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YOUR GUIDE TO **MENTORING**

Everything you need to know
to find, and be, a great mentor



MOST SUCCESSFUL PSYCHOLOGISTS will tell you they didn't make it all on their own. They had the help of at least one mentor who served not only as an advisor but also as a role model, guide and colleague. Research shows that effective guidance from a mentor plays a critical role in one's career: People who've had strong mentoring perform at a higher level, contribute more to their field and earn higher salaries than those who didn't have such relationships. ¶ In these pages, we highlight the best practices for mentoring, innovative ways to find the right mentor and advice on how to steer clear of common ethical pitfalls when mentoring. Pass it on.

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COVER: ROBERT NEUBECKER



BECOMING A GREAT MENTOR

A successful mentor is not just an advisor, but a role model, guide and colleague. Here's how to make the most of this important role.

BY CHRIS PALMER | PHOTOGRAPHY BY VANCE JACOBS

In Homer's "Odyssey," the character Mentor serves as the trusted older counselor to Odysseus's son, Telemachus. In the intervening centuries, the word has come to mean someone who gives guidance, shares knowledge and imparts wisdom. In academia, however, the term often gets watered down to refer to an advisor—someone

who helps undergraduate students choose the right courses to graduate or oversees doctoral projects to completion.

But true mentors do much more, from serving as role models to helping incubate research projects to bringing protégés into a network of colleagues. Unfortunately, only a quarter of college graduates report having

Dr. Jan Estrellado (left) and Dr. Nadine Nakamura (right) met two years ago through the Asian American Psychological Association Leadership Fellows Program and found they shared overlapping identities.

had any professor who cared about them, and fewer report having had a mentor, according to a large 2014 Gallup–Purdue University study. "A lot of colleges and universities advertise with glossy brochures about how students have rich mentorships with faculty," says W. Brad Johnson, PhD, a professor of psychology at the U.S. Naval

Academy and author of three books and dozens of journal articles about mentoring. “And it turns out that’s just not true.”

As for graduate students, 60 to 70 percent report having a mentor (*Teaching of Psychology*, Vol. 27, No. 4, 2000); for students in PsyD programs that figure dips to 50 to 60 percent (*Psychotherapy: Theory, Research, Practice, Training*, Vol. 37, No. 4, 2000).

There is an implicit assumption among university leaders that people with PhDs or other advanced degrees intuitively know how to mentor. But mentoring is not a skill that comes naturally to everyone—and as the statistics above indicate, many people earn their advanced degrees without the benefit of having a mentor, so they don’t necessarily have a mental map for how to do it effectively when they become faculty (*Science*, Vol. 311, No. 5760, 2006).

Another barrier is that good mentoring takes a lot of time and energy, yet compared with obtaining grants and publishing papers, mentoring often doesn’t “count” for much. And while a few rare institutions provide training in mentorship, most would-be mentors are on their own.

How can you go from being someone who keeps student guidance to a minimum to someone who provides mentees with exactly what they need to succeed? Seasoned mentors offer this advice:

■ **Be clear about the relationship.** The first stepping-stone to becoming an exceptional mentor



is determining what you want your relationship with a mentee to be. From the start, both mentor and mentee should spell out their goals, roles and responsibilities, and how the relationship will work.

“It’s kind of like an informal contract,” says Kimberley Duff, PhD, an associate professor of psychology at Cerritos College in Norwalk, California, who has won multiple awards for her mentoring. “Are you going to meet with them on a regular

Dr. Sannisha K. Dale (left) bonded with Dr. Jessica Henderson Daniel (right) the day Dale interviewed for Boston University’s clinical psychology graduate program. The two have remained close.

basis? Are you going to review papers for them? Are they going to invite you to presentations that they’re giving? This should all be discussed.”

Also, if you don’t have time to be a mentor or the fit doesn’t feel right, be up front about it. “There’s nothing wrong with very gently indicating that there may be someone else who could be an even better mentor,” says Drew Appleby, PhD, a professor emeritus of psychology at Indiana University–Purdue

University Indianapolis who has mentored more than 500 students over the course of his career.

■ **Take the time.** According to experienced mentors, by far the most important thing great mentors do is simply make time for their mentees. While that's not always easy amid a busy academic schedule, it's an essential part of good mentorship because it signals that you value the relationship. Some mentors establish regular check-in times for their mentees. For example, Diane Finley, PhD, a professor of psychology at Prince George's Community College in Largo, Maryland, recommends talking at least once a month either in person or on the phone.

Other mentors make themselves available on an as-needed basis. "If you haven't heard from your mentee in a while, don't wait—just reach out," Johnson says.

■ **Champion their dreams.** Many mentors make the mistake of trying to mold their protégés into mini versions of themselves. But mentoring is about helping a mentee realize his or her goals.

"It's like being a parent," says Nadine Kaslow, PhD, a professor of psychiatry and behavioral sciences at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta. "Good parents don't make their kids into clones of themselves. Instead, they help their kids thrive and flourish doing what they want to do."

And with so many careers for people with psychology degrees

to funnel into, it's rare that students follow closely in their mentor's footsteps, Appleby says.

That's why great mentors make the effort to learn about their mentees' career goals and tailor their mentoring accordingly, Johnson says. "It's only when you have done that work that you can open the right doors and do the right networking and provide the right challenges for a mentee," he says.

