Wright describes what mentoring is, what its goal is and various ways in which it can occur. He has had a lot of formal mentoring and has done it himself, as well. He was at one point the president of Regent College in British Columbia, Canada and is currently the head of the Max De Pree Leadership Center affiliated with Fuller Seminary.

Table of Contents

Foreword by Max De Pree
Introduction - *Wisdom for the journey*
Chapter 1: **Character**: Mentoring reflects on the character of leadership
Chapter 2: **Leadership**: Leadership reflects on the character of the relational leader
Chapter 3: **Encouragement**: Mentoring shapes the character of relational leadership
Chapter 4: **Choice**: Mentoring reflects the character of relational leadership
Chapter 5: **Relationship**: Mentoring lies at the hear of relational leadership
Chapter 6: **Growth**: Mentoring reflects on the hope of relational leadership
Chapter 7: **Promise**: Mentoring reflects on the potential of relational leadership
Chapter 8: **Ambiguity**: Mentoring reflects on the tensions of relational leadership
Chapter 9: **Inquiry**: Mentoring reflects on the future of relational leadership
Conclusion: “Granddad, if we had been roped together you could have saved me.”

**Foreword**

“One of society’s significant needs is the continuous development and maturation of its leaders.”

“Mentor was the trusted friend whom Odysseus left in charge of Ithaca as he departed for the Trojan War. Disguised as Mentor, the goddess Athena helps Telemachus, Odysseus’s son, search for his father. Through the centuries, the word has come to mean trusted advisor and counselor, and the mentoring relationship today seems to me to have become a primary way to grow and develop as a leader.”

“For those approaching retirement, mentoring is a life-giving way of being called to retirement, rather than defaulting to retirement.” For those still engaged in the daunting job of active leadership, mentoring is a way to bring all the advantages of contemplation and unbiased perspective to an active life.”

“[Mentoring] focuses on the whys and wherefores in our work and lives, not on the what and the how.”

“Mentoring is a holistic approach to becoming a better servant – to one’s calling, to one’s society, to one’s followers. It has to do with family and career. Its roots lie in
ethical behavior and virtuous beliefs. Mentors and mentorees work hard at establishing and nurturing relationships. They respect the value of effective communication."

“The kind of world most of us live in makes life-long learning a natural requirement, regardless of our discipline or profession or occupation.”

“Mentors guide personal development by formulating questions that trigger response thought, that bring the light of experience to the discussion and that encourage breadth rather than narrow focus. Mentors have the opportunity to move the interaction beyond job or career into family matters, other areas of service, or areas of study not connected to career. We all ought to know something special – about the arts, about theology or philosophy, about other cultures. One very specific reason to broaden the horizons of our discussions is to remove the fear I have found in many leaders of the creative process and creative people.”

“Another good rule of thumb is that to be a good mentor we need more than desire and theory. The mentor’s side of the bargain is to be competent and a good communicator. Competence comes from experience: don’t go to sea with a captain that has never left port. Competence is never unlimited: don’t try to give help in areas of your incompetence. (It’s tempting sometimes to think that one’s position as mentor conveys omniscience!) Every mentoree deserves a mentor’s best shot, part of which surely includes good communication, by which I mean the ability to listen and a knack for telling stories from experience.”

“The process of mentoring may be enjoyable, but good mentoring is not easy work for either person.”

“Personal growth is a serious business. It requires determination, grit, and heart.”

“Getting together without an agenda can be a pleasant social experience, but it is not mentoring.”

“Try to remember that mentoring is a process of becoming, not an unimpeded march to perfection. The odds of success increase tremendously when we understand that mutual discovery, not exclusive answers, leads to potential. The best mentors spark the discovery.”

**Introduction** - *Wisdom for the journey*

[CHS – I found the metaphor of ropes and mountain climbing to mentoring particularly helpful, not that I have ever done mountain climbing with ropes, but the concept was particularly “fruitful” in helping me to understand mentoring better.]

- The rope is the mountaineer’s lifeline.
- Climbers choose to rope up.
- The strongest climber goes first.
MENTORING

- Being roped to someone stronger protects you against your mistakes.
- The leader does not do your climbing.
- Persons roped together have to find a pace that works.
- Few climbers have the confidence (or foolishness) to climb on high mountain glaciers without being roped to at least one other person.

