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Section

MODERN RISE OF ADULT LEARNING AND MENTORING

Julius Caesar once said, For lack of training, they lacked knowledge; for lack of knowledge, they lacked confidence; and for lack of confidence, they lacked victory.[1] This may sum up the motivation of many adult learners. The pace of change in society continues to accelerate. Restructuring, downsizing, right-sizing, corporate mergers, and buyouts are resulting in a job market which is becoming increasingly competitive. New ways of acquiring and processing information are emerging. More and more adults are feeling ill-equipped to face the new challenges they are encountering in such a fluid environment. In a word, they are seeking growth.

Growth occurs when

we move through progressive transformations as our world grows more complex…Each new horizon demands that we form new, overarching ways to make sense of the diversity and conflict we see with increasing clarity around us. For each, we need to learn to think in whole new ways.[2]

In other words, growth comes from a shift of perspective. As a result, Deloz says, "A good education ought to help people to become both more receptive to and

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[1] Jess Gibson, Coaching Champions: The Privilege of Mentoring, (Green Forest, AR: New Leaf Press, 1994), 150.
[2] Laurent A. Daloz, Effective Teaching and Mentoring: Realizing the Transformational Power of Adult Learning Experiences, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1986): 137.

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more discriminating about the world."[3] He also says,

"Significant learning entails development. Development

means successively asking broader and deeper questions of

the relationship between oneself and the world."[4]

    This relational view of the world has implications for

educational methods.

> Education is something we neither 'give' nor 'do' to
> our students. Rather <u>it is a way we stand in relation
> to them</u>. The nature of that relationship is best
> grasped through the metaphor of a journey in which the
> teacher serves as a guide [emphasis author's].[5]

"If the journey is a good one, they will learn…to <u>see</u> in a

new way [emphasis author's]."[6]

    Adult learners are frequently people whose mental maps

are not proving useful for dealing with the actual terrain

they are encountering. Their motivation might be described

as being a pragmatic concern with application.[7] There is a

term which relates to this phenomenon, situated cognition.

This simply means that some contexts require learning which

occurs within the given situation, or anchored instruction.

A good illustration of this theory in application is the

traditional practice of apprenticeships for many occupations

or residency or internship requirements in many modern

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[3] Daloz, 236.
[4] Daloz, 236.
[5] Daloz, xv.
[6] Daloz, 33.
[7] Gibson, 157.

professions.[8] This trend of thought is having profound influence upon adult learning approaches. It is out of the resulting ferment that mentorship as an intentional practice is experiencing a tremendous increase in popularity.

A corollary to anchored instruction is the premise that "We learn as much or more from the way we are taught as from the content itself."[9] Pursuing this train of thought some educators have identified aspects of mentoring which lead to its success as an instructional method and seek to employ them in other modes of teaching as well. Some of these strengths of mentorship as a tool in adult learning are the availability of

> time, affirmation, mutual respect, open dialogue, open
> questions that invite dialogue, engagement in
> significant work, role clarification, responsibility,
> and immediate response to questions and issues that are
> raised.[10]

It is with these methods that "The mentor leads his student to a higher plateau of learning…by instilling within the mentoree a discipline to increase knowledge."[11]

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[8] Arthur L. Wilson, "The Promise of Situated Cognition," in An Update on Adult Learning Theory, ed. Sharan B. Merriam, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1993): 77-78.

[9] Daloz, 144.

[10] Jane Vella, Learning to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994): 68.

[11] Gibson, 33.

DEFINITIONS OF MENTORING

There are a number of definitions of mentoring.
According to Cranton, the difference between a teacher who
takes the expert role and a mentor is most significantly in
the area of relationship with the learner.

> The effective model or mentor displays a love for the
> subject area, expresses contagious enthusiasm, is
> available for personal interaction with learners, is
> open and authentic, and develops good rapport with
> learners.[12]

Caffarella, states that "learning via individual modes
is a key way through which adults learn," and she then
identifies mentoring as one such mode. She defines
mentoring as

> an intense, caring relationship in which someone with
> experience works with a less experienced person to
> promote both professional and personal growth. Mentors
> model expected behavior and values and provide support
> and a sounding board for the protégé.[13]

Seaman and Fellenz, note that the distinctive nature of
such education lies in the fact "that instruction centers on
the teacher as a model." They note that

> learning depends primarily on close observation of the
> teacher-model, interaction and communication with that
> model, and opportunities to practice the newly

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[12] Patricia Cranton, Understanding and Promoting
Transformative Learning: A Guide for Educators of Adults,
(San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1994): 127.

[13] Rosemary S. Caffarella, Planning Programs for Adult
Learners: A Practical Guide for Educators, Trainers, and
Staff Developers, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers,
1994): 152.

