop and evolve. In addition, mentoring can be a completely different experience when done with different individuals. Hence the opportunity for improvement of the process and for your growth as a mentor. No mentoring process is ideal and no approach is the right one. When mentoring we constantly try, reflect and revise, and then try again. We learn from all experiences, and we have an opportunity to make the next experiences more successful. That's what makes mentoring exciting and fun.

As there is no secret formula for successful mentoring, feel free to find one that works best for you. To achieve that, you will need to try different things and reflect on the outcomes. Don't be afraid to experiment with different approaches. Sometimes you will see that something doesn't work as planned, so next time you can modify the approach or try something different. Something will work well with one mentee, but not with another. And something will be successful with one topic, but not with the other. Don't hesitate to ask for feedback, but also learn how to read the reactions of your mentee. And remember to always reflect on the experience. Depending on your mentoring program, you might also need to report on the process. Follow the guidance of your organization related to reporting – very often organizations will have their own report forms. If there are none, feel free to design your own forms. And even if formal reporting is not required, it is not a bad idea to do reporting for yourself. If so, choose a way of reporting that works for you – a dairy or an audio/video journal are also valid ways of reporting. This is also a great opportunity for you to discover and develop your own learning style. The mentor can also learn a lot from the mentoring experience.

4.5. Move four: Prepare to close, and close

Finally, even if long, the mentoring process needs to have an end. Keep this in mind when you start mentoring the young person. This is important for two important reasons. Firstly, both sides should have awareness that the mentoring relationship is not everlasting and they should be prepared that at some point it will end. Secondly, evaluation of the outcomes as an integral part of the process happens at the end, and it should be well planned.

The length of the mentoring process can't always be predicted at the beginning, even though the two sides will probably have some rough idea about it. At the very least, it should be clear that it has a beginning and an end. The end can be defined by practical circumstances (the mentor having other commitments, or the young person moving to a different place), or by the very goals of the mentoring process. In other words, sometimes mentoring objectively can't be done any more, but other times the success of the process will make the process itself obsolete. In any case, both the mentor and mentee should know that an end is coming, and they should not be afraid of acknowledging it when it can be anticipated. It is the best if the end doesn't come as a surprise, so that both sides and mentally and emotionally prepared for the closure. Thus, don't be afraid to open the subject and to prepare for the end together. This is particularly important if you as a mentor need to close the process. If the closure is due to objective reasons, make sure you name them on time, to the extent possible. If you feel that the process should be closed because the mentee is already achieving their goals and the developmental needs are almost met, then talk about that. Of course, it is more difficult to prepare for closure if you see the process does not work, either because the relationship is not working, the young person has needs that should be met by someone else (such as a counselor), or for other reasons.

Don't be afraid to name them too. As with everything else in life, sometimes we celebrate and sometimes we admit failure. Both are fine and can be learning experiences, if done properly and in a healthy way.

When both of you are ready for closure, make sure you plan it properly. It doesn't need to be anything big, but it should fit the tone of your relationship. The closure can be a typical mentoring session, but you can also plan to do something different – such as a nice meal together, doing a fun activity, or going to a special place. You can also consider a symbolic ending by going to where everything started, or doing the same activity as the first time. If appropriate, add a celebratory element. We assume you will be doing positive reinforcement and encouraging throughout the whole mentoring process, but the closure is definitely the place where you can congratulate the mentee on the achievements, and acknowledge their commitment and invested time. This is where the written initial goals and expected deliverables come in handy, because you can go back to them and see what you have accomplished. Evaluate the outcomes together and reflect on the ones that were not achieved fully. Ask for feedback on how the process could be better or the success greater – that's your opportunity for personal and professional growth. At the end, help the mentee set new goals and learning outcomes for the future. Their personal journey is not finished, just your accompaniment. You have supported them during part of the trip, and now it's time for them to move on. Help them prepare for the new adventures.

The closure of the mentoring process by no means has to be an end of the relationship. In one form or another, you may remain part of their life, and that's completely fine. The nature of your relationship will probably change, as will your role. And in their eyes, you may even remain a mentor for life. Keep that in mind and embrace that role, while also making it clear that the mentoring process is over and both of you are to move on. What happens next is something you don't have too much control over.

