

MentorInk Newsletter



...the online publication of Mentoring Solutions Inc. Year 20 Issue 3 October 2006

In this issue -

Mentoring Timeline® Over the past twenty years, this column has been a standard one. We've had VERY strong reaction to some entries such as the one about Da Vinci and his mentors. One reader (see page 2)

Series: Do you have what it takes? Part 2 Though this entry is about mentors, since we believe the proteges of today are the mentors of tomorrow, everyone should read this. (see page 5)

Editorial: They're out there ... waiting to invade your mentoring program ... I'm speaking of really oddball ideas uncovered through my research as MentorInk editor. Want some laughs? Read on! (page 7)

From The Virtual Mentoring Library: Mentoring Myth #3 (page 4)

Search no further: Workbooks & tools: In the 1980s, we invented the first paper & pencil mentoring tools. More details at www.mentoring-resources.com (see outline page 3)



Maybe I'll get my own mentor! Mentoring Solutions third generation family member (page 2)

The picking If you had to name one feature of a mentoring program (or relationship) that could make or break it, what would you select? Toyota thinks this is crucial to quality of product and service. We also suggest how a scarcity of this feature can destroy mentoring (turn to page 5)

MentorInk Newsletter enters year 20! This summer, MentorInk celebrates 20 years of continuous publication. We're proud not only of this record but also of the quality we believe we have maintained.

Future Issues: • Insightful Reading • Mentoring Timeline • Mentor Answers FAQs • and more



From the Editor:

Past issues have carried everything and anything on knowledge sharing using mentoring and coaching to support blended learning.

Happy reading for another year.

Your editor:

Marilynne Miles Gray

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Mentoring Timeline: 1992

took us to task for even suggesting any artist of this stature would ever have needed a mentor!

This issue, we pick up the notion with another artist who is famous for writing about and advising artists -- Julia Cameron, author of the best seller, *The Artist's Way*.

While *The Artist's Way* is one of many books by her, it is her best known. Based in large part on her own experiences with blocked creativity it also grew out of her many years of workshops on this subject. What she deals with is germane not just to people who sculpt, paint, dance or write for a living. Indeed, readers will quickly see the resonance with people in manufacturing, education, advertising, and so on.

What is the immediate connect with mentoring?

The core (of the more than 100 activities described in her seminal book) is an activity (tool) called "morning pages" emphasized as part of daily reflection to help develop a stronger, wiser, more self-assured self. She divides up the self into the Inner Child, the Adult Self and the **Inner Mentor**. The IC might react to a critic simply and with hurt. The Adult Self is "responsible". The **IM** is to be consulted when critics are encountered. Critics represent one of the most insidious of the

*"As artists, we must find those who believe in us, and in whom we believe, and band together for support, encouragement, and protection."
~ Julia Cameron*

blockages to creativity. The **IM** weighs the input of the critic with personal input and then offers counsel to encourage a supportive, nurturing form of inner dialogue.

In a subsequent work, *Vein of Gold* (1996), Cameron suggests the reader "ask the *Inner Mentor* to write a letter [to you]". She apparently asked her workshop attendees to profile the **IM** they would most want to have inside their heads to guide and offer advice. Typically this ideal **mentor** is some one: older, wiser, tougher, more benevolent than they are.

In *The Sound of Paper* (2004) Cameron writes: "For the older artist, the young protegee is a glimpse in the rear view mirror. For the younger...the veteran holds the promise of the future. Stieglitz and Georgia O'Keeffe were one such pair.... Artists are often great teachers. Through the centuries, artists

(cont. on page 4)



Maybe I'll get my own mentor

My name is Thea. I am fifteen years of age, and I attend Claremont Secondary School. I am the third generation of family to work for CMSI Mentoring Solutions!

The first time I came to CMSI, I was about six or seven and I came with my mom Tamara to see Bill and Marilynne Gray, President and Vice President of CMSI -- my grandparents. All I can remember is tons of computers, a lot of big guys, and this really cool whiteboard that I always doodled on (they had a pretty awesome collection of dry-erase pens).

When I visited back then, I was to stay out of my mom's way (because she worked for my grandparents), and to leave everyone to do their tasks, which was okay, because if you've ever been to my grandparent's place, you'd know that they have an enormous garden that is heaven to a six-year-old with an imaginative mind.

A couple of years later, I came with my mom who told me that CMSI had a new office. We pulled up in the parking lot, and boy, was I excited! A huge office where I could be all business-like, or pretend to be a spy, running away from or trying to catch bad guys.

Once we stepped in the doors, I saw that the office was everything I thought it would be. There were even extra offices in the back where I could run my own imaginary operations. The office became my favourite place in the world, and I enjoyed every day I spent there. Sad was the day, though, that my mom stopped working there. I came in every now and then, sure, but I wanted to be there every day. This year, I proposed to my grandparents that I work at CMSI as soon as school was over for a trial of 5 days before I went away on summer holidays. They thought about it, and finally said yes.