“Three lessons the Sherpas underlined at the beginning and modeled throughout the trip:

1. Walk your own pace.
2. It’s the journey that matters, not how high or how far you can go.
3. The people you serve are more important than the summits you climb.

Three truths about trekking; three lessons for life; three foundational assumptions of the mentoring process.”

Wright mentions the three Sherpas that went with them on their climb to the Everest Base Camp. One would go ahead, leading the way at a pace always a little faster than the fastest trekker. The second Sherpa followed the group, looked out for stragglers and encouraged the slower walkers. The third Sherpa walked with the group, pointing out interesting things on the way, giving information about the surroundings and checking on the condition of the trekker.

“No matter where we were on the trail, we were always part of the group; we were always included and encouraged. We always belonged. We were surrounded by leadership. This is mentoring at its best.”

“That is what the Sherpas modeled in their mentoring leadership. They went before us, walked with us and followed up behind to ensure that each one of us could walk at our own pace – just like the psalmist’s God does. Everyone walks his or her own pace.”

“This is a fundamental assumption of the mentoring process. No one walks our journey for us and no one else’s pace is appropriate for us. It is our journey. We walk through life and leadership as unique persons created by God. Mentors help us find our own pace. Walk your own pace. Your pace is neither too fast nor too slow. You have nothing to prove; be yourself. It’s the only person you can be. And trust your guides. You do not take this journey alone.”

“The people you serve are more important than the summits you climb.”

1. Character: Mentoring reflects on the character of leadership

“…here are three questions for you to think about. … Be honest. There is no trick to this...

What is the most important thing in life to you?
**MENTORING**

*Projecting yourself forward to the end of your life, what do you want to be known for?*

*At this stage in your journey, what do you need to learn next? …*

The first question is the question of **character**. … The second question is the question of **legacy**. … The third question focuses on the **present**: What do you need to learn next?”

![Diagram](character-leadership-culture-environment-productivity)

“**Our stated values are those we proclaim in our core value statements, our creeds, and our public commitments. But our true values are always reflected in behaviors and actions. What we really believe always shows up in our actions. And of course this is what integrity is all about.”**

“**Edgar Schein, the distinguished professor from MIT argues that the only thing of unique importance leaders do is create and reinforce culture. By culture he means the beliefs, values, assumptions, traditions and commitments that are so deeply imbedded in the organization that they operate unconsciously – ‘the way we do things here.’ Schein’s research makes the connection between leadership and culture because everything that leaders do and say reinforces the values embedded in the organizational culture – **everything**.”**

“**…there is one more box to add to the far left of our chart. In this box I write “Gods,” because the gods that we follow shape the person we are. Our character is a reflection of our faith, our beliefs, our commitments, the mentors we learn from, the promises we make, the gods we follow.”**

![Diagram](character-leadership-culture-environment-productivity-gods)

“**To finish framing this model, let me position three kinds of question-askers. Mentors tend to ask questions that help us reflect on the link between character, leadership, and culture. Executive coaches tend to ask questions that help us think about the**
MENTORING

applications linking leadership to productivity. Spiritual directors help us see how the
gods we follow shape everything else.”

2. Leadership: Leadership reflects the character of the relational leader

“Leadership is a messy mixture of people, passions, vision, and constraints, pushing
and pulling in a multitude of directions. There is not one way to do it. Not even a right
way to do it. It is more a matter of living with vision, character and integrity in the midst
of a network of relationships.”

“Leadership is the risk of deciding with the alternatives are equal.”

“The mentors we choose shape the person we are and the leadership we offer.”

Max De Pree’s philosophy or theology of management:

• “The leadership of God
• Men and women created in the image of God
• The relational nature of life from a Triune God
• The gifted diversity and interdependence of human community
• The inclusiveness of the marginalized
• Everyone belongs
• The stewardship of creation

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.” - Max De Pree [CHS – this
reminds me of the “Stockdale Paradox” from Good to Great.]