4.6. How to apply youth development strategies in your interactions with mentees

As you already read, youth development researchers have come up with five key qualities, or outcomes, that they believe are very important for youth to develop in order to become healthy and successful adults. These attributes are known as "The Five C's of Youth Development" or:

- **Competence:** Having a foundation of competence helps young people navigate the world successfully, opening the door to educational and career opportunities. Youth who have this foundation take pride in their abilities, see the possibilities that lie ahead, and are motivated to take on new challenges and learn new skills

- **Confidence**: The internal sense of overall positive self-worth, identity, and belief in the future. Having a strong sense of self-worth is a vital part of healthy development. Youth need constant reminders that they are valued and have great things to offer, that the skills they have are meaningful, and that they have the potential to make a difference in the world. Youth who are confident are able to set goals because they believe in their ability to achieve them.

- **Connection:** Positive bonds with people and institutions, including peers, family, school, and community, that provide a sense of membership, safety, and belonging. Developing strong, positive connections with people and institutions is an important developmental task for young people. These bonds create a sense of membership and belonging that increases self-confidence, encourages community participation, and offers safety and support. Young people need many opportunities to develop positive relationships with adults and institutions, especially those in which the young person contributes to the relationship

- **Character:** Recognition of societal and cultural rules, a sense of responsibility and accountability for one's actions, personal values, spirituality, and integrity. Young people develop character through their connections with individuals and groups that provide examples and lessons for them. Young people receive many messages about right and wrong, responsibility, integrity, loyalty, faith, and social and cultural expectations as they develop. Their developmental task is to decide which messages have the most meaning for them and how to internalize a set of personal values they will live by.

- **Caring and Compassion:** A sense of sympathy and empathy for others, leading to a desire to contribute. As youth develop positive bonds with family, friends, community members, teachers, and others in their lives, they begin to empathize with others and to have compassion for people in difficult circumstances. Youth develop their ability to empathize over time, as a natural part of their physical and emotional development. Care and compassion are important motivators for becoming involved in community life, volunteering, and offering support to friends and family in times of need.

If thinking on applying the youth development approach in youth mentoring the table below can help you understand how

The "Cs"	What can you do to help develop each of the "Cs"
Competence	Find things your mentee likes and support these passions and activities without taking over. Find things that your mentee does well and encourage him/her to pursue interests, activities, or hobbies that emphasize these skills. Help your mentee see that the skills he/she has are portable, that they can be transferred into other areas where he/she feels not so skilled. Help your mentee build competencies that enrich his experiences in school, in social settings, and in the community. Actively involve your mentee in making decisions that impact the completion of family tasks. Turn mistake, whether trivial or serious, into teachable moments. Encourage your mentee to set personal goals for improvement that are really meaningful for him/her, rather than those that the teachers or parents want him/her to do. Don't be afraid to challenge your mentee to do well in whatever goal he sets, but make sure he is equally invested in the goal or you may meet with resistance.
Confidence	Share your own life woes and lapses in confidence and ask your mentee for help when you can. Encourage your mentees to dream about their future and to plan for it by setting personal goals. Encourage the mentees to turn daydreams into goals. Nurture your mentees' talents and strengths through praise and practice. As you get to know your mentees' skills and interests, think of ways that these can be nurtured to increase self-confidence.
Connection	Make sure your mentees have a convoy of support so that they feel loved and valued every day and everywhere. Respect your mentees' privacy but appreciate that privacy can be perilous. Be respectful but vigilant. Increase youth social capital by connecting her to institutions and people to whom she might not otherwise have access.
Character	Create opportunities in your community so your mentee feels her voice is being heard. All youth want to feel that they matter. Talk with your mentee about personal values and beliefs.
Caring/Compassion	If you don't approve of a friend, a relationship, or an activity, speak out! Let your mentee know your values and explain why some behaviors aren't acceptable. Make sure *your* actions align with *your* words—you are, after all, a key model for your mentee. Keep a sense of perspective—and sometimes a sense of humor—about minor infractions in behavior or deviations in character. Provide opportunities for your mentee to make his own decisions, and, when you give him this opportunity, live with the decisions he makes.

4.7. Mentoring principles

While there is no single "ethical code" for mentoring young people, there are certain ideas that are repeated in various resources. Sometimes they are referred to as essential elements, sometimes as standards, sometimes as principles, etc. They vary culturally and in accordance with the overall characteristics of youth work in the country, but the differences are not big. Here is an overview of some aspects that are widely accepted:

