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Mentoring: Meanings, Models, and Metaphors

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Introduction

- Center for Interdisciplinary Mentoring Research (CIMR)
  - Faculty from multiple schools and departments
  - Examining mentoring in its various forms
    - Developmental stage (youth, post-secondary, adult)
    - Setting (community, school, workplace)
    - Format (1-to-1, team, group, peer)
    - Informal vs formal
  - Exchange, collaboration, innovation

Overview

- Approach
  - Orientation to concepts
  - Examination of expectations
  - Discussion and activities
- Questions
  - What is mentoring?
  - What is purpose?
  - What is context?
  - What is approach?

Meaning

- Who has had a mentor?
- Who has been a mentor?
- Who knows what mentoring is?
- What defines mentoring?
- What is successful mentoring?
- What are best practices?

Metaphor....

All the world's a stage,

And all the men and women merely players;

They have their exits and their entrances;

—William Shakespeare

Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire.
   —W.B. Yeats

Metaphors for teaching and learning

| STUDENT	TEACHER
Customer	Vendor
Client	Consultant/expert
Athlete	Coach/trainer
Harry Potter	Wizard

What roles offer metaphor for a mentor?

- Mentor (Odyssey)
- Teacher
- Friend
- Counselor
- Guide
- Coach
- Advisor
- Confidant
- Big brother/sister
- Drill sergeant
- Sponsor
- Patron
- Advocate
- Consultant
- Elder
- Role model
- Companion

Mixed metaphors

Hamilton and Hamilton (1992) observe:

"A mentor might act as a **tutor** one day (helping with math homework), a **sponsor** the next day (helping to find a job), and a **confidant** the third day (offering emotional support following a family crisis)" (p. 546).
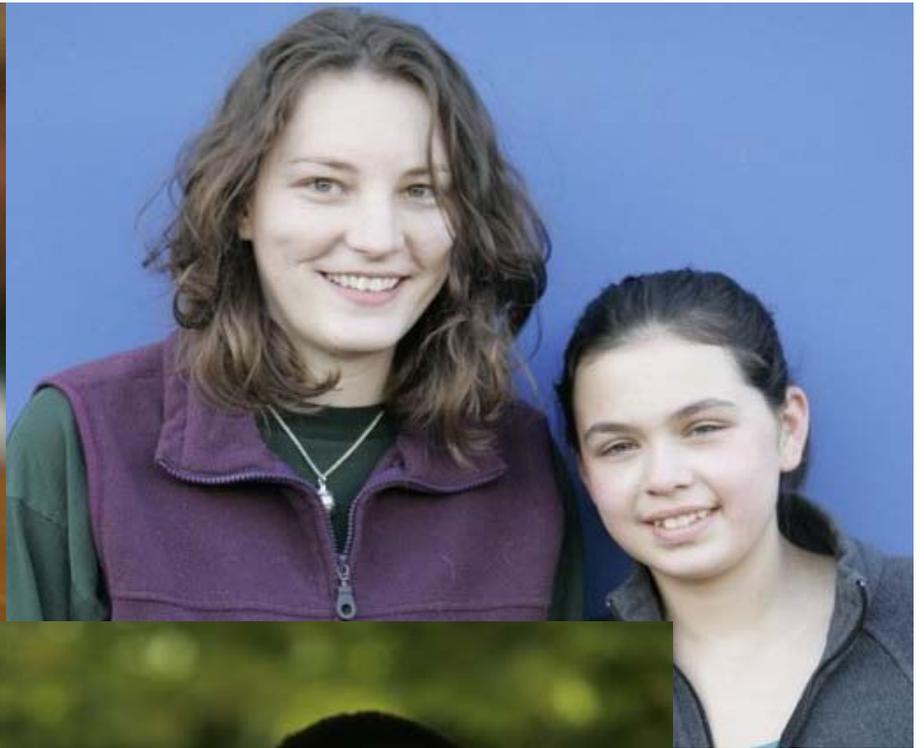
Common factors

- **Interpersonal relationship**
  - Direct involvement, engagement
- **Concern**
  - Caring, promoting well-being
- **Help**
  - Offering support and assistance
- **Power**
  - Mentor older, wiser, more experienced

Mentor hybrid model (Keller, 2005)

	Permanence	
	Obligated	Voluntary
Unequal	Parent Boss (vertical)	**Mentor (hybrid)**
Equal	Cousin	Friend Partner (horizontal)

Power

Developmental vs. prescriptive

- **Mentoring style** (Morrow & Styles, 1995)
  - Prescriptive mentoring A
    - Transformation goals early, often, consistently
    - Authority and control of decision making
    - Rigid and frustrated
  - Prescriptive Mentoring B
    - Wanted reciprocal partnership
    - Unrealistic expectations for youth to initiate activities
    - Wounded and discouraged
  - Developmental mentoring
    - Relationship-building goals (throughout) and transformation goals (emerging later)
    - Youth-centered, reading youth's cues
    - Flexible, adaptable and persistent