3. Encouragement: Mentoring shapes the character of relational leadership

“I…use the term ‘mentor’ to designate intentional, exclusive, intensive, voluntary
relationships between two persons, usually with the intent to grow and develop one of
the persons toward an agreed upon goal or objective. And like all relationships, even
though the purpose will be to grow one person, the process of relationship building
allows both persons to give and to receive, to teach and to learn. Mentoring is a dance
of teaching and learning together.”

“…it is clear to me that mentors may give advice when asked, but much more
importantly they give blessing and encouragement to risk learning and growth. By
listening and giving honest feedback in safe trusted conversation, the mentor both
affirms the perspective of the mentoree and broadens in gently.”

“Mentors provide a safe place to regain perspective and energy.”

“[Mentors] too are on a journey. But they can still believe in you and share something of
themselves with you as you walk together on your journeys.”
“[Mentors] bring their complete selves to the relationship – their strengths and their weaknesses. To the extent that mentors understand their weaknesses, it can be a touch point for learning and an area of growth for both persons.”

“When mentors put their insecurities, weaknesses, and fears on the table for discussion, the modeled vulnerability opens doors for learning and growth in two ways. First, the mentoree has opportunity to learn about vulnerability, honesty, and truth. Everyone has strengths and weaknesses, fear as well as courage. Too often on our journey we present a face to the world that belies the turmoil that goes on within, the uncertainties and questions that swirl in our minds. When we can face our fears and articulate our questions, we open the potential for growth and learning. Mentors we respect, who take us into the struggles of their journey, give us hope through their progress and model a courage from which we can learn.”

“But second, the mentoree needs to cultivate the independent objectivity to choose different paths from the mentor. In every mentoring relationship, while there is always the overwhelming respect that makes the mentor attractive, there will normally be decisions, behaviors, and beliefs of the mentor that the one being mentored may choose not to adopt. Mentoring is not a cloning process. It is intended to develop the unique person of the mentoree, and that requires a differentiation from the mentor.”

“Mentors, however, who are blind to their own weaknesses, prejudices, or insecurities can be a risk. A core purpose of the mentoring process is to assist mentorees to develop accurate self-awareness or self-understanding, and self-control as they choose their path in life. A mentor without accurate self-awareness or self-understanding may provide distorted encouragement or direction to those being mentored.”

“Mentoring is a relationship between fallible human beings and cannot exist without forgiveness and grace.”

“Mentors open their hearts and their minds and share themselves.”

“Mentoring is not about the mentor. It is always about the one being mentored. It is not about replicating the mentor. It is always about encouraging the growth of the one being mentored. It is a gift.”

4. Choice: Mentoring reflects the character of relational leadership

What makes a good mentor?

1. Mentors provide reflective space.

   “Mentors provide the gift of sanctuary – the opportunity to withdraw from the pressure of daily work and life and reflect on what is happening.”

2. Mentors provide perspective and wisdom.
3. Mentors critique ideas and provoke thinking.
4. Mentors learn together in a commitment of trust.

   “Mentoring is a partnership of learning and encouragement in a commitment of trust.”

6. Mentors are not always a good fit.
7. Mentors offer specific knowledge and expertise.

5. Relationship: *Mentoring lies at the heart of relational leadership*

   “Gordon Shea ... defines mentoring as ‘a developmental caring, sharing and helping relationship where one person invests time, know-how and effort in enhancing another person’s growth, knowledge and skills – responding to critical needs in the life of another person in ways that prepare that person for greater performance, productivity or achievement in the future.’”

   “Chip Bell ... says that ‘A mentor is simply someone who helps someone else learn something that he or she would have learned less well, more slowly, or not at all if left alone. Notice the power-free nature of this definition! Mentors are not power figures. Mentors are learning coaches – sensitive, trusted advisors ... We are fellow travelers on this journey toward wisdom.’”

   “Mentoring is exclusive in the sense that it is focused on the growth of a particular mentoree as perceived by that mentoree.”

   “Mentoring is intensive in that it normally has a focus.”

   “Mentoring is voluntary, and in this capacity differs from parenting, teaching or managing.”

   “[Mentoring] is a relationship that, like all relationships, must be cultivated and nurtured.”