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developed skills under the supervision of the model or master.[14]

A common theme in mentoring literature is the proactive role of the learner in a mentoring relationship. Galbraith and Zelenak note that a mentor "shares the dream or vision of the learner and assists in its promotion." A learner must be a risk-taker, one who "seeks independence, desires to see things in new ways, and accepts challenges that will lead to…development and growth."[15] Or as Gibson simply states it: "The mentor assists the learner in change."[16]

The two primary ideas which are common to most definitions, however, are the aspect of relationship and the concept of modeling. Relationships require time. Biehl notes that while teachers cannot establish mentoring relationships with all their students, they can with some.[17] Gibson, also recognizing time limitations, states that the discipline of mentoring is to spend "more time with fewer people to create a lasting impact."[18] As Daloz notes, however, "If learning is about growth and growth requires

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[14] Don F. Seaman and Robert A. Fellenz, <u>Effective Strategies for Teaching Adults</u>, (Coumbus: Merrill Publishing Company, 1989): 32.
[15] Michael W. Galbraith and Bonnie S. Zelenak, "Adult Learning Methods and Techniques," in <u>Facilitating Adult Learning: A Transactional Process</u>, ed. Michael W. Galbraith, (Malabar, FL: Krieger Publishing Company, 1991): 127.
[16] Gibson, 32.
[17] Bobb Biehl, <u>Mentoring: Confidence in Finding a Mentor and Becoming One</u>, (Nashville: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 1996): 140.
[18] Gibson, 88.

trust, then teaching is about engendering trust…Teaching is thus preeminently an act of care."[19]

Mentoring relationships cannot be and should not be static, but rather developmental. Mentors' work "is to empower their students by helping to draw out and give form to what their students already know."[20] Thus, mentorship is really a form of assisted self-teaching, at least in its later stages.[21] Seaman and Fellenz emphasize the importance of treating adults as partners rather than observers, thus encouraging them

> to bring their previous experience and knowledge to the situation and become actively involved in solving problems. Treating interns as partners leads to the formation of independent collaborators; treating them as observers leads to the development of dependent followers who need to keep calling…for guidance.[22]

Formal steps in the mentoring relationship can be quite simplistic: "I do it, you watch; then We do it together; then You do it, I watch; then You do it alone."[23] Steps can also include relational aspects. Candy cites a six stage model for a mentoring relationship. It consists of entry, mutual trust building, risk taking, teaching of skills,

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[19] Daloz, 237.
[20] Laurent A. Daloz, "Mentorship," in Adult Learning Methods: A Guide for Effective Instruction, ed. Michael W. Galbraith, (Malabar, FL: Robert E. Krieger Publishing Company, 1990), 206.
[21] Philip C. Candy, Self-Direction for Lifelong Learning: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991): 184.
[22] Seaman and Fellenz, 33.
[23] Gibson, 12.

professional standards, and dissolution.[24] Whatever model
one uses to define the stages of the relationship, "Self-
disclosure from the mentor seems to play a crucial part in
the full evolution of a mentorship from hierarchy toward
symmetry."[25]

ASPECTS OF MENTORING: SUPPORT, CHALLENGE, AND VISION

Daloz provides a widely cited three-part model of
support, challenge, and vision for successful mentoring
which he derives largely from the literary Virgil. "Virgil
begins by <u>engendering trust, issuing a challenge, providing
encouragement,</u> and <u>offering a vision</u> for the journey
[emphasis author's]."[26] Daloz notes that "Throughout the
journey, he alternately supports and challenges his
protégé."[27]

Growth necessitates movement. Support provides safety
for movement. Challenge provides motivation for movement.
Vision provides guidance for movement.[28] Seen another way,
the growth dialectic is enabled by this triad. Support
helps confirm, identify, and establish the thesis.
Challenge helps identify and propose the antithesis. Vision
enables synthesis.[29]

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[24] Candy, 185.
[25] Daloz, 176.
[26] Daloz, 30.
[27] Daloz, 30.
[28] Daloz in Galbraith, 209.
[29] Daloz, 212-213.

Supporting comes largely through listening, providing structure (which decreases over time), and giving a safe and open environment with positive expectations. It also includes advocating and explaining for the learner.[30] A feeling of continuity can also encourage a learner to take risks. "By their mere existence as experienced travelers, mentors provide continuity. Beyond that, by offering a map…a teacher can oftentimes make that sense of continuity still more concrete for her student."[31]

"The first business of a guide is to listen to the dreams of the pilgrim."[32] Listening is also perhaps the best way to provide support as well as the most important tool in building the relationship. An awareness of where the learner is and where he or she wants to go are essential both for the mentor and for the learner.

Challenging occurs through setting tasks, questioning assumptions or approaches, setting standards, encouraging hypothetical thinking, providing feedback,[33] and constructing hypotheses.[34] When a mentor challenges then it creates cognitive dissonance which the student has a desire to eliminate.[35] This is intended to lead to growth.

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[30] Galbraith and Zelenak, 128.
[31] Daloz, 193.
[32] Daloz, 21.
[33] Galbraith and Zelenak, 129.
[34] Daloz, 227.
[35] Daloz, 223.