- **Voluntary participation** – that is, it should be young person' voluntary decision to engage in a mentoring process, and they should not be forced into one.
- **Confidentiality** – the young person should be certain that whatever is shared with the mentor, will stay within the mentoring relationship, so that they can be free to communicate their thoughts, emotions, fears, wishes and whatever else they find relevant for sharing. If there are limits to the confidentiality, they should be shared upfront, or whenever you as a mentor feel that soon you may need to break confidentially. Example is a situation in which you are afraid that the mentee may engage in self-harm, and then you will clearly need to seek professional support.
- **Availability** – the mentee should feel that you are there for them, and they can count on you when they need you. This also has limits though, as it is not your role to be available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. That's why it's important to agree on a framework at the beginning, so that the mentee know when it is appropriate and acceptable to reach out to you.
- **Openness** – this works both ways: mentee's openness to the process, your approaches and the things that come out of the mentoring; and mentor's openness to needs, interests and wishes, to the extent possible and appropriate. Perhaps most importantly, openness to feedback and ideas.
- **Participation** – active involvement of young people in all phases of the mentoring process. Mentoring is a relationship, and such it has two sides. Both sides should feel ownership of the process and should be able to influence it.
- **Time limitation and efficiency** – meaning that timeframe for the mentoring process and for the individual sessions should be agreed upfront, and both sides should respect it. Efficiency is about using the devoted time for the purposes of the process. Of course, sometimes you will engage in activities that will need directly contribute to the objectives and may feel like "wasted time" – particularly in the getting to know each other phase. In such instances it is important to be aware of the importance of those activities, as well as to control how much they extend.
- **Non-discrimination and acceptance** – mentoring is not about judging the young person or telling them what is right or wrong from the point of view of your own system of values. Sometimes you will hear opinions and witness attitudes that you don't agree with, and some can be difficult to tolerate. Respecting differences and not discriminating is essential even if challenging, and you can see it as another opportunity for growth. Instead of judging, try to understand where the other person is coming from, and support them to challenge their own beliefs and attitudes.

In addition to the above-mentioned principles, mentoring should be:

- *based on precise, clear and defined goals that are related to the rights and needs of the young people*
- *guided by caring individuals who offer active support, friendship to young people and are a positive model of identification, who have appropriate skills, expertise and experience in the field of mentoring*
- *flexible and guided according to the needs, rights, possibilities and specific characteristics of each young person individually*
- *participatory, ie to be created and implemented with the active involvement of young people in all phases of the mentoring relationship and in decision making, from mapping the rights and needs, by creating plans and decision-making strategies on issues that are of interest to them until the implementation and evaluation of their success*
- *create opportunities for monitoring, evaluating and documenting the progress of young people in the process that we are mentoring*

Activity: What are for you the most important principles of mentoring young people?

4.8. Tips and tricks for successful mentoring in youth work

Here are some tips and tricks from your fellow mentors, that might help you get the be "the best mentor ever" award from your mentees:

- Focus on the opportunities, rights, needs and specific characteristics of the young person you mentor.
- Let your behavior reflect your respect for the rights and dignity of young people
- When speaking to the young people you mentor, use a clear, understandable and simple expression appropriate to their age, abilities and unique characteristics.
- Listen carefully and show that you are interested in your conversation.
- Help young people in expressing their feelings or fears and show them that you understand them and that you are here for them.
- Emphasize the specificity of each experience and refrain from comparing the youth with you or with another person.
- Refrain from imposing solutions for everything you hear.
- Encourage your mentee to explore opportunities and new perspectives or perceptions of existing situations.
- Value their thoughts, attitudes, achievements and support them in dealing with their failures without judging them!
- Never share the information entrusted to you by your mentee. If sharing some information is necessary for protecting and effective help, explain that to them and get permission to do so. Whenever possible, encourage

young people to share information themselves with a person that would be important.

- Be honest with your young mentees- ALWAYS!
- Stay positive!
- Keep your promises!
- Be open about your strengths and weaknesses, and acknowledge your mistakes.
- Encourage them to take the lead over various activities
- Get creative and make mentoring fun !
- Learn, learn, learn! – Continue to follow things that are of interest to young people who mentor and promote their knowledge related to them.
- Give constructive feedback
- Connect your mentees with people who may be important to achieving your goals and plans

There are many reasons to believe that mentoring can be an effective intervention for young people that can encourage their positive development and transition to independent and autonomous living. Mentoring programs and mentors themselves provide informative, instrumental and emotional support for changing young people's lives in the field of identity issues, personal development, education, employment, health, youth rights, youth participation, etc.

Mentors and their superpowers

5

According to the Oxford Dictionary – the mentor is **"an experienced and trusted adviser"**. These people have something more than just a common sense, wish and experience, that enables them to support youth in their development in the way described previously.