   “There is no formula, no ideal model, and no program of steps to success. It is a relationship – and relationships resist definition.”

   “I do believe there is an important role for peer groups of leaders – what I like to call ‘learning communities’ – where leaders belong, where they have something to offer and something to learn, where they feel safe enough to think out loud, and where they find encouragement, affirmation, and hope. The mentored learning is still individual; it is the responsibility of the mentoree.”

   “These mentoring groups – four or five couples committed to meet weekly, to share our life journeys, and hold one another accountable for learning and growth – guiding one another through the ups and downs of marriage, parenting, career and vocation,
sickness and health. This is a place where people have permission to ask each other the questions we need to face as we negotiate pathways through life. Every person in the group is working on particular growth areas at each stage of our journey. This too is mentoring.”

“Mentoring includes forgiveness. Mentors are human beings with flaws and failings. We like to think of mentors as those who are above us, beyond us, on a pedestal, models of success. And they may well be. But they are always human beings – flawed, wounded – seeking to understand, live, and contribute to life. Mentors may let you down. You may let your mentors down. Any strong relationship must carry within it the commitment to forgive and give trust again if the relationship is to survive for the long haul. The same is true for the mentoring relationship. Only forgiveness and commitment can sustain a relationship over time and that is precisely when we learn the most about our leadership and ourselves.”

“Mentoring is mutually beneficial. Relationships are reciprocal. The mentoring relationship is not an exception. We choose mentors to follow and learn from as we walk our journey and form our leadership. But mentorees are not the only ones to profit from this learning exchange. Mentors benefit from the mentoring relationship as well as the one seeking a mentor. If the mutual benefit is not there, the relationship will not last. Both parties bring something to contribute. Both parties must believe that they are receiving value from their investment.”

“Mentoring requires an appropriate fit. There must be sufficient common ground upon which to build a mentoring relationship – probably a common pool of share values is a pre-requisite. Shared experience, shared vision, and compatible personalities will play a role.”

“Mentoring involves listening and asking questions.”

“Mentoring sustains relational leadership. Leadership is a relationship of influence. … it is a serious meddling in other people’s lives. Leadership is a precarious responsibility.”

“The effectiveness of a mentor will always be determined by the perception of the mentoree.”

6. Growth: *Mentoring reflects on the hope of relational leadership*

“Mentors influence and affirm. But mentorees choose whether they will learn, grow, and become the leaders they are capable of being. Mentoring is a leadership relationship in which both mentor and mentoree add value and benefit, but at its core, mentoring is a relationship of learning directed by the mentoree.”

“…the mentoring cycle begins with the mentoree.”
1. Identify areas open to growth

“Effective leaders continually learn and identify areas in which they need to grow.”

2. Identify someone from whom you can learn

“Potential mentors do not need to be great leaders, recognized stars; but they do need to be great persons whom you respect and with whom you believe you can address your identified areas for growth.”

3. Ask for one meeting (lunch?); interview your prospective mentor and listen to his or her thoughts on your subject.

“Suggest you would like to ask some questions, hear their wisdom, and gain insights from your prospect’s experience. If you can, eat a meal together for this first meeting, and pay attention to the social side of your time together.”

4. Use the first meeting to test for a natural and comfortable relationship

“Mentoring is all about a relationship. A continuing relationship depends on both you and your mentor finding the time enjoyable and instructive.”

5. Ask for a second meeting or propose a short-term, periodic relationship

“If you both find the first meeting comfortable and interesting ask for a second. Schedule just one meeting at a time until the mutual comfort level is strong enough to warrant a commitment to periodic get-togethers.”

6. Take responsibility to arrange the next meeting (s)

“Remember this is self-directed leadership development. The mentoree takes initiative and manages the learning process.”

7. Take responsibility for the agenda

“Come to the meetings with an agenda of things you would like to talk about. Do not assume that your mentor will bring one, even though he or she might.”

“The conversation usually includes some summary of what has happened in our lives and leadership since we last met before it focuses on the particular issues at hand.”

8. Come to the meeting with questions

“Your agenda should be heavily weighted with questions designed to draw wisdom from your mentor. In addition to questions specific to the area of shared interest, it can be
valuable to ask mentors what they have learned lately or what they are reading. Come more as a listener than a talker.”