Promise and paradox

- Aims of mentors (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1992)

    Level-1: developing a relationship

    Level-2: introducing opportunities

    Level-3: developing character

    Level-4: developing competence

- Hierarchical—Higher level mentors incorporated lower level aims

- Results: Levels 3 & 4 had longer and more successful relationships

Interpretation

- Developmental vs. prescriptive
  - Be a friend
  - Build relationship
  - Don't exert authority

- Relationship vs. Instrumental
  - Focus on goals
  - Relationship built through activities

Dimension: Activity orientation

Category & Sample	Characteristics
Teaching Assistant (n = 6)	Focus primarily on academics and instruction.
Friend (n = 11)	Focus on positive relationship and fun—alternated between formal learning exercises, games, and some interpersonal sharing.
Sponsor (n = 6)	Focus on verbal sharing--level of other activities varied. Mentor demonstrated sense of protectiveness and guidance.
Acquaintance (n = 4)	Limited level of activity due to awkwardness and uncertainty.

Keller & Pryce (2010) Mutual but unequal: Mentoring as a hybrid relationship

Teaching assistant

The Big then encouraged the Little to start on her homework. "Let's do this now (pointing to the homework) and then we'll maybe play a game." The Big gave the Little a lot of positive encouragement while she worked, such as pats on the back and clapping a few times when she finished a task, and making statements, such as "You write very neatly," and "You are a very neat colorer." The Big watched her attentively and gave her prompts and guidance when she got stuck on a question.

The Big asked questions about the Little's life between homework tasks, such as, "What are you going to do this weekend?" and "Is there someone at home to help you with your homework?"

(Observation: Tricia & Anna)

Friend

"And I really worked with him, I didn't talk to him as an adult at all, I didn't talk to him about how is school, how are your grades or anything like that, it was more like, you know, tell me a little bit about you, let me tell you a little bit…actually, I started off telling him a little bit about me, so he can understand where I'm, some of the things that I do."

Big and Little were intermittently laughing and celebrating throughout the game. Little initiated competition with [another match] stating, 'Look how high we got ours, though!?' Big asked Little about himself, whether or not he watches sports and what athletes he likes. Big shared with Little that he attended a basketball game this weekend.

(Observation: Jackson & Dennis)

Sponsor

"Probably a couple things, one being obviously fairly comfortable with other people and the ability to establish rapport with a child which isn't super easy. But also a willingness and ability to be an adult. Really act the adult role, boundaries, be willing to discipline appropriately. In the most limited sense, adjust right and wrong and appropriate behavior. Nothing beyond the scope of the setting you are in. And honestly, for the kids it's great to have someone that is fun and relaxed. Has an idea of what it is like to be a child in their living. . . know something about their life. I think that's probably it. Flexibility I think is very important."

(Mentor interview: Sherry & Jane)

Acquaintance

M: Maybe the third or fourth week, he would come in and, we went to the gym, and he was just running around, the same thing like when he would sit by himself, playing by himself and I would be like, "Why don't you shoot over here?" And he would just be running back and forth, playing by himself kind of thing. So I didn't really feel like I bonded with him.

I: So you were trying to engage him in a game and he was doing his own thing?

M: Right.

I: And how did you feel during that experience?

M: How I felt? Not empty, but wow, what am I going to do here? I'm sitting here and I see everyone else playing with their Littles and I feel like, do something, I don't want to say helpless, but I felt like I didn't know what to do. (Mentor interview: Darian & Morris)

