**Mentor:**

Mentor teachers have become key players in launching student teachers into the teaching profession. Mentor teachers are recognized for their practical knowledge of the teaching profession, which complements the theoretical knowledge that the student teacher has acquired from the university.

The Role of Teacher, when I ask adults to reflect on their most significant mentoring experience, they describe a special teacher, one they say really connected with them and guided them through the memorable process of self-discovery. The learning they recall transcends a particular time and place and resulted in enduring and meaningful learning that remains useful to this day. Teachers who prepare themselves as mentors increase their potential to enhance student growth and development, help students maximize education experiences, and enrich their own teaching experience and professional development. Mentors often report that they gain exposure to new and diverse perspectives, improve coaching and listening skills, find work more meaningful and satisfying, hone desired leadership skills, and often become reengaged professionally. Teachers mentor students for a multitude of reasons.

Some teachers gravitate quite naturally toward mentoring. Others find themselves uncomfortably thrust into the role. Even under the best circumstances, most teachers are either unprepared or underprepared for the mentor role. Whether you formally or informally mentor graduate or undergraduate adult learners, or mentor other teachers (also adult learners), adequate preparation is essential. This chapter describes the mentoring journey, provides signposts to navigate the four phases of the journey, and raises reflection questions to encourage more critically reflective mentoring practice.

The strategies for promoting effective learning in a mentoring relationship are congruent with those used to facilitate student learning:

 • Ask questions. The questions can open a learning conversation or shut it down.

• Reformulate statements. By rephrasing what you have heard, you clarify your own understanding and encourage the mentee to hear what it is he or she has articulated.

• Summarize. Summarizing reinforces the learning and is a reminder of what has transpired.

• Listen for the silence. Silence provides an opportunity for learning.

• Listen reflectively. When you listen reflectively, hold up a mirror for the mentee (Daloz, 1999).

• Provide consistent feedback. Candid and compassionate feedback is a powerful stimulus for learning.