Research indicates that mentors and mentees who develop and manage successful mentoring partnerships demonstrate a number of specific, identifiable cognitive, emotional and rational superpowers that enable learning and change to take place. Here are some of them:

5.1. Being able to listen actively

Active listening is the most basic mentoring skill; the other skills build on—and require—it. When you listen well, you demonstrate to your young mentees that their concerns have been heard and understood. As a result, they feel accepted by you, and trust builds. The way you indicate you're listening intently is by performing several observable behaviors. For example, if you're an excellent listener, you:

- appear genuinely interested by making encouraging responses such as "Hmmm..." and "Interesting..." or sometimes reflecting back (paraphrasing) certain comments to show you've grasped the meaning and feelings behind the message;
- use appropriate nonverbal language such as looking directly into people's eyes, nodding your head, lean-

ing slightly toward them, frowning, or smiling where appropriate;
- avoid interrupting your mentees while they're talking;
- remember and show interest in things they've said in the past ("By the way, how did the meeting with the friend you like go?"); and
- summarize the key elements of what each of you said. Resist the impulse always to turn the conversation to your experiences and opinions and to find immediate solutions to problems you may be hearing. Listen carefully first; problem solve much later. If your mentors and mentees have a habit of immediate problem solving, see if you can help them be better listeners and problem explorers.

Active listening means listening to things that are not being said, therefore, you need to really work on developing your perceptive sensitivity and understanding non-verbal communication.

5.2. Being trustworthy

Trust is built over time. You will increase trust by keeping your conversations and other communications with your protégé confidential, honoring your scheduled meetings and calls, consistently showing interest and support, and by being honest with your mentee. The more that your mentees trust you, the more committed they will be to your partnerships with them, and the more effective you'll be. To become trustworthy, you should:

- value your mentees as persons;
- keep confidences shared by your mentors and mentees;
- spend appropriate time together;
- follow through on your promises to them;
- respect your mentors' and mentees' boundaries;
- admit your errors and take responsibility for correcting them; and tactfully tell your partners if and why you disagree or are dissatisfied with something so they'll know you're honest with them. Particularly with cross-difference (e.g., gender, culture, style, age) mentoring, trust building is crucial and has to be developed over time.

5.3. Asking powerful questions

When faced with a question, the human brain is naturally programmed to go in search of an answer. The direction that search will take will depend very much on:

- how the question is asked (appropriately or not),
- when it is asked (getting the timing right), and
- the type of question.

The most powerful questions cause people to search in a new direction – towards a new insight, action or commitment. Powerful questions are open-ended, meaningful and used in order to elicit change. Powerful questions in mentoring and coaching are usually short and require more than Yes / No answer. They are not advisory, but lead to research in order to understand the full situation and all available opportunities. They usually start with:

These questions create an opportunity for proactive thinking as to what and how young people need to prevent or overcome the transitional challenges or challenges associated with independent autonomous living.

By asking the powerful question, the mentor invites the young mentee to clarity, action, and discovery at a whole new level.
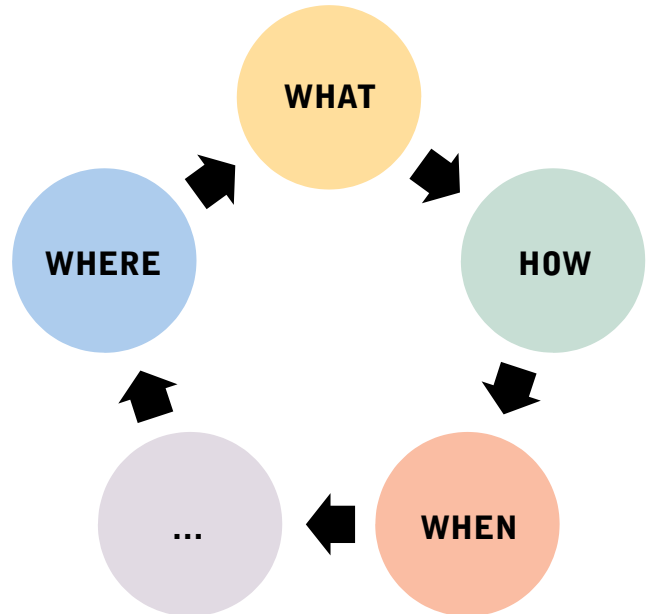
The most powerful questions are sometimes the simplest:

WHAT IS NEXT?

HOW WILL YOU DO THAT?

And above all:

WHAT

DO YOU WHAT?

Example of such questions are:

What would you like to be different?
What are the things you can control?
What are your dreams?
What should you learn / acquire to realize your goals and dreams?
What could you do differently or better next time?
What after this / that?
Looking at the full picture, how much (X) is it important for you?
How is the feeling to become aware of this (X)? How did you manage it so far?