A critical part of a mentee's maturation is developing the

Dr. Tyler C. Bradstreet (right) credits Dr. Mike C. Parent (left) with showing him how to balance work, service and self-care. Now at different schools, the two talk regularly about shared research projects.

capacity to cultivate, launch and see through to completion independent research. So, give them the freedom to bring their own ideas to life rather than foisting projects on them that you've come up with.

■ **Learn to listen.** Successful mentors listen to what a mentee is asking for and don't project what they think they should be asking. That's especially important if you've been in the field for years, says Finley. Listening



closely is also key when working with mentees who may not yet even know what they need mentoring in, she adds.

In a related vein, it's critical to learn to ask good questions, says 2018 APA President Jessica Henderson Daniel, PhD, who has mentored hundreds of students as an associate professor of psychology at Harvard Medical School. "Asking questions that stimulate their thinking and problem-solving skills will help guide them toward self-sufficiency," Daniel says.

■ **Model key behaviors.** Once you've taken time to understand a protégé's career goals, show them what it takes to reach those goals. If your mentee is looking for a faculty position and doesn't know how to put together a professional curriculum vitae, show her yours and walk her through how to write it. If a mentee doesn't know how to run a meeting, let him watch you run one.

■ **Offer support.** Long hours, heavy workloads and career uncertainty mean that grad students, postdocs and early career psychologists can feel overwhelmed. So, provide them with support and encouragement, says Johnson. A great mentor is there to accentuate a mentee's development and achievements.

Like anyone else, mentees also have their share of personal problems, so being in



their corner during these times can mean a lot, Johnson adds. "Be prepared to tolerate tears, provide encouragement and do triage when somebody gets into a crisis," he says.

■ **Challenge your mentee.**

That said, part of being a great mentor is resisting the urge to spoon-feed your mentees and allowing them to figure out for

Dr. Maggie Syme (left) and Dr. Linda Mona (right) met 10 years ago, when Syme was on internship and Mona was a clinical supervisor. Today, they are close friends who connect weekly.

themselves what they need to know. "Trainees have to learn to be independent as they navigate becoming a faculty member," Finley says. "They can't rely on you to tell them everything."

So, challenge them, Johnson says. If your mentee struggles with writing, suggest he write a review article. If she's terrified of public speaking, convince her to present at a meeting. "Your

● **To view a slideshow** of more mentor pairs, go to www.apa.org/monitor/digital/mentors.aspx.

mentee may be ticked off at you, but she will likely say, 'Boy, it really pushed me to get more comfortable—I needed that,'" Johnson says.

■ **Stay humble.** Great mentors are willing to say, "I don't know," or to talk about their own failures. "A lot of our mentees are perfectionists," says Jerry Rudmann, PhD, a professor of psychology at Irvine Valley College in California who has mentored hundreds of students. "A mentor who's willing to talk about what didn't go well can be really empowering."

In fact, great mentors may not even call themselves mentors, says Johnson. "I would

hesitate to call myself someone's mentor unless we're formally paired in a mentoring program," he says. Especially if you're in a cross-gender or cross-race relationship, saying you're someone's mentor may signal power and privilege, even ownership. "However, when your mentee starts referring to you as a mentor, then you know you've arrived," he adds.

■ **Give public praise.** A litmus test for mentors is whether they talk about their mentees when they are not in the room. "Are you telling people how great your protégé is? Are you introducing them to key people and networking them in? That's sponsorship, and it's crucial to a mentee's success," says Johnson. But don't be disingenuous. You're not helping your mentee when you praise them excessively or give them credit for something they didn't do. And you still have to carefully evaluate their work.

■ **Let the relationship grow.** The best mentorships become more friendly and mutual over time, so allow this relationship to evolve naturally, Kaslow says. Treating mentees more as colleagues than underlings provides them with much-needed validation and makes a big difference in their self-perception. While in some ways, "once a mentor, always a mentor," it's common for the best relationships to flower into true collegiality, she adds. "Before you know it, your student will be writing letters of recommendation for you," she says.

RESOURCES

On Being a Mentor: A Guide for Higher Education Faculty (2nd ed.)

Johnson, W.B.
Routledge, 2015

The Elements of Mentoring (3rd ed.)

Johnson, W.B., & Ridley, C.R.
St. Martin's Press, 2018

APA's Tips for Mentors

[www.apa.org/pi/disability/
resources/mentoring/tips-
mentors.aspx](http://www.apa.org/pi/disability/resources/mentoring/tips-mentors.aspx)

APA's Introduction to Mentoring:

A Guide for Mentors and Mentees

[www.apa.org/education/grad/
mentoring.aspx](http://www.apa.org/education/grad/mentoring.aspx)

RESEARCH

WHY WE NEED MENTORS

Research shows that well-mentored people are more likely than those without good mentorship to:

- Be competent and confident.
- Perform at a higher level.
- Receive better evaluations and promotions.
- Make more money.
- Contribute more to their field on a variety of measures, including number and quality of publications.
- Be loyal to their institutions, which translates into increased giving as alumni and increased retention and lowered attrition, especially for junior faculty.
- Mentor others themselves.

"Good mentoring shapes not only the current generation, but future generations as well," says W. Brad Johnson, PhD, a professor of psychology at the U.S. Naval Academy and author of three books and dozens of journal articles about mentoring.

■ **Enjoy the benefits.** Finally, great mentoring is not just give, give, give. There are many advantages to shepherding the next generation of psychologists, Duff says. First are the intrinsic benefits. "It's like having your own children go on and be successful and you have a small part in it," she says. "It can be extremely rewarding."

