



the  
RRANN  
Mentor  
Program

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## The Peer Mentor

- Admitted to a nursing major (AAS or BS) and has knowledge of the School of Nursing
- Willing to invest time, energy and interest in the support of a pre-nursing student
- Understands participation in academic and/or social activities may be required
- Possesses a sense of enthusiasm and humor

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## Benefits

- The opportunity to practice caring and strengthen the profession
- Develop leadership skills
- Connect with a nursing student interested in personal growth
- Promote a sense of “giving back”
- Fun, friendship with a terrific human being
- Adds strength to resume

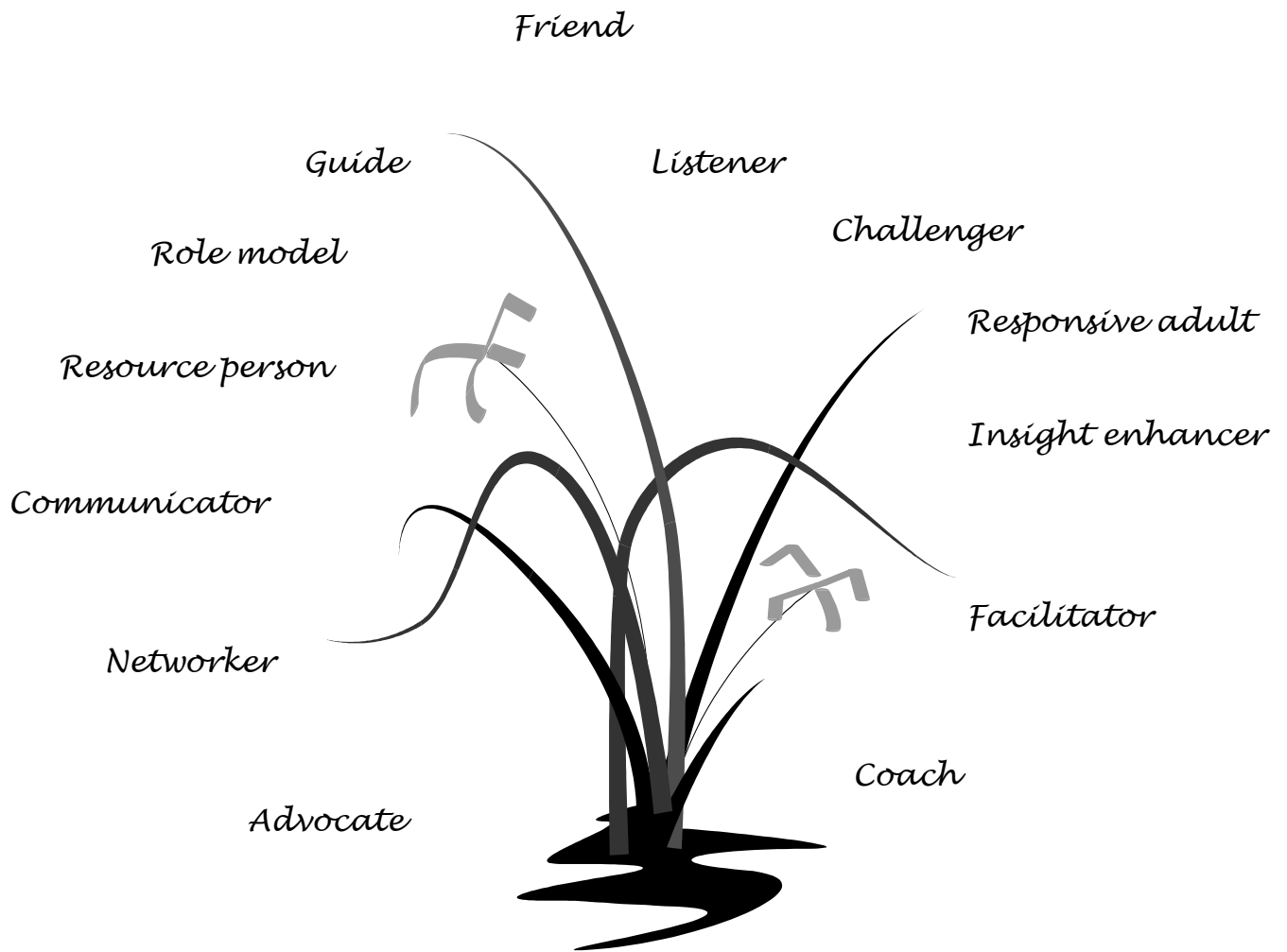
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## Responsibilities of a Mentor

- Initiate contact with his/her student within one week of assignment. If contacts have failed after three attempts, notify the Program Coordinator. (Note: 86% of all students who say they need help also say they will not initiate searches for appropriate resources.)
- Schedule a person-to-person contact
- Follow-up phone or email contacts, starting on a weekly basis
- Email monthly update to RRANN coordinator. Updates due by the end of each month.