So here I am this week doing jobs like taking inventory of computer programs, assembling hanging files, reorganizing files, counting paper and pencil tools, being a beta tester for Colaboro 4. The bonus is getting to write this column. In August, once I'm back from leadership camp, travelling to the Calgary Stampede and visiting family "on the Mainland", I may have more time to pick up my CMSI work and learn even more. Maybe I'll get my own mentor!

[Editor's note: She came back for another week and has booked herself to work summer 2007 and holidays.]



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Search No further



for mentoring materials

Videos, CDRoms & Trainer's Guides

- *Mentoring for Results Training Video / CD-ROM* -- 19 minutes of intensive, life insights as a real protégé learns how to deal with a particularly challenging problem she hasn't been able to solve on her own. Shows how to use 4 Mentoring Styles to equip & empower, plus 6-Step Mentoring Process that builds effective & efficient relationship. Mentoring behaviors & their impact are subtitled & explained.
- *Facilitator's Guide for using Mentoring for Results with Colaboro*— Details how to use MFR Workbook & Training Video. Explains how to teach both use & value of key Colaboro Mentoring Management System online functions, start to finish such as: create Coaching Plans & Mentoring Action Plans, report progress, complete a mentoring Agreement, evaluate benefits.
- *Mentoring for Results Trainer's Guide* – Explains how to use MFR training video & Mentor-Protégé Workbook together. Can be used independently of Colaboro for any type of program.
- *Leader's Guide for Mentoring Style Indicator* – Describes: 4 Mentoring Styles & related behaviors; negative consequences that result when each partner gets stuck in one or more behaviors that will undermine the relationship; five ways to use this tool. Two pages can be reproduced for use by participants during training.

Workbooks & Tools

- *Mentoring for Results (MFR) Workbook for Colaboro Users* – Contains activities for a half-day course. Teaches partners how to work together productively & how to use key functions of the Colaboro Mentoring Management System. Best used with MFR Training Video & Facilitator's Guide (see below).
- *Mentoring for Results Workbook* – Contains activities for a half-day course for partners. Best used with MFR Training Video & Facilitator's Guide (see below).
- *Mentoring Action Guide - for Career Development – for Developing Leaders* – Each contains additional activities & unique materials for training partners over a full day. Customizable.
- *Mentoring Style Indicator* – Our most popular tool (8 paper versions). Self-administered/scored/interpreted. Trains partners to develop a solid relationship & greater flexibility because they gain crucial insights into style of assistance a Protégé likes to receive & a Mentor likes to provide. Diagrams: Gray's 4 Mentoring Styles & The NEW Mentoring Paradigm. versions: Sales Training & Development / Health care Professionals / College Students / Career Development / Leaders / Generic / New hires / College & University Faculty
- *Mentoring 6-Step PocketCard* – Useful summary of key mentoring concepts/skills – The 6-Step Mentoring Process & The NEW Mentoring Paradigm. Accompanies MFR video & Workbooks. Diagram: Gray's Mentor-Protégé Relationship Model.
- *Protégé Needs Inventory* – Self-administered/scored. Indicates type & degree of help needed (protégé), & type & degree of help/expertise that can be provided (mentor). Pinpoints important protégé goals quickly & accurately. (Versions: Newer Hires & Career Development)
- *Action Planning Guide* – During training, partners use Action Planning Guide to convert talk into action steps to achieve desired goals. Accelerates relationship as it provides essential structure to stay on track.
- *Build Better Teams* – Workbook activities teach, in one day seminar, how 4 Personal Styles hinder or contribute to the 4 Stages of Team Building & Transformational teamwork. Best used to build better teams from the outset, but can also enhance existing teams. (Personal Style Indicator supplies scores).

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From The Virtual Mentoring Library

In past issues of *MentorInk*, more than a dozen mentoring myths have been described. Back by popular demand after a long absence, here's the third of many encountered over the decades:

Mentoring Myth #3

Myth. Meaning well is enough to keep a program or relationship going.

Mentor's take on reality: Not.

Let's take a comparable. Who would go for help to a medical doctor or a dentist whose sole qualification was being well intentioned? They had no training in medicine. They had never held a scalpel or a drill. But they really, really, really wanted to be a dentist or a doctor. [Even in my day thousands of years ago, we knew better. If you aren't sure about this, read a few chapters of *The Odyssey*!]

Sadly, we let the same thing happen in mentoring programs. The mentoring graveyard is littered with matches and entire programs filled with people who were well-meaning but just couldn't pull it off. Either these people (mentors) didn't have the requisite skills or background to do the job or the program was so badly organized people gave up after one or two sessions.