In the extrinsic sense, appreciative mentees often pay back the efforts you've made on their behalf, Johnson adds. They can broaden your network, bring you in on new collaborations and even let you know about job opportunities, according to research by Rajashi Ghosh, PhD, and Thomas G. Reio Jr., PhD (*Journal of Vocational Behavior*, Vol. 83, No. 1, 2013).

"There's lots of reciprocity as these relationships evolve," Johnson says. ■



NEW WAYS TO FIND THE RIGHT MENTOR

Thanks to new technology and a variety of innovative programs, it's easier to find a mentor suited to your needs

BY CHRIS PALMER

Until recently, if you wanted someone to help guide you in your career, the pool of available mentors was limited by geographical location—specifically by your university. And the pool of possible mentors who shared similar values, experiences and backgrounds with you was even smaller.

Now, thanks to mobile devices, email and other technologies, it's much easier to find the best mentor for your unique needs. You can even find mentors who offer just short-term guidance on specific topics, peer-to-peer mentors or reverse mentoring relationships in which early career psychologists guide already established ones.

APA divisions, psychology leaders, students and others have developed innovative mentoring approaches to help in any form, area or level you need. Here are some of the most interesting developments.

VIRTUAL MENTORING

Not all mentoring relationships are built to last for years. For some students, having easy access to a variety of leaders in their field can help meet their immediate mentoring needs.

“Our division has always had a mentoring program, but we ran into some of the same challenges other divisions did—students didn’t feel like they were really connecting well with their mentors long-term,” says

ROBERT NEUBECKER

Desa Karye Daniel, a counseling education doctoral student at the University of New Mexico and a student representative for APA Div. 45 (Society for the Psychological Study of Culture, Ethnicity and Race).

So, in 2017 Daniel and the division's mentorship committee launched a virtual mentoring program. Rather than matching one student to one mentor, they recruited several Div. 45 psychologists to serve as mentors on specific topics.

For the program's first year, eight mentors met with students virtually for an hour a week for three weeks. In the first session, the mentor gave a formal talk about a specific topic. The second and third sessions were more informal, giving students a chance to ask questions.

"That first session really gives you an idea of who that mentor is and if you want to actually attend the following sessions," Daniel explains.

Early feedback indicated that participants wanted more mentors to choose from and fewer sessions. So, in 2018 the program recruited 13 additional mentors who provided just two sessions: an initial overview session and a free-form, question and answer session. One of the most popular was a session with Cynthia de las Fuentes, PhD, an Austin, Texas-based psychologist, on how to start a private practice. Another well-liked session was hosted by Div. 45 President Helen A. Neville, PhD, a professor of African-American studies and educational psychology at the University of Illinois at

A new mentoring and networking app called Grip allows users to swipe through potential matches and select those they want to meet.

Urbana-Champaign, who talked about grant writing and the publication process.

In just two years, the program has blossomed, with more than 150 students participating in real time in the first year and 400 in the second. Hundreds more have since viewed the archived sessions online.

"We've had amazing, amazing feedback," Daniel says. "People were super excited about the topics we offered and about the diversity of the mentors."

Div. 45 is experimenting with other novel approaches to mentoring as well. These include short-term, goal-oriented mentoring focused on practical topics such as applying for scholarships and submitting proposals to APA. The division also hosts an annual in-person mentoring session at APA's Annual Convention. Similar to speed dating, these sessions give students a chance to visit one mentor at a table to chat about a specific topic, then move to another table after several minutes. "Our virtual mentorship is super successful, but people still need face-to-face interaction," Daniel says.

THERE'S AN APP, OF COURSE

Dating is also a good metaphor for another new mentoring tool, a networking and mentoring app called Grip that APA's

Continuing Education Committee is using to bring together people at its conferences.

First used at APA's 2018 Annual Convention in San Francisco, Grip pulls in registration information about APA members—their division affiliations, interests, fellowship status and more—to come up with matches for a range of purposes.

"Grip can help early career psychologists meet a variety of needs, whether they're trying to figure out the ins and outs of setting up a private practice, negotiating tenure and promotion or interviewing for a job," says Greg Neimeyer, PhD, associate executive director of APA's Office of Continuing Education in Psychology. "Grip can be especially useful at our big meeting, where we've got more than 10,000 people, many of whom want to find ways to connect with one another in meaningful ways," he says.

As with dating apps like Match.com or Tinder, users swipe through potential matches and select those they want to meet with. The app even recommends spots for easy meetups at the convention.

As Grip begins to generate data from interactions and user feedback, it may become useful for other purposes as well, Neimeyer says. These data may indicate patterns, for example, that reflect the kinds of things early, mid- or late-career psychologists are looking for, which could inspire the creation of formal career development programs offered by the Continuing Education Committee.

PROJECT-BASED MENTORING

Not all mentoring occurs at conferences or in the halls of academia. For psychologists who have been out in the field for a while, learning new skills and acquiring new competencies can be critical for career development. Div. 13 (Society of Consulting Psychology) recognized that its members could benefit from hands-on, project-based mentorship, while also creating a much-needed pipeline of leaders for its board.

"Like all boards, we had a backlog of projects," recalls Carolyn Humphrey, PhD, founder of the Charlotte, North Carolina-based Consulting Psychology Group. "And it was increasingly difficult to get division members to step up to leadership positions."