What do you want to achieve with that?
Think of someone who inspires you? What do you think he / she would do in this situation?
How would this help you for (X)?
What activities would you take and when?
What would be the other option?
Ok, this happened, but what would you have to do to move on?
What would I take next?

5.4. Knowing how to encourage

According to Phillips-Jones' research, the most valued mentoring skill is to know how and when to give encouragement. This includes giving your mentoring partners recognition and sincere positive verbal feedback. Effective mentors encourage their mentees, which in turn helps increase the mentees' confidence and enables them to develop. At the same time, successful mentees make a point of positively reinforcing their mentors, which serves to keep the mentors focused and motivated. Provide genuine, positive feedback to your mentors and mentees on a regular basis.

While there are many ways to encourage, and mentors and mentees can differ in the types and amounts of encouragement they like, you can:

- compliment your mentees on accomplishments and actions;
- point out positive traits (such as perseverance and integrity) in addition to their performance and accomplishments;
- praise them privately, one-on-one;
- commend them in front of other people (being sensitive to any cultural and style preferences regarding public praise);
- express thanks and appreciation;
- let them know how you use any help they give you.

Be certain that your praise and encouragement are sincere. In mentoring, err in the direction of too much praise, rather than too little. Some human development experts recommend a ratio of four or five praises for every corrective remark.

5.5. Being able to identify realistic goals

Whether you're a mentor or mentee, you should have a personal vision, specific goals, and a good grasp of current reality. As a mentor, be clear on and talk to your mentees about their visions, dreams, and career/life goals. They'll be interested in your current reality (your view of your strengths and limitations as well as the current reality of situations within your organization) and want help recognizing theirs as well. To demonstrate this mentoring skill:

- Get to know what's important to your mentee, what they value and desire most;
- recognize areas in which they are able to perform well, very concrete examples of behaviors youth can perform at the good-to-excellent level;
- identify specific weaknesses or growth areas;
- set tentative one- to five-year goals to reach in your personal life and career; and • describe accurately the reality of your abilities and situations.

Effective mentors are constantly fine-tuning this self-knowledge, incorporating new feedback and observations on a regular basis. Peter M. Senge, in The Fifth Discipline, mentions these skills as part of "personal mastery", which he calls a journey, not a destination.

5.6. Knowing how to instruct/develop capabilities

Probably all mentors do some teaching or instructing as part of their mentoring. The skill is especially important in formal mentoring. This seldom means that you'll give formal speeches and lectures. Instead, your instructing will usually be more informal—from modeling specific behaviors to conveying ideas and processes one-on-one, in a tutoring mode. You'll:

- be a "learning broker" as you assist your mentees in finding resources such as people, books, software, websites, and other information sources
- teach your mentees new knowledge, skills, and attitudes by explaining, giving effective examples, and asking thought-provoking questions;
- help your mentees gain broader perspectives of their organizations including history, values, culture, and politics;
- demonstrate or model effective behaviors, pointing out what you're trying to do; and
- help them monitor performance and refocus steps as needed.

A key part of your instruction is teaching the mentoring process. You can do this by making process comments—pointing out, naming, and otherwise getting your mentees to recognize which aspect of mentoring you're doing at the time—and why.

5.7. Knowing how to inspire

One skill that separates superb mentors from very good ones is an ability to inspire their mentees to greatness. By setting an example yourself and helping your mentees experience other inspirational people and situations, you can help them onto future paths that excite and motivate—even beyond their original dreams. Mentors vary in their ability to be inspiring. See if you can:

- do inspiring actions yourself which challenge your mentees to improve;
- help them observe others who are inspiring;
- arrange other inspirational experiences for them;
- challenge them to rise above the mundane and do the important things in life; and
- help them recognize inspiring actions they took in the past and ways to excel again. It's always tempting to tell mentees what to do and, in fact, to have them follow in your footsteps.

Your challenge as a mentor is to ensure that your mentees identify and pursue their own form of greatness, not necessarily yours.

5.8. Providing corrective feedback

In addition to giving frequent and sincere positive feedback, effective mentors should also be willing and able to give mentees corrective feedback. When you observe your mentees making mistakes or performing in less than desirable ways, you should be direct with your mentees, letting them know what you perceive and providing some better ways for handling the situation. It will probably be better for them to hear it from you than from others.

