The Art (and Science) of Outstanding Mentorship in Higher Education

W. Brad Johnson, PhD
Welcome to a Mentoring Buffet
"I think I am supposed to have a mentor... but I don’t know why."
Outcomes for Mentees

- Better Job (or, academic) Performance
- More involvement in professional org’s
- More networking and job opportunities
- Greater satisfaction with organization/program
- Lower attrition rates
- Stronger sense of professional identity
- Higher productivity
- More likely to mentor others
- Greater Career Eminence (Nobel Prize)
Create a Mentorship Schema

The Relational Cache

- “High-quality mentoring relationships are not only built on relational skills, they may also generate the relational skills needed to build other high-quality relationships” (Ragins, 2012)
Benefits to Mentors?

- Research-Supported Benefits for Mentors
  - Intrinsic Rewards:
    - Greater career satisfaction, creative synergy, rejuvenation, generativity.
  - Extrinsic Rewards:
    - Accelerated research productivity, greater networking, professional recognition for talent development, awards, bonuses, release time...?
Mentoring and the Dead

- Obituaries of Eminent Psychologists
- 4th most common theme in obituaries = “Inspirational Teacher/Mentor”
MENTORING A DYNAMIC, RECIPROCAL, PERSONAL RELATIONSHIP IN WHICH A MORE EXPERIENCED MEMBER OF THE ORGANIZATION (MENTOR) ACTS AS A GUIDE, ROLE MODEL, TEACHER, AND SPONSOR OF A LESS EXPERIENCED PERSON (MENTEE)
Distinctive Elements of Mentoring

- Reciprocity, collegiality, authenticity, and mutuality.
- Provision of both career and psychosocial mentoring functions.
- Intentional role modeling.
- A safe harbor for self-exploration (disclosure).
- Transformation in the mentee’s professional identity.
- A connection that endures beyond the formal role assignment.
One can be an advisor without being a mentor (and vice-versa).

*Advisor* = the faculty member with the greatest responsibility for guiding a student through his or her academic program.

What are the contours between roles?

Few researchers carefully define the terms.
Mentoring = a *quality* not a category

Johnson (2014)

Mentoring Relationship Continuum Model

Degree of Mentoring

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Higher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Advisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faculty Sponsor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relational Mentoring

Transactional → Transformational

Tentative Working Alliance → Strong Working Alliance

Low Social Support → High Social Support
Engagement with a faculty mentor through the medium of research can be especially transformational for women, minority group students, and first generation college students.
2014 Gallup Purdue Index Report (N = 30,000)
- 22% I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams
- 27% My professors at college cared about me as a person

2015 Purdue University
- administrators announced their plans to make mentoring undergraduate students a point of emphasis in tenure reviews.
Prevalence in Graduate School?

- Johnson et al. (2000) – Psychology Doctorates
  - Experimental psychology – 69%
  - Clinical Psychology – 53%
- Clark et al. (2000) – Clinical Psychology Doctorates
  - PhD programs – 73%
  - PsyD programs – 56%
- Lunsford (2012) – All Doctorates (Research I)
  - 57%
- Atkinson et al. (1991, 1994); Harden et al. (2009)
  - No significant race or gender effects
SURVEYS (QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE) REVEAL THAT LESS THAN A QUARTER OF UNDERGRADS REPORT HAVING A MENTOR IN COLLEGE (ONLY 57% IN R-1 PHD PROGRAMS)

WHAT ARE THE PRIMARY OBSTACLES TO MENTORING FOR YOU PERSONALLY??
Obstacles to a Mentoring Culture

- Promotion Criteria
- Time demands
- Lack of reward(s)
- Competitive culture
- Distance from colleagues
- Few Role Models
Will you be my mentor?
HOW WILL YOU RESPOND?

DO YOU HAVE ANY CONSCIOUS SELECTION CRITERIA FOR MENTEES?

HONESTLY, IS YOUR RESPONSE TO BOTH STUDENTS LIKELY TO BE THE SAME?
Emerging Adulthood (Jeffrey Arnett)

- Not Adolescents....Not Adults....
- Life/Dream solidity not established.
- **Tasks**: independence, exploration of life possibilities.
AM I GOOD ENOUGH?
Christin Gilmer receives her Doctor of Public Health from Harvard and credits a simple note from her 6th grade teacher, Mrs. Toensing, on her end of year report card.

“It has been a joy to have you in class...Invite me to your Harvard Graduation!”
Reparenting

FOR GOOD MENTAL HEALTH
Ethical Issues in Mentoring: A Mentoring Code of Ethics?
Qualities and Components....

- Long in duration
- Gradually more bonded
- Driven by “chemistry.”
- Power disparity
- Numerous, overlapping roles.
- Always evolving...
Relational Dialectics
Relational Dialectics

Separateness \[\rightarrow\text{Connectedness}\]
(Separation) (Integration)
"I need some alone time" "Why don't we do more things together?"

Certainty \[\rightarrow\text{Uncertainty}\]
(Stability) (Change)
"I'm glad you'll always be here" "You're so boring and predictable"

Openness \[\rightarrow\text{Closedness}\]
(Expression) (Privacy)
"Why don't you tell me when you're mad" "Quit being such a cry-baby"
Top 10 Ethical-Relational Mentoring Tensions

INTEGRITY  ETHICS
RESPECT  HONESTY
#1: Level of Relationship Formality

- Formality = \textit{visibility}, \textit{focus}, and \textit{duration}.
- Informal/Organic relationships = more robust benefits.
- Informed Consent???
What Excellent Mentors DO

- **Career-Related Support**
  - Direct teaching
  - Exposure & visibility
  - Coaching
  - Sponsorship
  - Protection
  - Challenging assignments

  These functions focus on the mentee’s success and advancement within the institution.