The solution Humphrey and fellow board member Melanie Kinser, PhD, founder of the consulting firm ThinkWyn, hit upon was to kill two birds with one stone by creating a yearlong mentoring program, which they dubbed the Leadership Development Initiative, and having the participants work on projects to advance the board's mission.

Humphrey and Kinser prioritized 10 projects the board needed to complete that corresponded to a set of competencies they identified as important for the field of consulting psychology. Then they recruited 10 mentees through a competitive selection process, bringing them to Seattle for a three-day session before the division's February 2017 conference, where they did a 360-degree competency

assessment, a management simulation, and team-building and peer-coaching exercises.

Over the next 12 months, the mentees met virtually as a cohort, talked regularly with their mentors and worked on their projects, which included creating a membership survey, implementing a branding initiative and updating board policy guidelines.

"We really progressed on some critical projects," Humphrey says.

Another plus: The program also filled several vacancies on the board, with nine of 10 mentees taking division leadership positions.

"That was not expected," Humphrey says. "Not only are they in leadership positions, they're way ahead of the game. Unlike previous incoming boards, this group had already spent a year working together."

EGALITARIAN MENTORING

Another novel approach to mentoring makes it an explicitly egalitarian enterprise. That's what APA Div. 35 (Society for the Psychology of Women) is doing with its Mentor Match Program, which it bills as a feminist mentoring program open to both female and male feminist psychologists.

"Historically, mentoring doesn't necessarily take into account what the mentee thinks, feels or values," says Olivia Moorehead-Slaughter, PhD, a psychologist at the Park School in Brookline, Massachusetts. "All of those things are central in feminist mentoring, which is

Not only do young people have a wide variety of tech skills they can impart to more senior colleagues, but they also often approach problems with a fresh perspective.



by definition mutually respectful, nonhierarchical and sometimes bidirectional" (*Mentoring & Tutoring*, Vol. 25, No. 5, 2016).

Mentor Match assumes that power is shared and there is mutual agreement about what the mentoring will be about, adds Moorehead-Slaughter, who initiated the program. "The purpose is not for the mentee to be a cookie-cutter copy of the mentor, but for the mentor to be a source of wisdom, advice and support in the areas identified by the mentee," she says.

"Mentor Match is another outlet for women graduate students to talk through personal and professional challenges in a safe place with someone who's been there and can relate to their experiences," says Monica Ellis-Blied, PhD, a psychologist at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' VA Loma Linda Healthcare System in California, who organizes Mentor Match along

with Alexandra Minieri, PhD, a psychologist at George Mason University Counseling and Psychological Services.

Because of its lack of hierarchy, feminist mentoring can be bidirectional, says Moorehead-Slaughter, with senior career psychologists encouraged to request mentoring from early career psychologists. “Implementing new technology, such as telepsychology and social media marketing, is one area where we really learn a lot from our younger colleagues,” she says.

THE STUDENT IS THE TEACHER

Not only do young people have a wide variety of tech skills they can impart to more senior colleagues, they also often approach problems with a fresh perspective. Reverse mentoring is tapping into this opportunity, says 2016 APA President Susan H. McDaniel, PhD.

“Any time you take an important leadership role, understanding how talented young people think is critical,” she says. “Their viewpoint is different, and they sometimes have the best ideas. But there’s not a systematic way to hear from them.”

McDaniel says the idea of using reverse mentoring occurred to her after working with a group of younger colleagues to pass the policy requiring at least one early career psychologist on every APA board and committee. “When I was elected APA president, I thought it might be really helpful to get a group of

seven or eight early career folks representing different facets of psychology and ask them to mentor me. We then organized monthly calls,” she explains. “I would ask the group, ‘Here’s what we’re up against. What do you think I should do about it?’ And then I’d sit back and listen to their points of view, which were often different than those I heard from more experienced leaders across the association. This early career psychologist mentoring group was very helpful to me and informed many of my decisions during my president-elect and presidential years.”

McDaniel was not the only one to benefit from the collaboration: The early career psychologists gained valuable leadership experience and networking opportunities, says Lindsey Buckman, PsyD, founder of Phoenix-based Buckman Psychological Consultants, who was part of the group. “Having that sort of access to an APA president is certainly unique, and I really appreciated the chance to consult with Susan and provide my feedback,” Buckman says.

PEER-TO-PEER MENTORING

Another growing mentoring relationship is peer-to-peer mentoring, which is the focus of the Peer Collaboration Program run by the American Psychological Association of Graduate Students’ Committee for the Advancement of Racial and Ethnic Diversity (CARED).

“The impetus behind the peer-to-peer mentoring was

our own personal experiences,” says CARED member Fiona Thomas, a doctoral student in the clinical psychology program at Ryerson University in Toronto. “Being from diverse backgrounds, we wanted to give graduate students a way to connect with fellow students when the opportunity to meet up face-to-face with people in their program or in their area wasn’t available.”

The Peer Collaboration Program was conceived of by former CARED member Shadab “Daisy” Hussain and was initially developed by Hussain and current CARED member Ryan C. Warner in late 2016. The most recent cycle started in March 2018 with 14 groups of three to four people each. The groups meet via email, Google Hangouts or other online platforms to discuss prompts that cover topics relevant to ethnic minorities in psychology such as professional identity development, career goals, self-care, diversity-related advocacy and conducting research related to racially and ethnically diverse populations.