Vision is essentially the ability to see the world in new ways. "It is the purpose of a mentoring relationship to unveil new perspectives and new ways of thinking and acting. Mentoring should assist learners in becoming critical thinkers."[36]

Vision is provided firstly through modeling.[37] Vision also increases through the provision of cognitive maps with which the learners can understand their journey,[38] through suggesting new language or metaphors,[39] and through reflecting back their own position from different vantage points.[40]

Mentors need to develop a comprehensive approach to topics which includes a broad overview, the context and relationships to other topics, assumptions and their alternatives, history, experts, cultural variances, and other points of view. They should present controversial positions and perspectives, encourage discussion and debate, and apply the topic to the tasks facing the learner.[41] Analysis and reflection should be encouraged.[42] In this

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[36] Galbraith and Zelenak, 127.
[37] Galbraith and Zelenak, 129.
[38] Daloz, 232.
[39] Daloz, 233.
[40] Daloz, 234.
[41] Daloz, 123-124.
[42] Daloz, 224.

process the learner will often move from either/or choice patterns to dealing with polarities.[43]

"Vision…is the field on which the dialectical game between the old self and the new can be played; it is the context that hosts both support and challenge in the service of transformation"[44] Vision allows this dialectical approach which always seeks synthesis.[45] Synthesis is not compromise, but rather a way of thinking in which "the only route out is through an understanding of the opposing position."[46]

EXAMPLE OF AND SETTINGS FOR MENTORING

A good illustration of the power of relationship in mentoring as an educational approach can be seen in William Tennent's Log College. William Tennent was a patent failure as a pastor, a preacher, and in terms of economic prosperity, yet he left a major imprint on the nation through the twenty men he mentored in his Log College, who in turn founded sixty-three institutions of higher education, including Princeton.[47] Tennent's aim of developing well-rounded pastors was complemented by his

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[43] Daloz, 141.
[44] Daloz, 230.
[45] Daloz, 141.
[46] Daloz, 142.
[47] Gary E. Schnittjer, "The Ingredients of Effective Mentoring: The Log College as a Model for Mentorship," Christian Education Journal 15 (Fall 1994): 86.

live-in mentoring approach.[48] His students essentially

became part of the Tennent family. This enabled him to have

a comprehensive influence on their ways of thinking and

approaches to life.[49]

Such mentoring relationships are not restricted to

educational settings. Management can provide an ideal

setting for such an approach.

> Mentoring will take on new meaning… As the manager
> makes himself available to the Xer and promotes the
> freedom to ask questions and to learn, the Xer will
> continue to develop a stronger sense of identity and
> confidence.[50]

Interestingly similar advice is given in regard to

dealing with Baby Boomers and Generation Xers in terms of

management. In regard to Boomers Elder advises,

> Lead by example, inspiring and equipping. It is WHO
> you are that wins and influences this generation, not
> your titles, achievements, or position. Develop
> leaders who can work as facilitators and coaches,
> rather than as order givers. Motivate by keeping a
> sense of involvement and sense of partnership high.[51]

Similarly, Bantz says that when dealing with Generation

Xers in a ministry setting,

> the goals should be to equip them with the tools they
> need for ministry; to enable them to make decisions and
> implement ideas; and to empower them with the authority

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[48] Schnittjer, 91.

[49] Schnittjer, 94.

[50] Jeffrey R. Bantz, <u>Generation X: Implications for Mission Organizations of Sociological Distinctives of Christians Born Between 1961 and 1975</u>, (Miami: Latin America Mission, 1995): 98.

[51] Annette Elder, "Boomers, Busters, and the Challenge of the Unreached Peoples," <u>International Journal of Frontier Missions</u> 8 (April 1991): 55.

to accomplish those responsibilities. Here we find a key aspect of mentoring. It would be beneficial for managers to view young workers as being in an apprentice role—helping them to develop as future leaders.[52]

SUMMARY

Mentoring is an effective tool for adult learning. One reason is that it is evident to the learner that what is being studied is practical because mentoring often takes place in a context which poses a challenge or opportunity for the learner. This motivates the learner.

Mentoring can also help the learner become a self teacher by providing new patterns of thinking which lead to a paradigm of continuous learning and development. This enables constant growth on the part of the learner, even after the mentorship is completed.

Mentoring is essentially a relational instructional method which relies heavily on modeling. The mentor seeks to provide a safe and supportive environment which will free the learner to take risks. Challenges are then chosen with the intention of providing appropriate risks for the learner to take. Finally, vision, in terms of patterns of thinking, are modeled by the mentor in order to guide the learner into appropriate problem-solving and relational paradigms.

Mentoring is a flexible approach in that it can be carried out in a wide range of contexts, but it is time

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[52] Bantz, 96.

intensive and so has severe limits in terms of the number of people which can be assisted by a given mentor. The effects are potentially powerful and long-lasting, however. Thus, mentoring holds particular promise for leadership development.

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