Student-reported relationship

Keller & Pryce (2010) Different roles and different results in mentoring
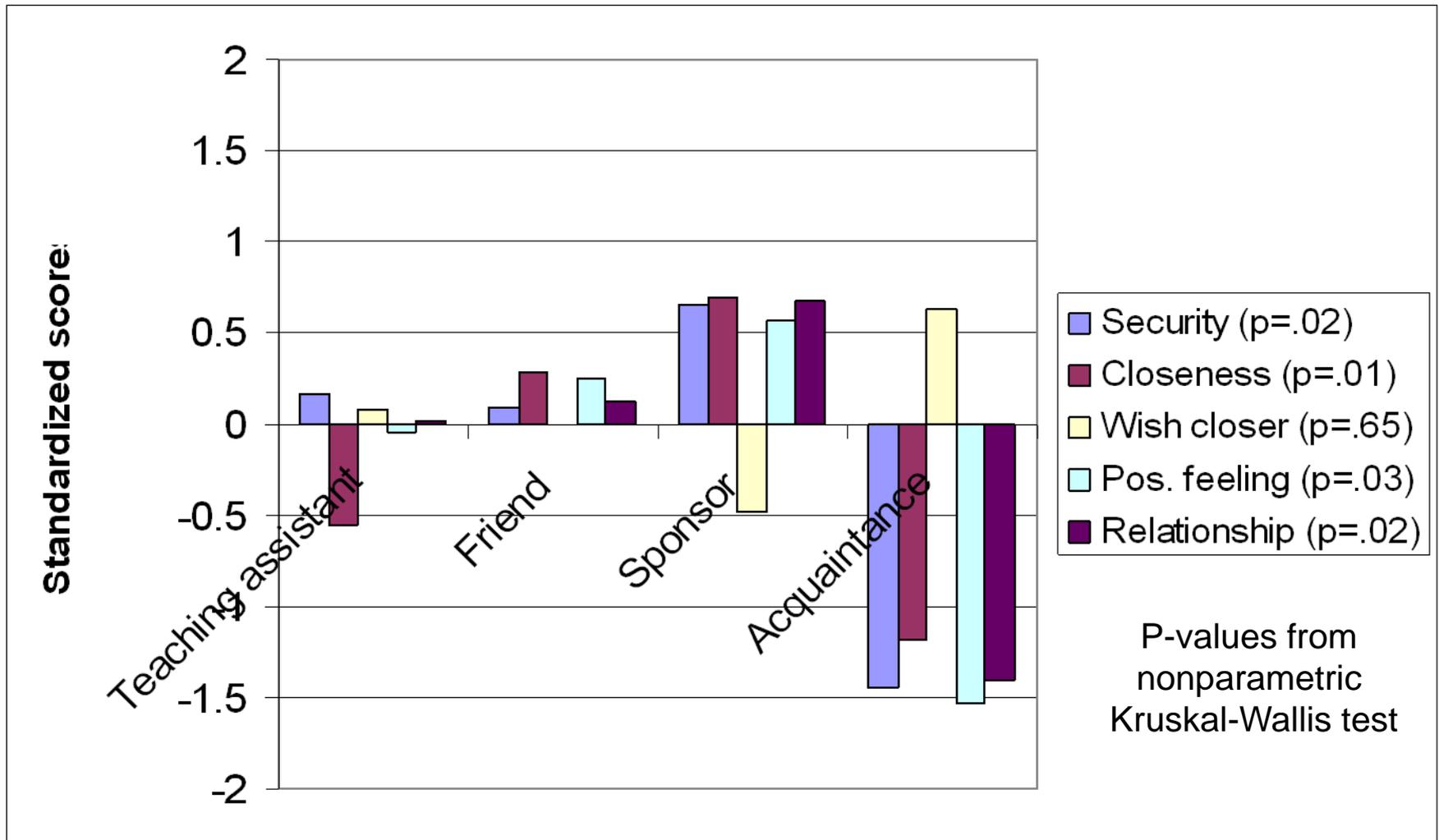
Student-reported changes in behavior (post-pre)
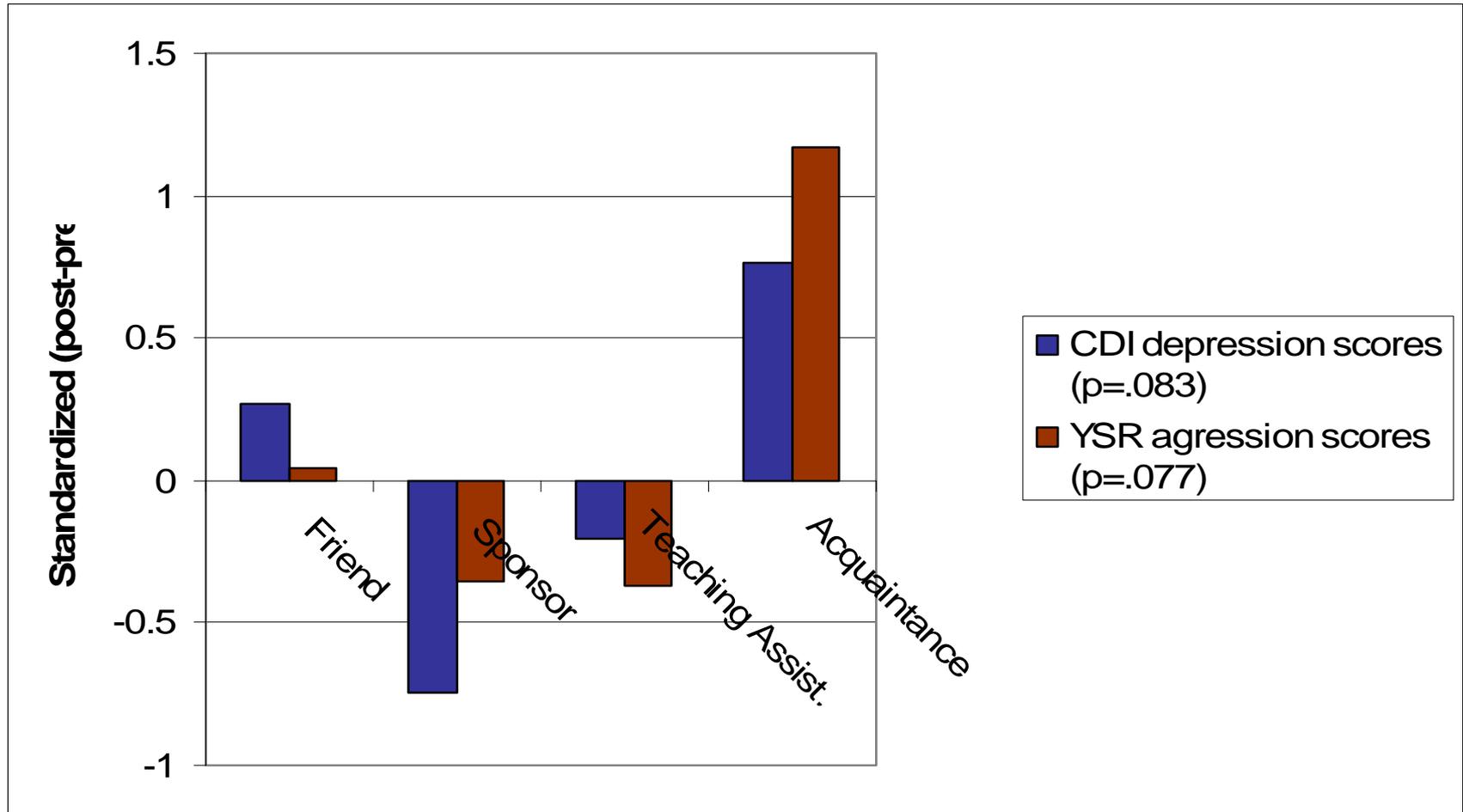
Attunement