“The program is something that I wish I would have had when I first started my doctoral training—a time when I felt like I was grasping for straws trying to find a community,” says CARED member Mary Odafe, a doctoral student in the clinical psychology program at the University of Houston. “If a program like this had been around, I certainly would have participated, so I’m happy that we get to be a part of bringing that to others.” ■

RESOURCES

APA Division 13 Leadership Development Initiative

www.societyofconsultingpsychology.org/leadership-development-initiative

APA Division 45 Mentoring Program

division45.org/students/division-45-mentoring-program

APA Graduate and Postgraduate Mentoring

www.apa.org/education/grad/mentors.aspx



MENTORS FOR ALL

Students and early career psychologists from underrepresented backgrounds can face challenges in finding mentors. Universities and professional organizations are stepping up to address the need.

BY CHRIS PALMER

In the spring of 2013, Mei Chen was seeking advice on applying to graduate school. She wrote emails to a handful of professors asking for guidance but got no response. A few weeks later, she wrote to a few others. Again, no response. In reality, though, there was no Mei Chen: She was a persona, one of many with race-signaling names created by researchers who sent out such emails as part

of a study on faculty's responses to emails seeking mentorship. The study found that faculty primarily responded to such requests from students with non-minority-sounding names (*Journal of Applied Psychology*, Vol. 100, No. 6, 2015). Mei Chen, and the research behind her, shed light on a real problem in academia.

"While it's possible these students with names that

Desa Karye Daniel (left) and Dr. Barbara Thelamour (right) struck up a conversation at a 2015 Div. 45 meeting and discovered a shared sense of humor that laid the foundation for a strong mentor-mentee relationship.

signaled racial minority status were not intentionally ignored, minority students are certainly not getting the same encouragement or opportunities," says Jennifer Teramoto Pedrotti, PhD, associate dean for diversity and curriculum in the College of Liberal Arts at California Polytechnic State University (Cal Poly).

Now, in an effort to make the field of psychology more

VANCE JACOBS

inclusive to *all* individuals, universities and professional societies are identifying the challenges that underrepresented trainees face in finding mentors and offering programs to connect them with experienced faculty.

STRETCHED THIN

Being ignored by faculty is just one of the many ways that psychologists and psychology students from historically disenfranchised backgrounds are denied equitable mentorship. Other common experiences include unequal access to research and training opportunities, fewer chances to connect with professors and a lack of mentors who understand their diverse life experiences.

Many of these challenges are brought on by the lack of diversity among a department's faculty. "As a student, if you're not seeing anyone who looks like you at your institution, it might be a little intimidating to reach out and initiate contact," Pedrotti says.

Such hesitation not only translates to a failure to connect with potential mentors but could mean missed chances to engage in career-advancing activities outside the classroom. "If I have a research project coming up, I'm more likely to offer the opportunity to someone who's been coming to office hours or engaging with me in other ways," Pedrotti says. "So, having access and regular contact with professors is important."

In addition to seeking career advice, underrepresented individuals often look for mentors who

Faculty can help fill the need by becoming more savvy about diversity through training on implicit bias and related topics.

understand the cultural component of their work, says Edward Delgado-Romero, PhD, a professor of counseling psychology at the University of Georgia. They also seek mentors who have been through some of the same hardships they have faced. "Young people find it refreshing to talk to someone who they don't have to convince that their experiences are real," he says.

Unfortunately, even for trainees lucky enough to have faculty from diverse communities in their department, chances are those professors already have a full mentoring load. "If you're the only faculty of color, for example, in a training program that is trying to increase the number of students of color, you're probably going to be stretched fairly thin," says Karen Suyemoto, PhD, co-founder of the Asian American Psychological Association's (AAPA) Leadership Fellows Program.

SHARING STRUGGLES

When a university department lacks diversity, faculty members' cultural competence is key to mentoring students from underrepresented groups, says Pedrotti. "You don't always need a perfect match," she says. "For example, someone who's Asian-American doesn't need to mentor only Asian-American students." Being open and

listening to all kinds of students as they share their experiences can provide a needed sense of validation, she adds.

Delgado-Romero says if trainees can't find a mentor in their home department, they should branch out by looking for a match in an adjacent department, a nearby hospital, a state association or an ethnic-minority psychological association such as the National Latinx Psychological Association (NLPA) or the Association of Black Psychologists. Approaching people at conferences is also a viable way to find mentorship. "When I was starting out, I drove a couple of hours just to attend a workshop given by [noted multicultural counseling psychologist] Patricia Arredondo, just hoping to get some of her wisdom," recalls Delgado-Romero, who went on to found the NLPA with Arredondo. "She ended up inviting me to lunch and she became my mentor, but I had to take the step of really reaching out and trying to connect."

As someone who now mentors students around the country, Delgado-Romero seeks mentees who are fairly independent but may need some support in specific areas. "If someone is just wanting to share struggles, that's OK too, but at some point, we have to get to work and do something," he says.

Meanwhile, all faculty can help by becoming more savvy about diversity through the trainings on implicit bias, micro-aggressions and related topics that many university departments are beginning to offer.

FINDING COMMUNITY

While faculty demographics are striving to catch up with those of the wider society, several programs are making it easier for trainees from under-represented communities to get the mentorship they need. They include:

■ Society of Indian Psychologists Native-to-Native Mentoring Program.