One of the first things you can discuss with your mentees is if and how they'd like to receive this feedback. People are more willing to hear corrective feedback if they've given permission and know in advance it's coming. At the same time, you'll be more likely to give feedback if you're invited to do so. Attempt to:

- use positive, non-derogatory, business-like words and tone of voice with mentees when their behaviors or products aren't satisfactory;
- give corrective feedback in private;
- give the feedback as soon as feasible after the performance;
- give specific (as opposed to vague) feedback on behaviors; and
- offer useful suggestions for them to try next time, offering to be a resource when that time occurs.

Tip: Use the Encouraging skill much more often than the skill of Providing Corrective Feedback.

5.9. Managing risks

Another distinguishing characteristic of effective mentors is their willingness and ability to protect their mentees from disasters. One of your tasks is to prevent your mentees from making unnecessary mistakes as they learn to take appropriate risks. This skill of Managing Risks builds closely on the core skill of Building Trust, identified earlier. Some refer to this risk management process as helping mentees ''step out on the branch, then fly when ready''. You'll:

- help your mentees recognize the risks involved in actions and projects, including some risks (and mistakes) you've experienced;
- make suggestions to help them avoid major mistakes (business, career, financial, personal, and other) in judgment or action;
- help them learn to prepare well, get wise counsel, then trust their own decisions and actions; and
- if requested in difficult situations, intervene as your mentees' advocate

Additionally to this, it will be good if:

- you are self-aware and have a good understanding of your own strengths and development needs,
- you have a desire to help others develop and understand how individuals develop and have experience, either formally or informally, of developing others,
- you can empathize with others
- you are prepared to try to understand different perspectives, approaches and possibly backgrounds of different mentees,
- you have personal and professional credibility; this may include being a member of relevant organizations

- you are willing and able to commit sufficient time to your mentee to offer support and guidance.
- you know how to get things done and how things work.
- have integrity. Personal integrity is required for the development of trust in any relationship and is typically demonstrated through honesty and behavioral consistency across contexts
- are caring. Caring can best be evidenced by a pattern of respect and sensitivity to the welfare and needs of others
- Exercise prudence. Finally, competent mentors evidence prudence. As a character virtue, prudence indicates playfulness, appropriate cautiousness, and evidence of good judgment in decision making—both personal and professional.

If you possess these competences to an adequate quality level—and if you use them as frequently as called for, your chances of having mutually satisfying and productive mentoring relationships will be greatly enhanced.

The knowledge, advice, and resources that you will shares with your young mentees, depend on the format and goals of your specific mentoring relationship. You might share with your mentee information about his or her own career path, as well as provide guidance, motivation, emotional support, and role modeling. Or you may help with exploring careers, setting goals, developing contacts, and identifying resources. Your mentoring role may change as the needs of the mentee change. Some of your mentoring relationships will be part of structured programs that have specific expectations and guidelines: others will be more informal.

REMEMBER: As a mentor, YOU will have the opportunity to use your experience and knowledge in a facilitative manner to support the development of the young mentee. However, the responsibility for making things happen and putting plans into action lies primarily with the mentee – not with you!

Tip: If you plan to be a mentor but you feel that you lack some of them or are not satisfied with the level of its development – go on, find your coach or your trainer or take your books, your phone/ or the computer, go to your favorite learning spot – and start working on it!

Activity: Reflect on all these superpowers and try to assess yourself on each of them. The question is not if you have them or not, but to what extent you are happy with them. Try grading yourself from 1 to 10 and identify the areas in which you need to work more. For each of them, prepare a simple action plan on how to get it, or improve it.

5.10. Support available to mentors

At times you may feel overwhelmed and stuck in the process or unsure how to get out of the situation you got yourself into, and you might need to *"get by with a little help from you friends"*. **This is totally OK!!!!**

- There is a range of supporters and support methods available to you such as:
- Your colleagues and peers at the organization
- Your own mentor if you have one (this is a good idea if you are going to mentor others)
- Mentor development sessions/programs
- On-line resources and tools
- Your coach, counselor, the therapist … (any other professional will do .. depending on the issue you have and the help you need)
- A fresh air, long walk with your thoughts, pets or the significant other, hot bath or sauna might also do the trick

It takes two
to tango

6

6.1. The role of the mentee in the mentoring process

The mentoring literature and the practice underlines that the mentoring is a partnership between two individuals involved in the process – the mentor form one side, and the mentee on the other. As the mentor, the mentee also wears "many hats" throughout the process, or you can say – performs several roles. Some authors emphasize that the mentee is the student who needs to absorb the mentor's knowledge and has the ambition and desire to know what to do with this knowledge. As a student, the mentee needs to practice and demonstrate what has been learned. The mentee determines the capacity of the mentoring connection. The mentee decides upon the amount of help and guidance he/she needs. The mentee takes the initiative to ask for help or advice and to tackle more challenging assignments…