9. Invite the person to ask questions that draw you out

“From the beginning invite your mentor to ask you questions. Give your permission to discuss anything and everything about you and what you believe. Give permission even to probe behind your words to a truth you might be avoiding or unaware of. Make yourself vulnerable to learning and growth. The questions your mentor asks may be more valuable than answers and advice.”

10. Listen, assess, act, and give feedback

Listen more than talk. Assess and evaluate what you hear. Sort out the wisdom from the biases or blind spot while watching out for your own biases and blind spots. Remember, mentors are human also. They too are on a journey; they are still learning. Act on the wisdom. Mentors will not stay long with people who fail to act on what they learn. Talk without action is a waste of time. Act and report at the next meeting on what you learned, what you tried, what worked and what did not, and be prepared with questions to explore the matter more fully.”

11. Ask for another meeting

“Don’t forget that the momentum for your relationship is up to you. Ask for, schedule and follow through with the next meeting.”

12. It is not important to call your conversations a “mentoring relationship.”

“It is much more important that two people find their time together a fruitful investing in and learning from one another. “

“Mentoring has long been a powerful strategy for leadership development. It is the natural approach for personal renewal and development when leadership is recognized as relationship rather than position or person.”

“Mentoring is self-directed leadership development – a teaching and learning relationship. It begins with the mentoree.”

13. Identify someone with potential whose values you respect  (Look for someone to mentor – here Wright shifts in his emphasis to helping people find others who can be or should be mentored.)

“Look for someone you respect, whose values you can affirm, someone who you believe has potential to grow.”
14. Find opportunities to affirm lavishly this person’s contribution

“Given the tensions of leadership and the ambiguities of the journey, most people need affirmation and encouragement to move forward with hope. Recognition, gratitude, and praise acknowledge potential and lift the spirit.”

15. Find opportunities to encourage personally

“Look for chances to encourage the other person by sharing of yourself, your resources, your connections, and your relationships. Be a person whose very presence is encouraging and empowering.”

16. Listen to words, emotions and body language

“In the mentoring relationship, listen. Listen to the words spoken, but listen even more carefully to the words not spoken. Listen to the emotions, the feelings, the joy, the hurt, the anger, the love being communicated. Try to hear what is going on inside the person’s heart as well as head.”

“You need to be able to listen behind the spoken word and read between the lines of written word. Listening may be the most important skill you bring to the relationship.”

17. Ask questions rather than give advice

“Think questions, questions, and more questions. When people ask for advice, resist the advice that leaps into your mind. Form a question instead that draws wisdom and learning from the other person.”

“Questions are relational; they create choice. Advice narrows perspective and may limit possibilities. The quality of the relationship will be found in the questions you ask.”

18. Consider what you can learn from that person

“All relationships are mutual. It takes two persons to sustain a relationship. A mentoring relationship is no different. Both people must see their time together as a learning, growing experience.”

19. Identify areas open to growth

“This brings us back to the beginning. Are you still open to growth, to learning, to change? A mentoring relationship assumes a shared journey with two people who know they must keep learning and growing.”
20. Identify someone from who you can learn

“The mentoring process is a cycle. Someone comes alongside, sees potential and gives us encouragement. We seek them out to learn from their experience. We take the initiative. We manage the relationship. We direct the learning. And we make the choices that form our character and shape our leadership. As we grow and develop in our leadership capacity we see people with potential. Because we have had mentors, we know the value and we know what to do. The rest is up to the person we encourage. And the cycle continues and leadership is developed.”

7. Promise: Memorizing reflections on the potential of relational leadership

What Do Mentors Look For?

Potential

“The key is whether you see it or not. If the mentor sees the untapped potential, it opens new possibilities for growth. If you do not see the possibilities, it does not necessarily mean the person has no potential; it only means that you are probably not a good mentor for that person. Can you see potential that you want to nurture?”

Curiosity and a desire to learn

“Persons in visible roles of leadership are not always willing to acknowledge the vulnerability of still needing to grow. With the inherent ambiguities of leadership, a person without curiosity and a desire to learn is a liability to the organization.”