With just over 300 psychologists in the United States identifying as American Indian/Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian, the chances of a Native trainee finding a Native mentor are slim. As a result, most Native students settle for mentors with whom they may not be able to connect due to cultural differences.

To help Native students get the mentorship they need, the Society of Indian Psychologists (SIP) runs the Native-to-Native Mentoring Program, which provides “communal counsel,” modeled in a way that is culturally congruent for Native students. Each year, Native students also have an opportunity to take part in a gathering held in conjunction with SIP’s annual conference.

“The leaders of the mentoring group help establish not just professional networking but also cultural and community networking, with support from the larger Native group,” says psychologist Wendy Peters, PhD, an associate faculty member at Antioch University in Yellow Springs, Ohio. “We also keep in touch through virtual meetings and a second in-person gathering each year.



As our program has evolved, our mentees have eventually become mentors, and we continue to grow more each year.”

This kind of communal support for Native students has made an enormous difference for their careers. “Top scholars in their classes have told me, ‘Were it not for your program, I would have dropped out and walked away,’” Peters says. “It would be a shame to lose brilliant young people from the profession, but this is frankly where we’re at.”

■ **AAPA Early Career and Graduate Student Leadership Fellows Programs.** Suyemoto, a former AAPA president, helped the association launch its Leadership Fellows Program 10 years ago when it noticed that early career Asian-American psychologists seemed reluctant to step into major leadership roles.

In the two-year program, two fellows are matched with a mentor who they meet with once a month in person or by phone. The focus is on leadership development, but discussions often touch on professional and

Dr. Nicholas Grant (left) and his mentee Lester Papa (right) matched through the APAGS Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity’s LGBTQ+ graduate student mentoring program in 2018.

personal goals. Common topics also encompass successfully negotiating cultural and racial discrimination and internalized racism. In the second year, mentees take on a project that is aimed at expanding on their professional interests as well as advancing AAPA’s mission.

“Many of the mentors are alums of the program,” says Nellie Tran, PhD, an assistant professor of community and multi-cultural counseling psychology at San Diego State University, who has co-directed the early career fellows program for several years. “So, they understand that we’re looking for someone who will work with our fellows in a holistic manner.” In 2017, Tran developed and launched the AAPA Graduate Student Leadership Institute, a three-day intensive program addressing the mentoring and professional community needs of Asian-American students. “We wanted to bring together folks who were sprinkled around the country, provide them with a strong foundation, network and a support system to help them through their programs,” Tran says.

■ **The APAGS Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity LGBTQ+ Mentoring Program.** Trainees identifying as LGBTQ+ can have a particularly hard time finding mentors, says Mary Guerrant, PhD, chair of the APAGS Committee on Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity and an assistant professor of psychology at the State University of New York, Cobleskill. One big

challenge is visibility. “Unlike more visible identities, such as race, LGBTQ+ identities are often much less apparent,” she says. “This makes it hard for LGBTQ+ individuals to find LGBTQ+-identified mentors without outing themselves, which can be a challenge in and of itself.”

Particularly for transgender and gender-nonconforming individuals, there’s a stigma associated with even asking for a mentor. Research also shows LGBTQ+ graduate students and early career professionals feel a need to overcompensate, by showing they can do things on their own, when faced with perceived discrimination or marginalization (*The Career Development Quarterly*, Vol. 49, No. 4, 2001; *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Vol. 40, No. 2, 2009).

As a result, many are hesitant to ask for any kind of help. Also, while disclosing identity can be an issue of comfort, in some places it’s also a safety issue.

The APAGS mentoring program started five years ago. Each year, the program pairs about 50 early psychology graduate students with more advanced graduate students or professionals. Typically, matches are based on specific needs. Some want to be matched with a mentor with a similar professional background. Others want mentors who can help them decide how to come out in their graduate program or the world at large. Other trainees may want to do research with LGBTQ+ individuals and seek mentors with expertise in this area.

If trainees can’t find a mentor in their department, they can look for a match in an adjacent department or their state association.

■ **APA Office on Disability Issues in Psychology Disability Mentoring Program.** Individuals with disabilities are sorely underrepresented in graduate psychology programs and careers. Few enter the field, and those who do often experience frustration that can lead to higher-than-average dropout rates. APA’s Office on Disability Issues in Psychology developed a mentoring program to counteract these trends.

The Disability Mentoring Program matches students from various disability identities with either a mentor who identifies as an individual with a disability or an ally who is closely engaged in disability issues, research, practice or education. Mentors help to empower their trainees by offering insights on career paths, recommending which areas to study and even helping trainees navigate family relationships in which loved ones may not fully support a student’s career goals.

The program supports an average of 50 mentor-mentee pairs, and has a waitlist. Some mentors continue to work with students after they have graduated. “We ask that mentees take the lead as far as introducing themselves and develop at least three goals to achieve within the mentoring relationship,” says Maggie Butler, PhD, director of the Office on Disability Issues in Psychology. “We also

ask that mentors develop goals, because we believe that mentorship should be beneficial for the mentor as well.”

■ **Cal Poly College of Liberal Arts Underrepresented Students Network.** Despite its efforts to attract more students and faculty of diverse backgrounds, Cal Poly is still a predominantly white institution. That prompted the College of Liberal Arts Student Diversity Committee to set up the Cal Poly College of Liberal Arts Underrepresented Students Network, a peer-mentoring program that helps students find community, learn about career resources and get advice from peers. Students on the committee offer training on a variety of topics—including active listening and understanding the power of assumptions—to peer mentors, each of whom works with two to four mentees.