"I know when she's reading out loud, I notice that she gets, loses interest even though I know she's a very avid reader. And I actually attribute it to the fact that, I don't really like reading out loud, I'm a fast reader and I get bored by the slow pace. So I made a decision, at a certain point I was trying to press us along, read more pages. And I actually sort of realized, I said to her, 'actually maybe it's just that reading out loud can be kind of annoying?' So I made a decision not to push her then because why spoil something she loves?" (Mentor interview: Sherry and Jane)

Attunement

- Insightfulness, inter-subjectivity, adaptability
  - Identifies issue *(child loses interest)*
  - Notices incongruence *(child avid reader)*
  - Looks to own experience for insight *(I don't like to read out loud)*
  - Considers own role in interactions *(I was trying to press along)*
  - Weighs trade-offs *(important to make progress but not spoil love of reading)*
 - Considers child's perspective and makes adjustment

Revisiting research

- Developmental mentors and "learned through trial and error what the youth's interests were by observing how they responded to various activities that the mentors chose" (Styles & Morrow, 1992, p. v).

- Level-4 mentor generated various ideas for activities that would teach new skills, provide new experiences and challenges, and inspire new pursuits for the youth. Throughout this process of experimentation, the mentor was devoted to learning more about the youth's interests and identifying activities the youth would enjoy. (Hamilton & Hamilton, 1992)

Summarizing

- Mentors influential in relationship development
- Hybrid model
  - Have sense of purpose
  - Keep mentee voluntarily engaged
- Mentee-focused
  - Seek mentee input, interests
  - Willing to take different routes to achieve aims
  - Experiment and adjust
- Interpersonal skills
  - Sensitive, attuned
  - Flexible, persistent