Strength of character

“Does the person know who he is, what he believes, what he stands for? Is there integrity between words and actions? Does she know herself well enough to be comfortable with new ideas, with conflict, with diversity of opinion? Can the person reflect on the experiences of life and relish the continued formation of character?”

Shared values

“Unless the purpose of the mentoring is focused on value clarification, the relationship probably will work more smoothly if both parties are operating with compatible values systems. If the values differ greatly, the relationship may not thrive.”

Reflective thinking and self-assessment

“Hand in hand with character and values comes self-assessment.”
“Accurate self-awareness and self-control are critical. It is very difficult to move someone forward who does not know here he is. Reflective thinking can be nurtured if character is strong and self-assessment is accurate.”

Responsibility for one’s own growth

“Internally motivated persons make good mentorees. Externally focused persons can move towards entitlement or victimization, and expect the mentor to tell them what to do. This is not mentoring. Mentoring at its hear is about assisted self-directed learning. The initiative rests in the hands of the mentoree. The mentoree is responsible for his or her own development.”

Energy

“This one is a little harder to describe, and perhaps it is only a personal attraction of mine. I like to work with people of energy, people in whose presence I am refreshed and stimulated. When the person walks into the room do they bring energy? Or do they take energy?”

Purpose

“This one also is closely connected to character. Character asks who the person is. Purpose asks why they choose to be who they are – what they are about. Mentors walk with people on their journey; there is purpose.”

Hope

“Mentors want to invest themselves in persons with hope, men and women who believe in the future and want to make it a better place. Hope feeds growth. Hope embraces learning. Hope is curious. Hope replicates itself.”

Why we mentor others

“For some, mentoring is an effective way to address the question of legacy. We want to contribute something with our lives that lasts. As we get older it becomes clear that positions, titles, accomplishments, and acquisitions have little to do with legacy.”

“And hope is the promise of mentoring. We mentor because we believe in the future, because we can still see possibilities for making this a better place to live, because we can envision what person can become, because there is promise.”

“But there is another reason why we mentor. Mentoring fuels personal growth and renewal in the mentor. The opportunity to reflect critically on our own life and leadership teaches us new truths about ourselves. It is a valuable exercise to articulate what you believe and why, to discuss the connections between your values and your behavior, to review your leadership through a reflective lens. Mentors grow through the vulnerability
to self-disclosure and acknowledged learning. Responding to the questions of a mentoree is as formative for the mentor as it is when the mentor asks the questions. This questioning relationship is renewing. There is also the reality of continued learning that comes through the window of the mentoree’s experience. As we enter the world of the mentoree – inquiring, exploring, encouraging – we are introduced to another context, a new arena in which to think about our values and reflect on our leadership. 

The choice to become a mentor is a decision to grow.”

Becoming a mentor

“Mentors, like mentorees, must understand themselves. The work of Daniel Goleman and others on emotional intelligence suggest that effective leadership and mentoring is ground on certain emotional competencies. Effective leaders and mentors rate high in self-awareness, self control, social awareness, and relationship management. They have an accurate self-assessment and corresponding confidence. They manage their emotions with transparency, adaptability, learning, initiative, and optimism. They have empathy for the feelings of others and the relational dynamics of community. And they are very good at building relationships. Leadership is a relationship. Mentoring is relationship. The health of the relationship will always be tied to the health of the persons.”

“Mentoring is a working relationship focused on learning and growth. It is about active listening and powerful questions. It is therapeutic but it is not therapy. It is empowering but it is not management. Mentoring is an intentional relationship focused primarily on the self-directed growth of the mentoree. It encompasses character and nurtures leadership. It develops skills and nurtures reflection.”

Mentoring models

Gardener – Someone who goes beyond the obvious and sees what needs help and knows how to give it.

Advisor – “In organizational settings, mentors often appear as advisors or sponsors.”

Manager – “It is hard for me to imagine a healthy and effective leadership relationship that is not a learning relationship.”

Resource – Mentors are “resources to assist [mentorees] on the journey.”