Cal Poly also hosts the BEACoN Mentor Network, an effort to bring undergraduate research opportunities and mentoring to students from historically disenfranchised backgrounds. The network offers professional development opportunities for students and faculty, including workshops on such topics as conceptualizing personal strengths, authentic storytelling and implicit-bias training. “It makes students feel more comfortable interacting with academics,” says Pedrotti, who oversees the Underrepresented Students Network and co-created BEACoN. “Then, on top, some students are able to form strong connections that lead to more formal mentoring.” ■



HOW TO MENTOR ETHICALLY

Mentoring the next generation of psychologists is one of the most important contributions you can make to the field. Here's how to avoid ethical pitfalls while ensuring your mentees' professional and academic success.

BY CHRIS PALMER

Fresh from a research-oriented PhD program, “Dr. Smith,” a new assistant professor in a clinical PsyD program, was frustrated and mystified when some of her brightest doctoral students transferred to other advisers. The program’s training director

confided to her that several of these students reported feeling pressure to pursue research careers although most of them were interested in professional practice. After some soul-searching and consultation with a seasoned faculty member, Smith realized she’d been

attempting to clone her students in her own image, losing sight of the need for transparency around expectations of mentees and her ethical obligation to understand and promote her students’ autonomy in selecting their career paths. This scenario illustrates just one of the many

ROBERT NEUBECKER

ways psychologists who mentor trainees can inadvertently step into ethical trouble.

“Psychologists are generally conscientious and ethically minded,” says Fred Millán, PhD, director of the SUNY Old Westbury graduate mental health counseling program and chair of APA’s Ethics Committee. “Most ethical lapses are inadvertent and may come from a lack of awareness of ethical considerations rather than from malfeasance.”

To minimize harm and maximize the quality of mentoring relationships, experts offer this advice, starting at the beginning stages of the relationship.

■ **Prepare.** Before becoming a mentor, consider the time, energy and emotional capital that you will need to invest to support a trainee’s academic and professional growth. “There’s an implicit assumption on the part of most university leaders that if you have an advanced degree like a PhD, then surely you can mentor,” says W. Brad Johnson, PhD, professor of psychology at the U.S. Naval Academy and author of four books about mentoring. “But that’s not always true.”

Mentoring can take many forms, including helping students choose coursework, overseeing research projects, providing emotional support, and helping trainees build networks and find jobs. Even experienced mentors have to be honest with themselves about the limits of their mentoring capabilities, says Drew Appleby, PhD, a professor emeritus of psychology at Indiana

Be clear with yourself and your potential mentee about the parameters of your relationship. Spell out how long the mentorship will last, how often you will meet and the amount of time you’re prepared to offer.

University–Purdue University Indianapolis who mentored more than 750 students during his time at the university.

“You want to make absolutely sure that if the student needs more than you can give, that you don’t try to bluff them into thinking you can help them,” he says.

■ **Manage expectations.** In a related vein, be clear with yourself and your potential mentee about the parameters of your relationship. Spell out how long the mentorship will last, how often you will meet and the amount of time you’re prepared to offer, advises Nadine Kaslow, PhD, professor of psychiatry and behavioral science at Emory University School of Medicine in Atlanta and past president of APA. That includes clarifying fuzzy relationships. “Sometimes people think you’re their mentor, but you don’t think you’re their mentor,” she says. “And so, in an unspoken way, they may expect things from you, and when you don’t provide them, they can become disappointed.” To head off such misunderstandings, talk with potential mentees early on about what they, and you, expect from the relationship.

■ **Be inclusive.** It’s also ethically imperative to mentor diverse students, not just those who are similar to yourself. While such

relationships may take more time and care to develop than those with demographically similar students, evidence shows that cross-gender, cross-race and cross-sexual-orientation mentoring relationships can be just as effective and produce the same outcomes (*Mentoring and Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, Vol. 17, No. 3, 2009).

To reach out, attend conferences hosted by diverse organizations at your campus and tell your college’s academic advising officers that you would like to mentor diverse students.

Similarly, find ways to reach out to shy or underperforming students, says Chris Brown, PhD, chair of counseling and educational psychology at the University of Missouri–Kansas City. “Highly successful students might find it easier to seek out mentoring relationships compared to students who see themselves as possessing characteristics that might make them *appear* as less desirable prospects,” she says. “We certainly want all students to have equal access to mentoring opportunities and don’t want unfair discrimination to occur when faculty are making decisions about who they would mentor.”

■ **Protect mentees’ privacy.** Mentees benefit when they perceive mentorships as safe spaces for divulging their fears,

concerns and perceived failures. As a general ethical guideline, mentors should always work to protect mentees' privacy while remaining mindful that mentor-mentee communications are not privileged in a legal sense, nor confidential in the sense of psychologist-client communications. But while keeping mentee disclosures private builds trust and enhances the value of a mentorship, training faculty also have a simultaneous responsibility to register serious concerns about a mentee's competence, both with the mentee and with clinical training leaders.

"If you become aware that your mentee or your mentor is doing something unethical, you have a responsibility to do something about it," says Kaslow. "Some people feel trapped and unable to do the right thing because of their perceived role as the mentor," Millán agrees. "What happens if the mentor finds out their mentee has a substance use issue, for example?" he asks. "As the mentor, you're an ally, but you also have a professional obligation to act on certain kinds of problems." Ongoing discussions with your mentee about how you plan to protect his or her privacy, while also ensuring that competence concerns are addressed can help mitigate any surprises for the mentee.

