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# Mentorship – a powerful and neglected instrument!

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# What is a mentor?

- A dynamic, complex and multi faceted term!

- Historically – originates from Greek classical story “The Odyssey.” King Odysseus calls upon his trusted friend called Mentor to act as **guide** and **advisor** to his son Telemachus as he left to war
- Levinson et al (1978) describes the mentor as a male who is **older, wiser** and of a more **senior** status than the protégé

- A uni-dimensional character perceived as a wiser, older man who is intellectually, spiritually and emotionally **superior** to his charge (!!)



- NMC (2008) a Registrant who has met the outcomes of stage 2 (i.e. those of a qualified mentor) and who facilitates learning, and **supervises** and **assess** students in practice settings



- *a nurturing process in which a more skilled or experienced person, serving as a role model, teaches, sponsors, encourages, counsels and befriends a less skilled or less experienced person for the purpose of promoting the latter's professional and/or personal development. (Anderson and Shannon, 1995; p178).*



## It is **not**:

- Preceptor
- Counsellor
- Clinical Supervisor
- Personal/Link tutor
- Team Leader
- Assessor
- Clinical Educator
- Practice Educator
- Manager
- or....

# Why?

- A dynamic interpersonal process dependent upon the socio-cultural processes prevalent within the group.

(Colley, 2003).

**You are a distinct group!**

# Mentorship - Benefits?

- Helps interpret practice – promotes reality
- Support the development of complex specialist knowledge and skills
- Support the development of practice
- Are less likely to leave and more likely to succeed

- Helps with clarity and confidence building.
- Provides the opportunity to challenge thinking
- To have someone who might help in difficult situations – guidance and support
- Encouragement
- Role model

- Safe Feedback/Reflect upon good/bad experiences – honest views!
- Learning and developing skills - sharing learning
- Advance more rapidly
- Reduces stress
- Reciprocity

**AND... Earn higher salaries!!**  
**Enhances Practice and Careers!**

# What is an effective mentor? – Personality Traits (Darwin 2004)

- Nurture
- Approachable
- Inspirational
- Hard working
- Authentic
- Competent
- Conscientious
- Volatility

# Effective Mentor Characteristics

(Darling 1984)

- Role model
- Envisioner
- Supporter
- Teacher-coach
- Eye opener
- Ideas bouncer
- Career counsellor
- Energiser
- Investor
- Standard prodder
- Feedback giver
- Door opener
- Problem solver
- Challenger

# Can everyone be a good mentor?

- Helping is an inherent and natural behaviour in humans – but some people clearly are more successful than others.

Influenced by

- Personality
- Socialisation characteristics e.g. “helping professions” the desire to help.

# But:

- Training and developmental activities contributes to skill and knowledge.
- The desire to help is the key to success in mentorship

# Delivered by:

- 1 : 1
- Group mentoring
- Co mentoring
- Long arm/Virtual e-mentoring

# Mentorship and the HCA

- Improves Knowledge, performance and skills
- Identity and the notion of “community” of practice
- Cavendish emphasises mentoring
  
- “Through the everyday, mundane process of mentorship, what is good can be determined and that good practice can then become routine and this then leads on to excellence” Fulton, p145; 2013

# Mentorship and me – what next?



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