

# The Heart of Mentoring



by Sarah Moor

I think of my parents, retired schoolteachers, who, well into their late 70's, spent countless hours with young children, including their grandchildren, sometimes helping with a specific homework assignment and sometimes using their own stories as teaching tools about life. They acted as mentors reaching into the depths of their years of experience and working closely with their students, their colleagues and their own children and grandchildren. They enhanced the lives of others by sharing their knowledge of subject matter and the lessons they learned through their own life experiences.

At the heart of mentoring, whether it is formal or informal, are goals and an action plan, and it is through that vehicle that mentors share their knowledge and experience while at the same time offering support. Mentors act as guides and help mentees to navigate through obstacles and challenges, having "learned the ropes" along the way. Mentors encourage exploration and may, for instance, pose poignant questions with the intent of helping the mentee draw out his/her own answer or conclusion.

The mentoring experience is also an opportunity for the mentor to grow. It is another unique life experience offering an opportunity for learning and exploration. A student's question can help the mentor to hone his/her own skills, to have a better understanding of concepts and to communicate more effectively, which is obviously important in sharing information.

This article could also have been titled "The Heart IN Mentoring." I think of sharing skills as the "technical" aspect of mentoring and the heart we engage as the "art" in mentoring. The quality of heart we bring sets the tone for the relationship and plays a role in how the mentoring process unfolds.

Science shows that a coherent heart rhythm enhances our ability to learn. We also know from doing energy work that it affects our energy environment - inside and out. Out of a coherent heart grows trust, where the mentee feels safe and where his/her questions are invited, encouraged, heard and acknowledged. The heart is the place where we feel a resonance with another - or not, if there is a disconnect, a signal that our heart, mind, nervous system and emotions are out of sync.

The heart IN mentoring also invites the qualities of listening without judgment and speaking with discernment. Coherent listening creates a different energetic space, one that nurtures patience and allowing and safety. Listening from the heart is listening with compassion and for the questions not being asked. Speaking from the heart is choosing words that can be heard while holding space for a deeper experience.

When we bring our coherent hearts into the mentoring process, we create a rich learning environment for both mentor and mentee and a chance to celebrate discoveries, lessons learned and challenges met which culminate in those AHA moments when the puzzle pieces come together.

Consciously engaging our hearts by creating a coherent heart rhythm pattern as we enter into a mentoring relationship allows

us to begin with a clean slate for learning and sharing, inviting the chance for both the mentor and mentee to experience something beyond the sharing of information. It's a shared experience, and both have a responsibility in the quality of the role played.

What would you like your mentoring experience to be? What message will your heart generate? How empowering it is to know that we can choose, in any relationship, how we will show up in it. Our relationships, all of them, need the true care uniquely generated in our hearts. Then, perhaps we too will be fortunate enough to experience a similar resonance of the heart space such as that created between an old school teacher and an eager, bright-eyed child so that another's life, as well as our own, might be enriched.

About the author:



Sarah's own life challenges led her to explore the energetic heart. To live from the heart is a matter of engaging it experientially so the power of the heart is harnessed and can then be accessed for its practical wisdom, for its ability to heal allowing us

all to live in a world of greater fulfillment and greater peace.

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