Period of Discernment

mentor training

2014

listening, affirming and supporting,
and asking questions that will clarify the issues and explore options

Metaphors for mentoring

Questions for reflection:

Which terms or metaphors for mentoring resonate for you?

Which metaphors jar, and why?
My experiences of mentoring
Briefly share your experience of mentoring, either as mentor or mentoree

What makes a good mentor?

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<th>A good mentor is ...</th>
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<th>A good mentor knows ...</th>
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Basic qualities of a mentor (Mallison, p. 64)

- Christ centred
- Passionate (about mentoring)
- Relational: develop rapport, actively listen, enjoy being with others, find ways to encourage
- Open and transparent
- Trusting and trustworthy
- Available
- Able to facilitate learning
- Competent/capable (in the areas the mentoree wants to grow)
- Prayerful

*Which of these presents the greatest challenge to you?*

*What are your areas of competency in life skills and/or ministry?*

*Share your challenges with one or two other people around you. What might you do to meet this challenge?*
Main roles of a mentor (Mallison, p. 75)

- Discipler: practice the basics of Christian discipleship, and assist others to do so
- Spiritual guide: assist reflection on relationship to Christ, lifestyle, and care for others
- Coach: evaluate and enhance performance, help address barriers and blockages
- Counsellor: ask good questions, listen well, surface their own solutions, make referrals
- Teacher: assist formal learning (from resources) and informal learning (from experiences)
- Sponsor: introduce, network, recommend, endorse
- Pastor: serve, love, nourish, comfort, heal, encourage,
- Model: demonstrate in practice, not just words
- Encourager: find positive perspectives or outcomes, give hope

Discerning questions (Mallison, p. 124)

- Helpful questions to ask in mentoring sessions are open not closed
- Reflective questions help to re-evaluate previous experiences, turn experience into learning
- Active listening involves setting the environment, body language, allowing the other to lead, giving feedback, responsive silence
Reflections from playing in role

Responsibilities of the Mentor

The specific responsibilities of the mentor are to:

- guide the participant in developing a discernment plan;
- meet regularly with the participant (a minimum of two hours per month);
- monitor the implementation of the discernment plan;
- help the participant reflect theologically and integrate learning and ministry experiences;
- guide the participant in the development of their portfolio;
- keep the Presbytery informed about the progress of the participant throughout the Period of Discernment;
- notify the Presbytery that the participant is ready to present their portfolio, and engage with the participant and the Presbytery in the discernment of the ministry to which the participant feels called.


We might also add ...

- Ensure the mentoree understands the Uniting Church expectations of leaders in the *Code of Ethics and Ministry Practice*, and the procedures around dealing with sexual misconduct or harassment – both for the management of appropriate boundaries within the mentoring relationship and in explorations and expressions of ministry.

When and how might this be discussed?

Do any of these responsibilities present a challenge for you?

How will you address any challenges which arise during your mentoring relationship?
Beginning well

Concluding well
Resources for the Period of Discernment

The CTM PoD webpage has links to various resources including an information kit:

http://ctm.uca.edu.au/layeducation/discernment/pod/

‘Your Resource for the Period of Discernment’

Presbyteries are encouraged to hold copies of “Your Resource for the Period of Discernment”, a two-volume resource published by the Uniting Church Assembly. “Your Resource for the Period of Discernment” can be loaned to participants and mentors involved in the Period of Discernment, who may only need to borrow the resource for a couple of months.

Volume 1 includes more detailed information about the same topics in the VicTas Period of Discernment Information Kit.

Volume 2 includes a range of resource readings, including:

- Guidelines for the period of discernment, Uniting Church Assembly (2008)
- Code of ethics and ministry practice for Ministers in the Uniting Church in Australia, Uniting Church Assembly (2009)
- Policy for dealing with a complaint of sexual misconduct made against a member, adherent or volunteer of the Uniting Church in Australia and for providing a safe faith community, Uniting Church Assembly (1998) [or download the current VicTas Synod policy on Responding to Sexual Misconduct in the Uniting Church from the Bethel website]
- Preparing a Personal Rule of Life, Rob Bos (1998)
- Basis of Union (1992 edition), Uniting Church Assembly (1992)
- Ministry in the Uniting Church in Australia, Uniting Church National Assembly, 1991
Further resources for mentors [Copies held by Dalton McCaughey Library]

- **UCA VicTas PoD information kit and online resources** (including most of “Your Resource for the Period of Discernment”), see [http://ctm.uca.edu.au/layeducation/discernment/pod/](http://ctm.uca.edu.au/layeducation/discernment/pod/)
- **UCA Assembly PoD guidelines:**
- **UCA NSW.ACT Education for Lay Ministry online resources**
- **John Mallison’s book *Mentoring to develop disciples and leaders*** (Scripture Union/OpenBook, 1998)[1], esp. chapter 5, ‘Tools and Skills For Mentoring’. See his website for a rich list of resources: [http://www.johnmallison.com/mentoring.htm](http://www.johnmallison.com/mentoring.htm)
- **Cheryl Lawrie’s short booklets** *Me, a Mentor* and *The Ministry of Mentor* (JBCE/Uniting Education, 1998)[1:1]
- **Farnham, Gill, McLean and Ward, *Listening Hearts, Discerning Call in Community*** (Morehouse Publishing, 1999)
- **Keith R Anderson & Randy D Reese, *Spiritual Mentoring***, including Appendix One, ‘Clinton’s Mentoring Types’ from J. Robert Clinton (InterVarsity Press, 1999)
- **Tad Dunne, *Spiritual mentoring: guiding people through spiritual exercises to life decisions*** (HarperSanFrancisco, 1991)[1]
- **Sharon Daloz Parks, *Big questions, worthy dreams: mentoring young adults in their search for meaning, purpose, and faith*** (Jossey-Bass, 2000)[1]
- **Paul C. Blacker, *Spirituality and mentoring*** [manuscript][1]
- **Search Institute’s Mentoring Resources**: [http://www.searchinstitutestore.org/category_s/183.htm](http://www.searchinstitutestore.org/category_s/183.htm)
- **Faith Formation Learning Exchange (USA)**: [http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/](http://www.faithformationlearningexchange.net/)
- **National Mentoring Partnership (USA)**: [http://www.mentoring.org/](http://www.mentoring.org/)