Coach – “An executive coach is basically a resource mentor sought out and engaged by contract to guide the mentoree along a specific portion of the journey. Sometimes coaches are assigned by organizations, but usually mentorees choose them. The relationship with a coach mentor tends to be more contractual and specific about desired outcomes.”
Cultures, gender, and age

“Many would counsel against mentoring across genders, but just as many see the importance of learning from another perspective.”

“Care must be taken, and while both parties are responsible to manage the relationship, the mentor has particular responsibility to define appropriate boundaries.”

“Care … needs to be taken with cross-cultural mentoring relationships. … Up front, both persons need to be clear as possible about different expectations, the communication of language and behavior, and what is culturally appropriate, especially as it relates to space, values, and time. Both mentor and mentoree need to understand that their questions and their answers come out of a particular cultural context and may need to be translated into the other’s world.”

Wright says that the traditional image of the mentor being older than the mentoree is changing since very often the younger person may have more experience than the older one in a particular matter.

“Character, wisdom, and experience are much more important than age.”

Leadership, management and mentoring

- Leadership is a relationship of influence.
- Mentoring is a relationship of influence.
- Leadership and mentoring are perceived by the followers.

“Leaders may exercise every model of influence type in the book, but until a follower chooses to accept that influence there is no leadership.”

“But only the mentoree has the right to call me mentor, and mentoring occurs only when the mentoree chooses to act on what he or she is learning.”

- Leadership is a transforming relationship

“James MacGregor Burns, in his Pulitzer Prize-winning book Leadership, argues that there is an exchange that takes place in every leadership relationship. He calls this exchange transactional leadership.”

- Leadership and mentoring are empowering

“[Peter Block, in The Empowered Manager, says he “wants leaders to model and encourage empowerment, to use their position to serve and nurture another; one person seeing in another the potential to be more than is visible today and committing
him or herself to the development of that potential. This is relational leadership. It is also mentoring.”

• Good managers and leaders are good mentors

“Mentoring is leadership influence focused on growth. Mentoring is the promise of relational leadership, the commitment to a person and a future.”

• Succession planning is a mentoring commitment

“Leadership transition is an ongoing concern of every organization. Effective leaders are always grooming persons with the potential to succeed them. For this reason alone every leader should be engaged in a mentoring relationship.”

Mentoring is a self-replicating investment of the mentor’s hope

“Mentoring may be the most rewarding way for a leader to leave a legacy. The promise of mentoring is the hope of the future. We contribute to that future when we invest in the life of another.”

8. Ambiguity: Mentoring reflects on the tensions of relational leadership

Things we need to know:

1. A sense of calling and self in the face of conflicting agendas
   Mentors ask: Who are you and who do you intend to be?

2. Making decisions when you really don’t know
   Mentors ask: What is important here? What is at stake? Are there more choices?

3. Vulnerability, transparency, and forgiveness replacing control, authority, and defensiveness
   Mentors ask: What do you fear? Where do you need to grow? What does failure teach? What does trust look like?

4. Articulating vision with participation of competing constituencies
   Mentors ask: Why? Who cares? How do creativity and constraint serve each other?

5. Balancing participatory planning and flexibility for change
   Mentors ask: What might change? How deeply are you invested personally? Why
should people trust you?

6. Communicating sufficiently to alleviate insecurity and suspicion

   Mentors ask: How are you communicating? What are you communicating? How transparent is your leadership? Where does insecurity constrain you?

7. Comfort with ambiguity and conflict produced by continuous change

   Mentors ask: Where do you experience conflict? How do you manage conflict? When did you last change? What does flexibility mean?

8. Developing board and finding governance/leadership balance

   Mentors ask: What does shared governance mean? To whom and how are you accountable? How does the board empower your leadership? How do you ensure the board’s effectiveness?

9. Balancing financial management, revenues and fund raising


10. Balancing time for leadership, travel, relationships and personal renewal

   Mentors ask: What is important to you? How healthy are your relationships? What are you teaching your children? What are you learning? What gives you energy?

11. Understanding organizational culture and the impact of leadership words and behaviors – legacy

   Mentors ask: What legacy are you leaving? What does integrity mean? What would your granddaughter learn by following you around at work?