Scientist/Explorer/Discoverer

- New metaphor= Mentor as:
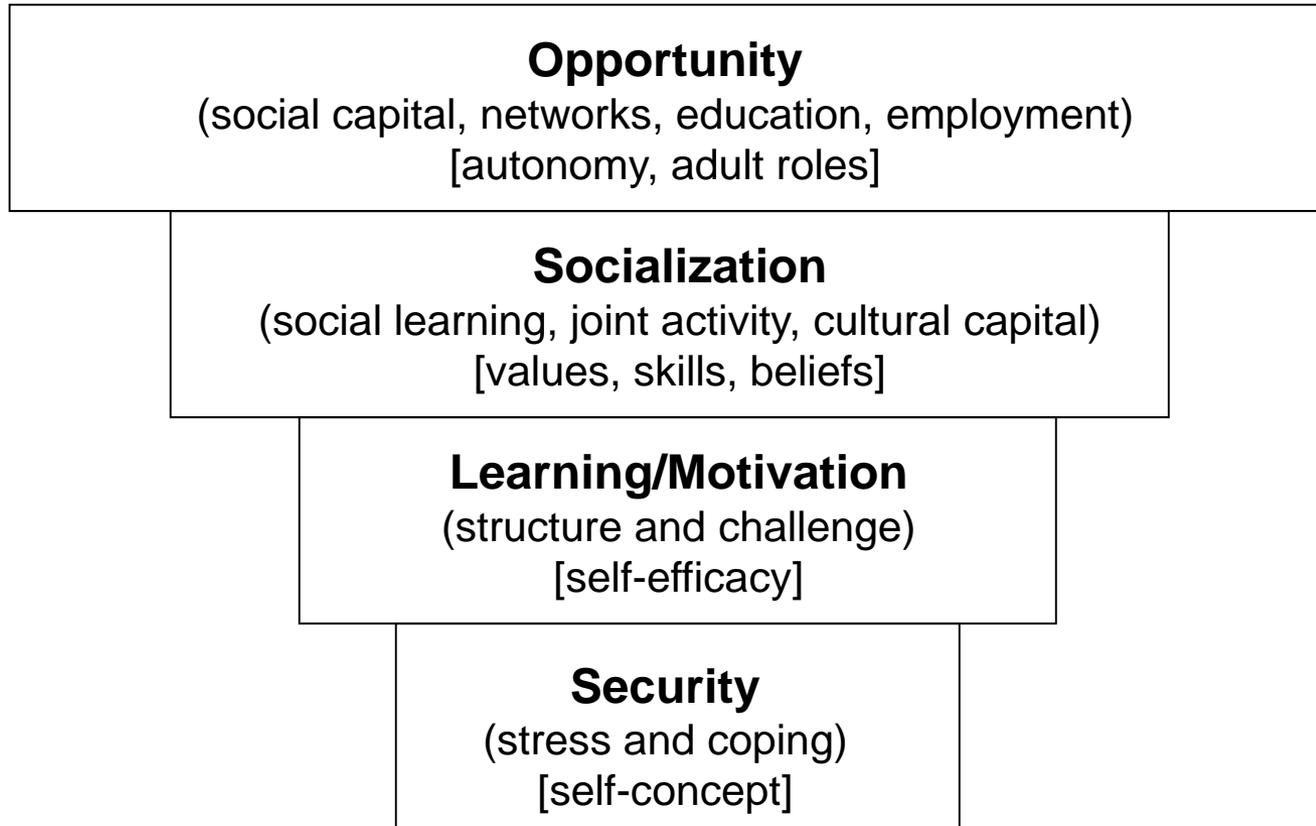 - Scientist
  - Explorer/Discoverer
  - Learner

Theory → Practice → Research → (cycle)
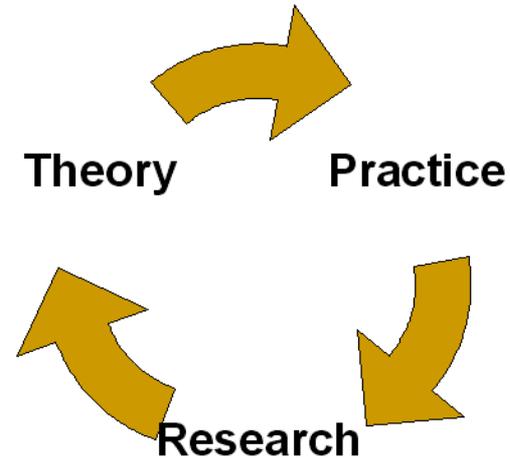
Purpose/Aims