----- What is a nurse mentor?

- Responsible mentoring is a structured one-to-one relationship or partnership that focuses on the needs of the pre-nursing student.
- Mentors foster caring and supportive relationships.
- A mentor is a wise and trusted friend.
- Mentoring helps a nursing student to develop his/her own vision for the future.



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## What a mentor isn't

- A savior
- A foster parent
- A therapist
- A parole officer
- A "cool" peer
- An expert

It is not a good idea to tell your protégé exactly what to do, but you can always give them your perspective as a nursing student.

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## Why be a nurse mentor?

- Strengthen the profession
- Give information
- Help a student grow and develop into a professional
- Invest in the future
- Participate in a mutual sharing relationship
- Share wisdom and expertise

# ----- Mentoring Functions

- Guidance
- Coaching
- Challenging excellence
- Role Modeling
- Establishing friendship
- Providing acceptance

Above all, be yourself. Try to end sessions on a positive note. Realize there are not failures in a mentorship. Both you and your student will learn as much from mistakes as from successes.



# ..... Communication Skills

- Use “I” statements rather than “You “ statements.
- Stay focused. Be there. Be present.
- Be quiet and listen.
- Don’t worry about what you are going to say next. Listen to your protégé!
- Make sure your message and your actions match.
- Be brave. Share your experiences (if helpful).
- It is better to listen than to talk.
- Listen for recurring themes.
- Ask open-ended questions.
- If you are not sure of the message, ask for clarification.

# ----- How to Inhibit Effective Communication

The following responses shut off understanding. At worst, they are inappropriate. At best, they are premature. In either case, they are non-productive.

Ordering or Commanding: "You must not feel that way."

Admonishing: "You should be thankful you have the opportunity to learn as much as you have."

Advising: "If I were you, I would talk to a counselor."

Instructing: "You should think about yourself in other ways."

Criticizing: "You are hurting yourself for feeling that way."

Praising and agreeing: "People often feel that way even when they are bright like you."

Name calling: "You are behaving like a baby."

Interpreting: "You are just tired."

Reassuring or Sympathizing: "You'll feel better about yourself after the vacation."

Probing: "Why do you feel that way?"

Diverting: "You don't look like Dumbo to me. Go get your mind off it."

Things you might say instead:

Offering General Leads: "Go on." or "Tell me about it."

Making Observations: "You appear upset by this."

Encouraging Description of Perceptions: "Tell me when you feel stupid."

Exploring: "Tell me more about that."

Verbalizing the Implied: "Is it your feeling you can't learn?"

Suggesting Collaboration: "Perhaps you and I can discuss this and discover what makes you feel this way."

Using silence (say nothing)

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## Common Worries

### *What if my help isn't wanted?*

It's not easy to trust a stranger, especially if you're a young person. It may take a while to build up your trust. Don't interpret caution as rejection. A young person may not show it — in fact, he or she may not even know it fully — but your help is definitely wanted.

### *What if something really serious comes up?*

While most mentoring relationships develop and flourish without serious problems, things do happen. Mentors have an important role, but that role does not include medical or psychological treatment, or family counseling. There are support systems in place for emergencies. The most a mentor is expected to do— a should do— is to help guide a young person to the appropriate source of professional help.

### *What if I'm too different to relate well?*

Many first-time volunteers worry that difference in age, race, religion, education, or gender will be insurmountable barriers. Actually, most experienced mentors report that mentoring a young person from a different background broadened their own horizons and deepened their understanding of other people and cultures.

### *What if I do something wrong?*

If you are there for your friend no matter what; if you listen and really hear what's being said; and if you do your best to counsel and not to judge, you will have done everything right. Some people are readier than others for a mentor. Some may test a mentor's commitment. Try not to take such behavior personally. Just keep trying your best and keep doing the right things. Gauge your success by your actions, not your protégé's.

### *What if the person I mentor is a disappointment?*

A better question is, "What encouragement can I give if my protégé disappoints himself or herself?" Mentors are in the business of helping young people achieve their fullest potential. You can be sure that mistakes will be made. You won't be able to help a young person learn from a mistake if you can't handle it yourself.

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## Tips for mentors

- Answer questions promptly or get help from someone who can. If you don't have time to respond quickly, consider postponing your stint as a mentor.
- Set parameters on your role. If you prefer to avoid basic clinical questions (like "What are the steps for giving an injection?"), let your protégé know.
- Give constructive feedback. Your role is to guide, not to chastise.
- Learn from your protégé. Mentoring can be a two-way learning opportunity.