The roles that the mentee can have in the mentoring process, are different. Some of them, that you can read about in the mentoring resources, and that you need to keep in mind, include:

Driver of relationship/leader

At the beginning – the mentee faces something that makes him begin his mentoring adventure. This might be a problem or a challenge (s)he needs to overcome or, a question/ a feeling that needs answering … Mentees are the ones that need to identify what is the thing that is bothering them, what they want from the mentoring process and they need to communicate that with the mentors. As mentors, you should always be aware that even though it appears that you lead the way, it is them who are driving the relationship in the desired direction. You are there to give them the space they need for that, to feel the security they need for that, to make sure that they get all the support they need for it so that they look forward and enjoy the ride.

Active participant in the planning of the mentoring process

Mentees need to participate actively in the development and maintenance of the mentoring plan. This process deals with issues that affect their life and in relation to that, mentees must be a part of and must be actively engaged in all the planning related to it. They work in partnership with their mentor to set up goals, developmental activities, time frames… Active participation is an element, an indicator and a starting point of the progress in your mentoring process in general.

Active participant/Resource partner

Mentee, together with their mentors, has an active role in seeking resources for learning; in identifying people and information that might be helpful, finding answers to the questions that are of importance for the situation they are in. They are not just passive listeners but are

Teacher

There will be moments where mentees will act as teachers. They will look for opportunities to give back to their mentor;

share any information that they think might be valuable and teach their mentors how they can use all of that to support their development.

Continuous learner

Additionally to all this, it is important not to forget that during the mentoring process, the mentees learn constantly and they take full advantage of all the opportunities to learn.

To be involved in a mentoring relationship is a privilege for both participants, and as a result it is important to be gracious and thoughtful towards each other.

Being aware of the important role of the mentee in the mentoring process, and the effect that mentee's attitude can significantly influence the outcomes of it, implies that you have a chat about that with your mentee, before you start the mentoring process and throughout. Some recommendations and guidelines that you can give to your mentees include:

- Have a clear understanding of why you want to be mentored
- Select a mentor based on criteria relevant to your goals
- Allow your mentor to take the lead in the relationship, at least initially. Listen and respect the opportunities, limitations and format of the relationship he or she is able to provide for you. Always act with courtesy and respect towards your mentor.
- Use active listening skills during discussions with your mentor. Be careful not to interrupt, unless you need to clarify a point and you see no other opportunity or pause. Take notes when appropriate, ask good questions and have a purpose for your questions.
- Prepare the goals and objectives you have. Be prepared to ask for specific guidance and advice on your goals,

plans and strategic ideas. The more specific you can be, the easier it will be for your mentor to help you.

- Have a clear understanding of your expectations for your mentor
- Clearly communicate those expectations
- Stay flexible in changing expectations or plans
- Create goals with milestones and deliverables
- Inform your mentor about your preferred learning style
- Be realistic about setting timelines
- Take the initiative to ask for feedback. Feedback, although difficult to hear at times, is critical to your personal and professional growth and development. Demonstrate that you are open to hear new ideas and suggestions to bring out your best and overcome any blind spots. Get feedback on specific issues, for example, how you come across to others. Ask for specific details to ensure you understand specific behaviours. Tell your mentor how you prefer to get feedback (for example, direct, with humour, softened). Don't get defensive. Thank your mentor for taking the risk to be honest with you. Remember, if your mentor was not invested in you, he/she would probably not take this risk. Honest feedback gives you an opportunity to improve yourself and help you to move towards fulfilling your potential.
- Always be considerate and respect your mentor's time as you do your own. Be thorough, but succinct in your explanations, experiences and comments. Watch for clues that you may be going on too long. It is polite to ask directly if you are talking too long.
- Return phone calls promptly and be on time with commitments or meetings. If your mentor offers a specific time frame of availability, respect his/her wishes by following through. Only extend the time of your contact

if your mentor initiates or insists to extend or complete a task or discussion.