- **General models for youth mentoring**
  - Domains (Rhodes, 2002)
    - Social-emotional
    - Cognitive
    - Identity
  - Functions (Keller, 2007)
    - Protecting from psychosocial risk
    - Enhancing personal competence
    - Promoting social integration
- **Models for workplace mentoring**
  - Personal support
  - Instrumental support
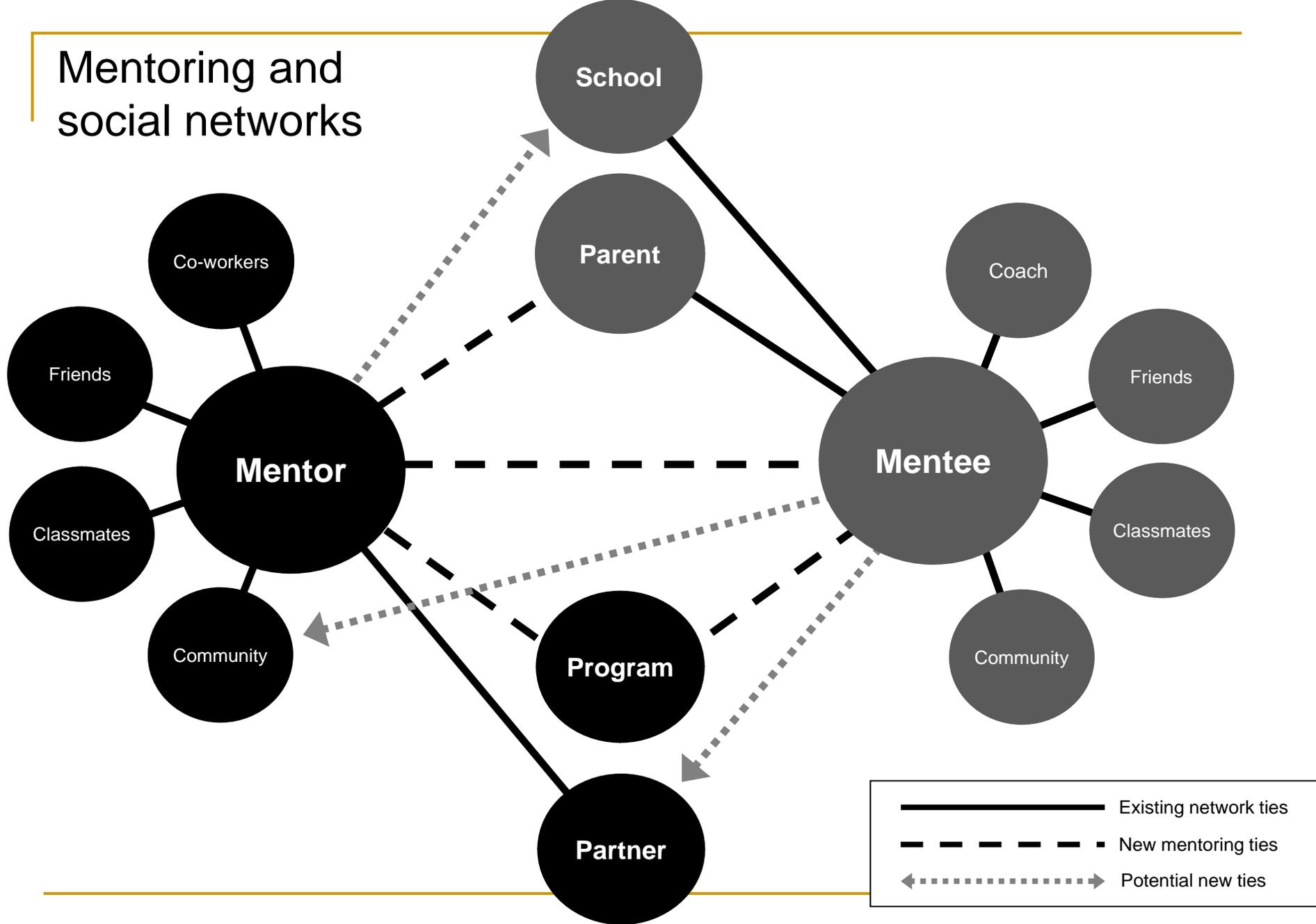
Hierarchical-sequential model

Keller (in progress)

Opportunity
(social capital, networks, education, employment)
[autonomy, adult roles]

Socialization
(social learning, joint activity, cultural capital)
[values, skills, beliefs]

Learning/Motivation
(structure and challenge)
[self-efficacy]

Security
(stress and coping)
[self-concept]

Risks vs. rewards

- Potential for harm
  - Disappointment, exploitation
- Boundaries and expectations
  - Misunderstandings and different perceptions
- Consistency and trust
  - Reliability and confidence

- DISCUSS RELATIONSHIP ITSELF!

Mentoring system

Keller (2005) A systemic model of the youth mentoring intervention

Mentoring and social networks

Legend:
- Existing network ties
- New mentoring ties
- Potential new ties
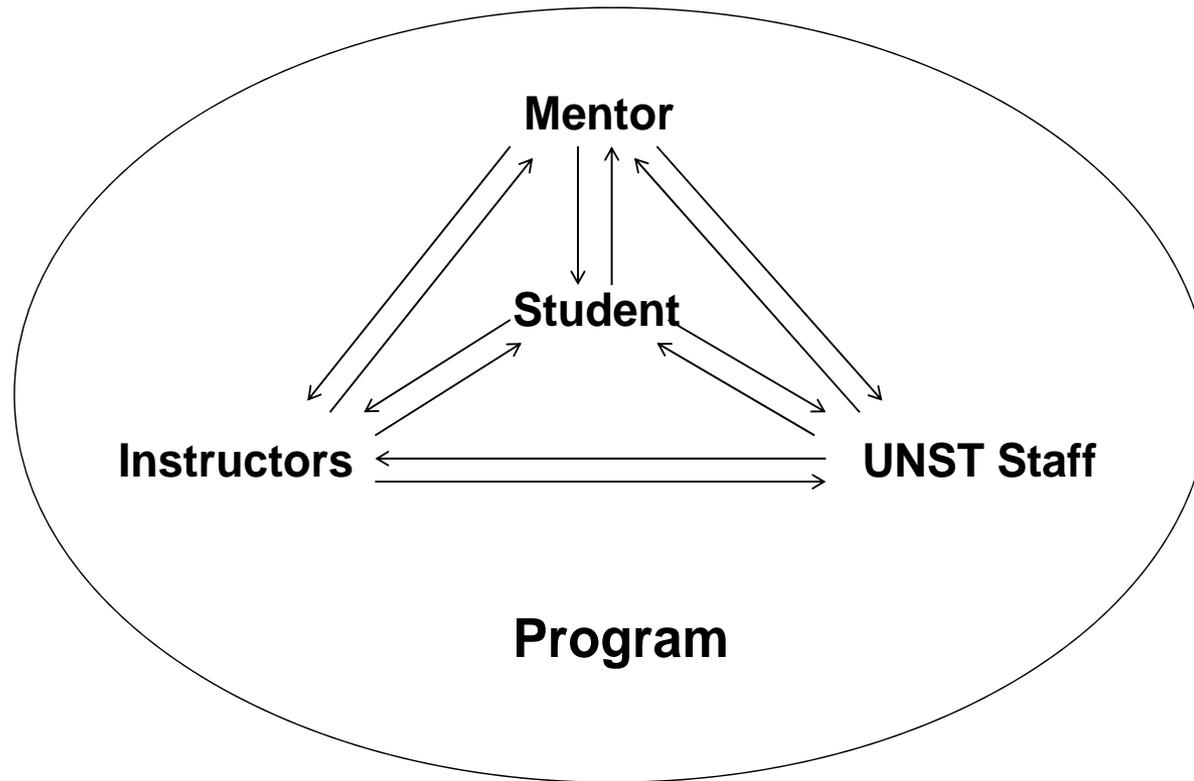
Keller & Blakeslee (2010) Mentoring and social networks