Why does this happen even now when we should know better?

Here's some answers:

- Primarily because we believe we lack the resources -- the mentors to lend a hand or the programs for those lined up to get the mentoring they want and need.
- Second, we aren't particularly creative about our approaches.
- We don't bother to think through then draft a list of criteria and stick to them.
- We aren't willing to be gutsy and say: "*You don't have the experience we need for this group of proteges.*" or *This program needs to be rethought cause it's not going to last past year one and we need it to continue into the future.*"

Dear reader, have I planted doubts in your mind? I hope so. If guru Tom Peters can tell successful business people to deliberately take apart perfectly successful company processes, then Mentor can tell people who are about to take on board the wrong people or who are willing to launch with a bad design: "*What on earth do you think you're doing?*"

Mentoring Timeline: 1992 (cont. from p. 2)

have routinely apprenticed other artists...[sharing] experience, strength and hope."



Of her own life she says: "...in film school, my **mentor** was Jack Whitehead, an aged Hitchcock cinematographer. I'm my 40s, my theatrical **mentor** was John Newland, then in his seventies. From both these men I learned artistic standards and the value of the slogan 'Just do it.'

"Artists are generous...but a part of that is enlightened self-interest. When we share our enthusiasms, they grow stronger... We do not know how much we have learned until we are asked to share it."

Publisher's Weekly noted: "Julia Cameron walks her talk. The artist-**mentor** ...guided millions of artists and would-be artists beyond creativity-squashing obstacles with her 1992 book *The Artist's Way*... [Cameron] kept busy in the 10 years since writing nonfiction, dramatic plays, musicals, an opera and books of poetry and prayers. She also has continued to work as a teacher and **mentor** in classes and workshops. Independent artist groups using *The Artist's Way* started cropping up in the early '90s and continue to spark a creative rebirth among many." [Additional source: Publishers Weekly 2002]

*"Take care to get what you like
or you will be forced to like
what you get."
~ George Bernard Shaw*

Not so trivial trivia

Since the late 1970s, over 1200 researchers have consistently found that mentoring was beneficial at three different levels:

- 1** for the protege receiving personalized help from a more experienced person, income and career advancement, personal development, and much more...
- 2** for the mentor who benefits in a number of ways such as gaining a sense of being useful, being revitalized through helping others, and much more...
- 3** for the organization that benefits through increased productivity, lower job turnover, more competence, more staff engagement, and much more....



The picking

If you had to pick one thing that every program must have and needs to work on diligently, what would it be? At Toyota, it's clarifying expectations. As Albert Schweitzer author of *The Philosophy of Civilization* once said: "Expectations dictate performance."

Here's how that one item will impact mentoring programs and act as a decided barrier to results.

Not long ago, one mentoring program for a world-wide NGO to develop its managers based in Europe did an evaluation of their year-long efforts. We reviewed the profile and the participant comments. The program did not survive into year two for a number of reasons, including bad design, poor planning, lack of clear expectations.



The mentors said at the outset: "*We don't need any help. We know how to mentor. We can do the job*"

They had expectations of themselves and their proteges.

*"Expect people to be better than they are;
it helps them to become better.
But don't be disappointed when they're not;
it helps them to keep trying."
~ Merry Browne*

How did they fare in reality?

Reading post-program comments from these same people and their partners, it was clear few readily handled the challenges that arose. These should have been anticipated by organizers then conveyed to participants before they signed on.

"If my mentor can't give me help the help I need, why recruit that person or match me with him/her? What were we expected to do or accomplish?"

"If I'm in country A and my partner is in country B, how can we be expected to meet on a regular basis or was that not the expectation?"

"If my mentor is always moving from country to country doing work, what are the expectations for our meeting?"

Yes, expectations dictate performance. It's possible to leverage those to obtain fabulous results or to consign a program to the dustbin of history. As a side note, participants noted that their feedback was unlikely to be acted on! Which says something about their expectations -- before, during and after all that time, money and effort went into the mix.

Series: Do You Have What it Takes?

The challenge is often a creative one: how to provide the perspective of the mentor to those who have never been one? For our purposes, we often use short scenarios and extended case studies to get those in the workshop thinking long and hard about choices.

A nice neat list of ideal qualities always looks wonderful on the pages of the latest book claiming to give you expert advice but it isn't realistic. When the program participant has to "deliver", that's when it counts.

So, how have different successful programs met the challenge of putting ideals into practise?

- In one corporate program, the design team and I started with the goal for the mentors (as a radical departure from normal process) who were unproven would-managers. All wanted to participate in a leadership program the next year. We made the mentoring program the gateway for eligibility. To get into the leadership program, the new manager had to be a mentor and carry this role out successfully according to several appropriate criteria.

