

MODULE 5 ACTIVITY

Building a Mentorship

This practice is divided into two sections. The first is intended to facilitate a needs assessment and identification of potential mentors to help strengthen those needs. This section is useful for anyone at any stage of their wellness journey, but especially for those who work in organizations that do not have an embedded mentorship program.

The second section provides some initial action steps and activity recommendations to encourage the growth of your mentorship relationship. These are meant to be used incrementally throughout the relationship, so return to this activity as needed.

Section 1: Identifying a Mentor

Give yourself 1-2 minutes of uninterrupted time to reflect on who you want to be as an adult and a professional. If you have completed the values module already, draw from that experience. Identify a few key values, goals, and behaviors you want in your adult life. Write them in on the following pages. Use another piece of paper or, if completing digitally, add additional boxes if you need more space.

Take some time _____

Under each value, goal, or behavior you want, identify what skills you need to succeed. If you completed the Bullseye activity from the values module, you can use those skills too.

Take some time _____

Finally, in the last box, identify one individual in your life (professional or personal) that has demonstrated competency in those values, achieved similar goals, or behaves similarly. If you can identify someone you know that could mentor you in multiple areas, fantastic but it is not expected that one person meet all your needs. Be prepared to build a mentorship network.

Directions: After you have identified your potential mentors, start with one. Approach them, share your wants, and ask if they would be willing to mentor you.

Example Mentor Questions

What do you want?

Ex: Writing a book

What do you need?

- Help managing writing time
- Structure to develop plots
- Creating realistic characters
- Developing my prose
- Navigating publishing processes
- Marketing my book

Who can provide?

Successful author I know



Mentor One Questions

What do you want?

What do you need?

Who can provide?



Mentor Two Questions

What do you want?

What do you need?

Who can provide?



Mentor Three Questions

What do you want?

What do you need?

Who can provide?



Mentor Four Questions

What do you want?

What do you need?

Who can provide?



Section 2: Mentorship Activities

Below is a list of activities to engage in once a mentorship relationship is established. Some of these are best completed early in the relationship and periodically reviewed, while others are great to use throughout the relationship.

Identify goals: Complete this at the beginning of a mentorship as well as periodically throughout so that both mentor and mentee know what they are working toward.

Action plan: For each goal, create an action plan. An effective action plan targets a goal, acknowledges the “why” of that goal (i.e., why that goal is important or what value it actualizes), acknowledges barriers to that goal, develops if-then plans for when that barrier emerges, then builds in rewards for making progress toward goal.

Identify challenges: This is similar to identifying barriers in the action plan and is focused on identifying new challenges as they arise.

Role-play: Role-playing can be uncomfortable, yet it remains one of the most effective methods for developing skills and fluency with a process.

Shadow: We learn a lot by first observing others doing a job. Find time for the mentee to shadow the mentor.

Provide networking opportunities:

One of the biggest benefits for a mentee is an expansion of their personal and professional networks. Mentors can facilitate this by connecting mentees with individuals directly or inviting them to events where networking might naturally happen.

Provide feedback (written and oral):

Feedback is a great way to share expectations and bring attention to specific areas of improvements as well as areas of strength.

Share career history: Mentees can often find themselves in a place of uncertainty about their career trajectory. Mentors who share their history can give mentees a realistic model for the career process.

Review materials: Mentors often have little “nuggets” of knowledge that can help improve documents and instructional materials.

Read up: Select reading material for both mentor and mentee to read and discuss.

Identify strengths and focus on using those:

Both mentor and mentee should continually assess the mentee's strengths and find ways to tailor projects and activities toward those strengths.

Identify weaknesses and support them:

Weaknesses are just a step away from being lesser strengths. Although it might not be effective to build activities that are high-stakes (e.g., administering anesthesia under emergency conditions) and require the use of a skill or knowledge area that the mentee is currently weak in, practice activities can be used to build up the weakness until the mentee can incorporate that knowledge or skill into "real world" practice.

Build in exposure to challenges:

In order to grow, mentees need to be faced with challenges that are just beyond their current skills, much like how muscles grow in response to exercise. These need to be purposefully built into a training experience.

Closing the relationship: Once the mentee has met their goals, the mentor and mentee should meet to close the relationship and decide in what way the relationship evolves.