- Seriously consider all advice or suggestions you receive. Arguing why the mentor's advice would not work, can be construed as rude and close-minded.
- Demonstrate that you have followed advice or commitments for action at every opportunity, even if you have modified your plan. Pointing out that you used your mentor's help and sharing outcomes is important.
- Express your appreciation for every form of assistance you get. Provide positive feedback, thanks as well as positive comments to him/her in front of others.
- Make only positive or neutral comments about your mentor to others. If you disagree with your mentor's values, behaviours, or attitudes, discuss it with him/her directly. Respect your mentor's confidence and trust.
- Assume the mentoring connection will be strictly professional. This does not mean you cannot be yourself, or you cannot be friendly. Let your mentor take the lead in establishing a more friendship based connection. Do not intrude into your mentor's personal life or expect to be close friends. If you have a cross-gender connection, any romantic involvement is inappropriate. Ensure your mentoring connection does not give the appearance of favouritism or romantic.
- Evaluate progress
- Celebrate success
- Be patient. Consistent, committed and reliable
- Prepare yourself to move beyond your mentoring connection, once it has served its purpose. Be sure to end on a positive note.
- Keep the door open to return to your mentor for assistance or advice at a future time.
- Follow up with your mentor after termination to keep in touch, to share your progress and to continue to express your gratitude.
- Stay positive!
- Say thank you!

6.2. Training mentees

Mentoring has a great potential to contribute a lot to a young person's development, but the extent to which it will be beneficial for the mentee also depends on young person's understanding of the process and preparedness to engage in it. Like with many other opportunities in life, the more one is prepared for it, the higher the possibility for impact. Thus, training and preparing mentees for the mentoring process should not be neglected.

There are different views as to the type of training that should be provided to mentees – its length, topics to be covered, the format. For example, some organizations would provide one-on-one mentoring with a staff member, others would do group trainings, some would involve mentee's parents, and some even the future mentor. There are benefits to all approaches, and what you decide to do will depend a lot on your local reality and the needs of the young person. Regardless, pre-mentoring training in one form or another needs to happen.

Pre-mentoring training is important for different reasons. It helps the young person:

- understand the characteristics of the process
- learn about the potential benefits of mentoring
- see the importance of their active participation
- clarify the roles and responsibilities of both sides

- develop realistic expectations from the process
- understand the limits of confidentiality
- understand the boundaries of the mentoring relationship
- learn where and how to get support in case of questions or concerns

As you can see, the pre-mentoring training has a multifold purpose. It introduces the concept and the "rules of the game"; it helps the young person define their own role in the relationship; but it also helps prevent potential misuse of the process. Having parents and mentors themselves involved in the training for mentees helps bring everyone on the same page and assure that all sides involved have the same understanding of their own and each other's roles.

While the bulk of the training for mentees usually happens before the mentoring starts, you may also decide to cover some of the topics throughout the process, as an ongoing training. There are multiple reasons for this. Firstly, sharing all information upfront might be overwhelming for the young person. Secondly, some of the aspects to be covered are more relevant once the young person starts working with the mentor. Thirdly, having training elements throughout the process allows for check-ins and reflections on the mentoring. Some topics you may consider covering as an ongoing training include:

- Dealing with difficult subjects
- Managing conflicts
- Setting goals and learning objectives
- Communicating with parents and peers
- Exploring educational and career opportunities

Conclusion

After all these pages on mentoring and many related topics, are you ready to mentor young people? The truth is – you will never be fully prepared. You are not born mentor, you don't even become one, you keep becoming one. Even when you start acquiring the superpowers, you need to keep practicing them so that you become better at it.

Mentoring is an effective approach in supporting youth development, and as we saw, it's not the only one. If you are somehow involved in youth work, it's already a good beginning. And even if you just care and want to support young people, it's already something. In many ways, mentoring is more challenging and needs more expertise, but it is definitely something that can be practiced. At the same time, mentoring is a very valuable approach in supporting young people's development, and thus it is very important that organizations adopt it in their work. Mentoring is by far more adjusted to the needs and challenges of the individual young person than many other approaches in youth work, and has the power to positively impact young people in different ways. It focuses on the individual strengths and obstacles and it helps the young person grow. It is also a longer-term approach that follows a young person's growth and development over time, something that is often neglected in today's fast-paced world.

We hope that getting introduced to mentoring through this handbook is just the beginning of a beautiful journey, valuable both for you and for the young person. This handbook will not make you an expert, and no document can offer you that. But it is a framework that lays down what is important to keep in mind when engaging in mentoring relations. It builds a good framework for a quality mentoring in youth work, and shows you the way of becoming better at it. The next thing to do is practice. Start small and simple, and make a habit of coming back to the different chapters as they become more relevant for you. When you start mentoring, you will see how different chapters and sections in this handbook appeal more to you. Keep returning to the activities and make it a personal growing experience for yourself as well – since mentoring is a process that ultimately benefits both sides – the mentee as well as the mentor.

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