- In the first mentoring program we ran starting in 1978 and lasting until 1985, one of the criteria for being a mentor was meeting with the proteges (matched in a 2-to-one ratio) on a weekly basis for 14 weeks and to help proteges turn out a successful presentation that would be delivered at the end of the match to entire audiences of peers.

- One study I carried out was to take one of the "standard" lists of qualities of the ideal mentor and ask proteges at the end a program to rank order these (and add any that came to mind as important based on experience with a mentor). Some of the results were unexpected. Very few lists note "a sense of humour" but that quality was listed or surfaced time after time.

What more does that say about mentor-protege partnering?

To my mind it denotes the fact that sometimes we are too intense. We're so invested in doing the job that we stress out and, we get too self- or other critical.

Maybe we need to add the phrase: "Lighten up!" to the list?

Next issue: Do you have what it takes to be a **protege**?

Top of the list

In 1999, Dr. Sharon Feiman-Nemser of Michigan State University reported that "mentoring is by far the most common induction practice in the U.S. and all [induction plans] recommend a strong mentoring component, which usually means careful selection, training, and support of mentor teachers." [Source: Edutopia.org]



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Reading Faces

Facial expressions are contagious. Once you've digested this notion, you'll wonder what's the **mentoring** connection? According to decades-long research by Paul Ekman those who can read faces gain insight. He has been cited in popular books like Malcolm Gladwell's *Blink*, and prestigious magazines like *Smithsonian*.

By documenting facial expressions of people around the world from Brazil, to Japan and New Guinea, Ekman concluded expressions were the universal products of evolution. There were fundamental lessons to be learned from the face if a person knew where to look. In theory, the skill of reading faces could help an individual with everything from trying to make his or her way through the corporate maze to dealing with authority figures.

Ekman and his colleague Wallace Friesen became aware that there is a feedback loop -- particular expressions cause corresponding emotions. A genuinely happy smile would make others feel the same. Many studies have established this feedback loop as a biological imperative. Physiologically, the act of smiling oxygenates and cools the brain. This state is better for decision-making than negative moods and nasty behaviour.

Lesson: don't meet with your partner or make major mentoring decisions when depressed or feeling negative. Or you risk being caught up by "emotional contagion" which means you pick up on the facial expressions and emotions of your partner (or others). Mentor calls this "*working with prune face, lemon lips people.*" Or find other activities to carry out that may move one or both of you out of the negative space.

Managers, leaders (and in another context, mentors) are most able to render emotional contagion into the situation at hand. Roosevelt and Churchill were masters at reading and injecting emotional contagion. Awareness of this capacity gives people a better sense of

- what really drives the workplace mood, the nation, the company, the mentoring relationship and
- what can be done about it.

To take this one step further, the receiver -- the subordinates, the people of the nation, the staff in the company, the protégé-partner -- if aware of social contagion and how it operates, is one step ahead of those who are unaware.

Let us return to prune faces and those pursed lemon lips. Not everyone is going to have the charm and charisma of the great



Editorial: 20 Years of Quirky Concepts

As Editor of *MentorInk*, I've done enough related book reading to stack several piles of texts ceiling height. Any of you who've seen *MentorInk* surveys know we also place phone calls, internet searches, magazine articles, personal interviews, theses and dissertations into the mix of what eventually becomes an article.

What makes for a quirky mentoring concept? Usually it's an idea that comes out of thin air. Not a shred of evidence or research -- which hasn't stopped that author from publishing it. At least it's funny. Here are two favourites from the internet:

"Mentor was an old sea captain with a wooden leg."

Perhaps this writer was confusing the Trojan horse, made of wood. Same war but not the same "animal".

"Toss names in a hat and match that way. This is a perfectly good way of matching mentors and proteges."

Honestly, I'm not making this one up. It comes straight out of a newsletter from a company that is still offering mentoring programs.

P.S. They've since moved on to matching people using very simplistic demographics (location, number of years in an occupation, one-word topics for discussion, etc.). Matching of this sort is rudimentary and cannot equal matching on styles, or personality factors which, of course, is far more complex yet necessary for proper matching. ~

*Mentor calls this
"working with prune face,
lemon lips people..."*

and inspiring who will carve a positive legacy in history.

Lesson: Stop and think about how we, as individuals, infect the workspace around. This act alone can make a positive difference. The prune faces and lemon lips people likely are a small minority as we are social animals and have to depend on others for cooperation. It's suggested that we survive if we build up peer support. And don't forget that your mentor (or protégé) is an ally too.

Lesson: Smile. We tend to gravitate to those who smile. Think of Julia Roberts' smile. Who can forget it? Which brings us to the topic of smiles and humour but then that's a whole other mentoring story.