- **Psychosocial Support**
  - Friendship
  - Acceptance and confirmation
  - Counseling
  - Role modeling

  These functions enhance the mentee’s sense of identity, competence, and effectiveness as a professional.
Mentor Competence
(Integrated Deep Structure)

**ABILITIES**
- Cognitive: intellectual skill, values complexity
- Emotional: emotional balance, personality adjustment
- Relational: capacity for intimacy, communication skill

**COMPETENCIES**
- Student development
- Relational phases
- Relationship structure
- Mentor functions
- Boundary maintenance
- Recognition of dysfunction
- Cross-Cultural skills
- Gatekeeping
- Respect for autonomy
- Self-awareness

**VIRTUES**
- Integrity
- Caring
- Prudence

Triangular Model (Johnson, 2003)
“Mentor? I’m sorry. I thought you wanted a TORmentor.”
We are Often Unaware of **Incompetence**

- “People tend to be blissfully unaware of their own incompetence”
  - Dunning et al. 2003
- Those who are least competent are least capable of self-assessing and correcting problems.
Psychologist

**Inner Core:**
Primary mentors, closest colleagues
Highest levels of emotional support
Highest levels of intimacy & reciprocity

**Collegial Community:**
Rich network of more distal yet caring colleagues
Mutual support for sustained competence
Moderate levels of intimacy and reciprocity

**Collegial Acquaintances:**
Tertiary collegial connections and experiences
More formal professional friendships
Lower levels of intimacy and reciprocity

**Professional Culture:**
Values, legal requirements and ethical standards in psychology
Standards of practice and customs bearing on competence
#3 Advocacy vs Evaluation
#4 Confidentiality? Privacy?
#5 Intimacy, Attraction, Sexual Feelings
#6 To Disclose or Not to Disclose
I'm not wearing underwear.
#7 Multiple Roles

BOUNDARIES
having healthy relationships
Mentees Prefer Mutuality/Collegiality

• Empirical evidence suggests that students are most satisfied with training relationships characterized by:
  - Emotional support
  - Mutuality
  - Collegial friendship
  - Some degree of reciprocal disclosure
Something New

- When a mentee “friends”....
#8 Equal Access by Diverse Mentees
### Cultural Competence

- Focus on achieving culture-specific attitudes, knowledge, and skills
  - Assumes competence is achievable.
  - Frames culture [gender] as monolithic.

### Cultural Humility

- Maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented; sensitive to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the [mentee]
  - Emphasis on self-humility, reflection, and learning
I’m not bossy!
I have skills...leadership skills!!
Understand?
#9 The Temptation to Clone
#10 Do You Call Yourself a Mentor??

- The problems with “claiming” Mentor Status.

- Brown & Ostrove (2013) on genuine allyship
A Mentoring Code of Ethics
Guiding Ethical Principles

- **Beneficence:**
  - Promote mentees’ best interests, always.

- **Nonmaleficence:**
  - Avoid harm to mentees (neglect, abandonment, exploitation, boundary violations)

- **Autonomy:**
  - Work to strengthen mentee independence and maturity.
Guiding Ethical Principles

- **Fidelity:**
  - Keep promises and remain loyal to those you mentor.

- **Justice:**
  - Ensure fair and equitable treatment of all mentees (regardless of cultural differences)

- **Transparency:**
  - Encourage transparency and open communication regarding expectations
Guiding Ethical Principles

- **Boundaries:**
  - Avoid potentially harmful multiple roles with mentees and discuss overlapping roles to minimize risk for exploitation or bad outcomes.

- **Privacy:**
  - Protect information shared in confidence by a mentee. Discuss all exceptions to Privacy.

- **Competence:**
  - Establish and continue developing competence.
Does Everyone Deserve or Require a Mentor?
Creating a “best-fit” Structure

- Traditional Mentorship
- Team Mentorship (2-3)
- 1st Year Cohort Teams
- Mentor Vertical Teams
- Peer Mentorship
- External Mentorship
- Constellation Approach
Out with the “Guru”, in with the Constellation!

- Don’t pretend you can meet all your mentee’s needs
- Deliberately help your mentee craft a mentoring Network
- And...NO JEALOUSY allowed!
Mission/Vision: The Master Mentor program is designed to create cohorts of experienced and well-trained expert mentors of junior faculty who are maximally effective at enhancing the career trajectory of their mentees. These Master Mentors are a resource that can help other faculty develop and enhance interpersonal skills for optimal mentor-mentee interactions. Successful Master Mentors will accelerate the advancement of their mentees and elevate the quality of mentorship throughout their divisions/departments by providing a constant role model of the best mentoring possible.
Institution Leaders Must Show Support

- Publically support and publicize mentoring
- Provide $$$ to support mentoring.
- Participate as a mentor!
- Count mentoring by faculty as key service
- Fund awards
- Ask faculty, “Who are your mentees?”
Establishing A Mentoring **Culture**

- Be a “Mentor of the Moment”
- Show interest, ask *Socratic* Questions.
- Be available (*introverts*, this means you too).
- Remember, your junior employees/students may have a touch of the *imposter syndrome*... so reach out and take the initiative.
Thank You!

75 Practices of Master Mentors

The Elements of Mentoring

W. Brad Johnson + Charles R. Ridley

On Being a Mentor

A Guide for Higher Education Faculty

SECOND EDITION

W. Brad Johnson

ATHENA RISING

How and Why Men Should Mentor Women

W. Brad Johnson, PhD & David Smith, PhD