■ **Make sure the mentee gets deserved credit.** A significant number of mentees work on collaborative projects with their mentors. Whether a project was initiated and largely carried out by the mentee, or whether the mentee played a

"There's an implicit assumption on the part of most university leaders that if you have an advanced degree like a PhD, then surely you can mentor. But that's not always true." —W. BRAD JOHNSON, PhD, U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY

supporting, but significant, role in an existing project, figuring out how to assign credit can be tricky. However, there are clear ethical guidelines regarding publication, Johnson says. "If it's a dissertation or a thesis, clearly the student should be the first author," he says. "But if you're talking about something less formal where a mentee has a great idea and then lo and behold the mentor's taking credit for that or writing a paper about the idea without including the student, it's potentially exploitative."

Even when mentors give their hard-working protégés all the credit they deserve, there's a danger that mentees can be exploited in terms of the amount of work they are assigned. "Junior faculty may see mentoring as a low-risk way of enhancing their opportunities for career success, but it is important to make sure that trainees are being mentored in a way that will be professionally beneficial," Brown says.

■ **Maintain boundaries.** Avoid blurring the relationship's boundaries and having it morph into the inappropriately personal. While it's OK to be friendly, avoid being a mentee's friend—at least at first—and steer clear of acting like his or her therapist, Kaslow advises. And remember that your aim

is to help your mentees fly on their own, says Appleby. "There's going to be a time where the mentee's going to have to move on to the next step," he says, "and you want [him or her] to have the confidence to do so."

An obvious no-no is entering into a sexual relationship with a mentee, but attraction and romantic feelings can begin to intrude in a mentorship long before any egregious boundary violations occur. Some warning signs for mentors to watch out for include finding themselves looking for opportunities to spend more time with a mentee and making very personal disclosures to a mentee.

In addressing such feelings, says Johnson, a mentor should be careful not to abruptly withdraw and leave the mentee wondering if he or she did something wrong. It's also important not to burden or confuse the mentee by sharing your feelings of attraction. A far better strategy, Johnson adds, involves seeking consultation with a trusted colleague, discussing appropriate options for keeping the mentorship professional and helpful for the mentee, or if necessary, devising a process for gracefully transferring the mentee to a different adviser. Whatever the ultimate decision in such a situation, it is a crucial time for a psychologist to rely on guidance and support

from his or her own “competence constellation,” which can come from a trusted core group of colleagues (*Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, Vol. 44, No. 5, 2013).

■ **Minimize multiple roles.** In many instances a mentor holds considerable power relative to the mentee—a power differential that can be problematic if the mentor also serves as an adviser, supervisor or classroom instructor. That’s why mentors should advise mentees to seek balance by ensuring that other psychologists fulfill these important roles in their education.

An obvious no-no is entering into a sexual relationship with a mentee, but attraction and romantic feelings can begin to intrude in a mentorship long before any egregious boundary violations occur.

Also, because some mentors and mentees have overlapping duties in their roles, such as writing grants together, a mentor may be less likely to critically evaluate a mentee’s work. “Mentors have an obligation to avoid engaging in multiple relationships that could impair their objectivity and thereby risk exploitation or harm to their mentee,” Brown warns. “This concern for impaired

objectivity when engaging in multiple relationships is noted in our code of ethics.”

■ **Advocate, but evaluate.** Over time, mentorships evolve to become more reciprocal, bonded and close. As the relationship develops, it’s natural for the mentor to become the mentee’s advocate or sponsor—to tout the mentee’s virtues in the public arena. But it’s not in the mentee’s best interests for the mentor simply to be a cheerleader for him or her, Johnson says.

Praising mentees in public and then later objectively criticizing their work in private can be confusing for them, he says. “Also, you don’t want to overlook opportunities for development if they’re having problems.” Especially in psychology, where many trainees go on to provide supportive services for others, mentors need to take seriously their responsibility to vet and prepare mentees for the sake of the clients and systems they’ll be working with, he adds.

“Intentional ethical mentoring requires self-awareness and, always, a focus on each mentee’s best interests,” Johnson says. “Modeling ethical behavior in the context of a personal developmental relationship can pay dividends by inspiring mentees to care for the ethical commitments and aspirations of their profession.” ■

ESSENTIAL IDEAS

GUIDING ETHICAL PRINCIPLES OF MENTORING

Brad Johnson, PhD, professor of psychology at the U.S. Naval Academy and author of four books on mentoring, suggests that psychologist mentors adhere to these guidelines:

- **Beneficence.** Promote mentees’ best interests whenever possible
- **Nonmaleficence.** Avoid harm to mentees (neglect, abandonment, exploitation, boundary violations)
- **Autonomy.** Work to strengthen mentee independence and maturity
- **Fidelity.** Keep promises and remain loyal to those you mentor
- **Justice.** Ensure fair and equitable treatment of all mentees (regardless of cultural differences)
- **Transparency.** Encourage transparency and open communication regarding expectations
- **Boundaries.** Avoid potentially harmful multiple roles with mentees and discuss overlapping roles to minimize risk for exploitation or bad outcomes
- **Privacy.** Protect information shared in confidence by a mentee and discuss all exceptions to privacy
- **Competence.** Establish and continue developing competence

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