RELATIONSHIP DEVELOPMENT

| Stage	Conceptual features	Research findings	Program practices
Contemplation	Anticipating and preparing for relationship	Mentor motivations, expectations, and goals	Recruiting, screening, training
Initiation	Beginning relationship and becoming acquainted	Mentor patience, similarity of mentor and youth interests	Matching, making introductions
Growth and maintenance	Meeting regularly and establishing patterns of interaction	Frequency and nature of activities, mentor style	Supervising and supporting, ongoing training
Decline and dissolution	Addressing challenges to relationship or ending relationship	Mentor and youth characteristics, mentor style	Supervising and supporting, facilitating closure
Redefinition	Negotiating terms of future contact or rejuvenating relationship	Not available	Facilitating closure, rematching
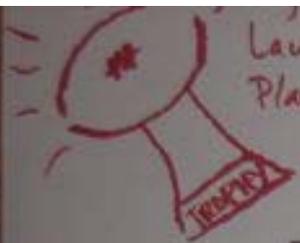
Keller (2005) Stages and development of mentoring relationships
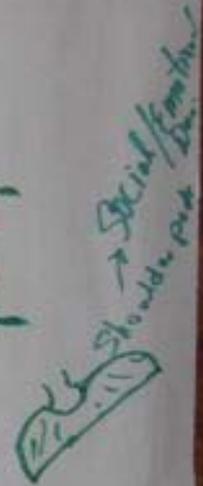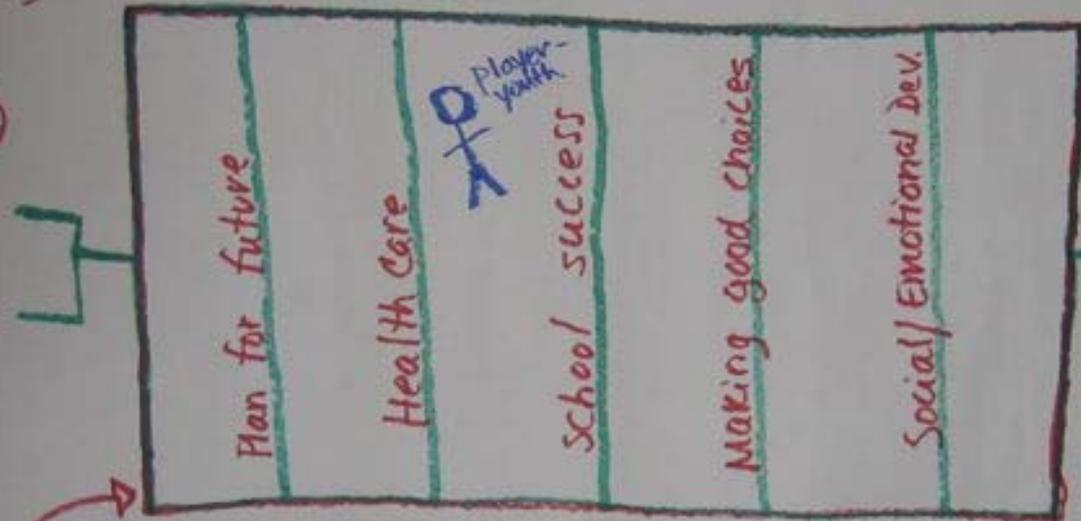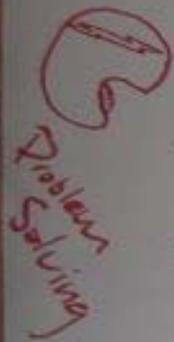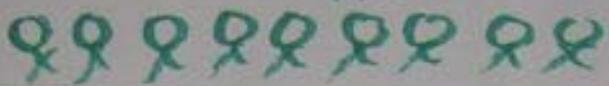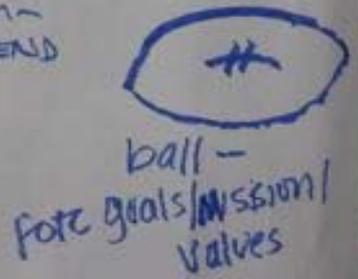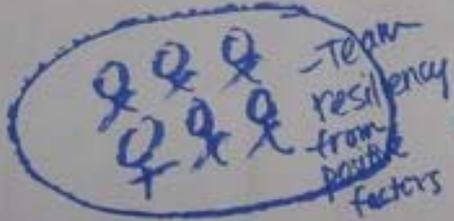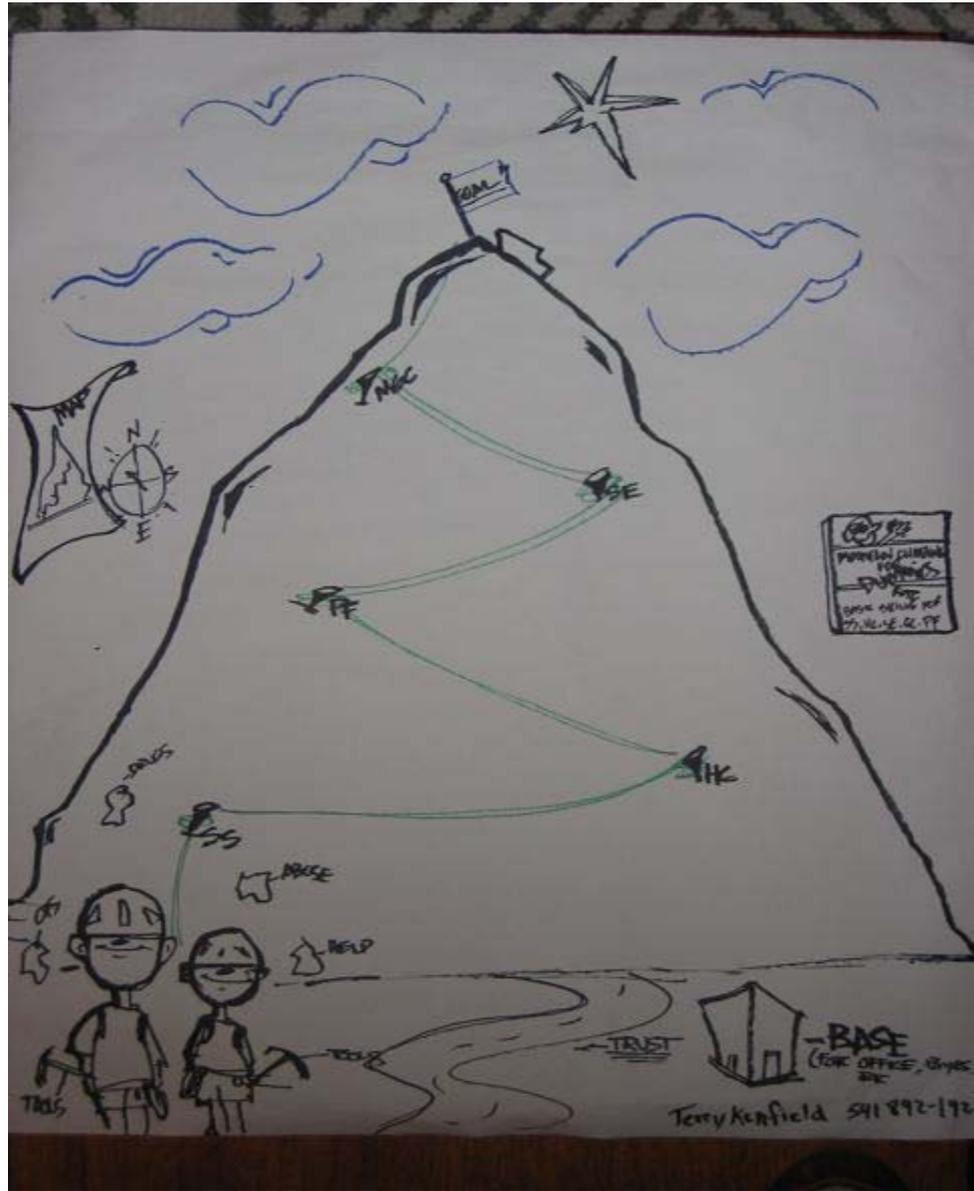
Final thoughts

- Human beings of all ages are happiest and able to deploy their talents to best advantage when they are confident that, standing behind them, there are one or more trusted persons who will come to their aid should difficulties arise.

  - *John Bowlby*

Center for Interdisciplinary Mentoring Research

- www.mentoring.research.pdx.edu
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- Kay Logan, Center Coordinator