Quotes:

“The problem of leadership is that it is never neat and clean. Leadership is filled with ambiguity, pulled by tensions. Leaders are necessary because it is not obvious what should be done. Leaders choose a path and persuade others to follow without guarantee of success. That is the calling of leadership…and the risk. It is why we seek mentors.”

“Heifetz and Linsky argue that because leadership contains such inherent ambiguity, it is critical for leaders to have confidants, mentors, with whom they can speak from the heart, knowing that they are cared for, that they will hear the feedback that they need, and that they have a safe place in which to reflect about their choices.”
“Leaders articulate and model the mission and the culture of their organization constantly before a variety of cooperating and competing constituencies. They must decide often between opposing alternatives. Decisions are made in light of the mission and the values, with the real possibility that they might be wrong. Leaders must know who called them to this responsibility and to whom they are accountable for life.”

“Low –risk decisions should be delegated to the people most involved in the decision. Strategic decisions are the responsibility of leadership. Leaders are there to bear the organizational burden of choosing when you really don’t know.”

“…leadership lies in the hands of the followers. You only lead when someone chooses to accept your influence. …it needs care and nurture to maintain the flow of trust and power.”

“The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality.” – Max De Pree.

“Leaders are responsible to lead their organizations in the formation and articulation of shared vision – a vision owned and lived by the members of the community - a vision that drives the daily life and operation of the organization. Reality, however, includes more than vision. It includes culture and constraints and changing environments.”

“The task of leadership is to weave a tapestry of vision with the participation of all stakeholders recognizing the culture, constraints, and context cradling the organization.”

“The only place the supply of trust necessary to sustain flexibility for change can be nurtured is in the one-on-one personal relationships of organizational community.”

“Good communications reduces suspicion and grows trust.”

“Providing leadership in the information age … requires a high level of comfort with ambiguity and the ability to transcend and manage the conflict caused by competing visions.”

“Leadership is about taking the risk to act decisively in the midst of ambiguity – to frame a reality in which others can contribute with less burden of ambiguity.”

“Effective leaders are comfortable in the presence of conflict – can stand above the debate, engaging in caring relationship with all sides. Again that requires a strong sense of calling, with the ability not to take oneself too seriously.”

“There are three areas, however, where I think mentors should keep this tension (about a lack of time to do everything they are supposed to do) before us: relationships, family, and personal renewal.”

“…your ability to serve others is directly related to your own learning and growth.”
“Everything we do as leaders teaches. Every moment is a teaching moment.”

**9. Inquiry:** *Mentoring reflects on the future of relational leadership*

“The most powerful tool mentors bring to the mentoring relationship is the provocative question. Mentoring is about the art of reflective inquiry. Leadership is about asking the right questions.”

 “[Peter Block] argues clearly for leaders of vision who will take responsibility to lead with integrity from their deepest values. He calls us to *lead our piece of the organization the way we wish the whole organization was run.*”

“A few years later Block wrote the book *Stewardship*, in which he called leaders to accept responsibility for results while recognizing that they have not authority of control.”

“Mentors ask questions. Mentorees reflect on the answers.”

“Leadership is the risk of deciding when the alternatives are equal.”

“Whom are you preparing to take your place?”

“Promotion is an opportunity to learn.”

“Perhaps we need to develop a 360°-assessment tool to give feedback on spiritual life and personal character.”

“How diverse are [the leaders’] following? Do they influence only people like themselves? Or do they have a broader appeal?”

“Tell me about a recent risk you have taken: What happened and what [did you learn] from it?”

“Who are the organizational mentors? Who are the tribal storytellers? How is the history and culture of your organization passed on? Leaders create and reinforce culture but every organization needs to encourage storytellers to keep the vision alive, to celebrate the traditions, and to revive the history that has shaped the culture.”

“I had a conversation about [“owning” the organization] with a young executive in Hong Kong last year. He was surprised that I thought he should have ownership for the mission of the company where he was employed. He said he just worked there. He was even more surprised when I told him that I would never hire him.”

“I think vulnerability is a good thing for leaders. It keeps us learning and growing. It keeps us dependent on God. It reminds us that this is not about us. It is about God.”