Activity Pack:

# Module 8 – Mentoring in Practice



These trainer’s notes contain a handful of activities that you can use in your interactive session on ‘The Role of the Mentor’. They can all also be adapted for in-person or blended learning.

Accompanying resources that will help you deliver training for this module:

* **Online Learning:** Accessed via <https://intandem.thinkific.com>

# Overview of activities:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activity Name | Learning Outcomes | Mode(Group, pairs, individual etc.) | Practicalities(Length, tech etc.) |
| **Mentoring is…**p. 4 | Volunteers think about different aspects of mentoring and what it includes – particularly in an intandem contextInsight given into what mentoring is through different definitions | Small groups or pairs | 20 minsBreakout rooms |
| **Be the Mentor You Wish You Had**p. 7 | Volunteers think about the qualities and behaviours that make a good mentorVolunteers reflect on their own personal qualities as well as their experience of being a young person | Group | 15 minsBreakout roomsWhiteboard & Annotation |
| **What a Mentor Does**p. 9 | Volunteers gain an understanding of beginning a mentoring relationship in practiceClarification is given on appropriate behaviours and approaches to mentoring | Small groups or pairs | 25 minsBreakout roomsWhiteboard & Annotation |
| **Unique & Shared**p. 12 | Conversation skills which can be transferred when getting to know a young person are demonstrated | Small groups or pairs | 15 minsBreakout rooms |
| **Positive Endings**p. 14 | Volunteers reflect on the benefits of positive endings | Pairs | 15 minsBreakout rooms |

# Using Breakout Rooms for Groupwork

## Timings

Always make sure to let volunteers know how much time they have in their breakout rooms so that they do not get surprised when they suddenly re-join the ‘common room’ (i.e. Main Meeting).

If you’ve ticked the box ‘breakout rooms will close automatically after x minutes’, let your volunteers know that they can see the timer at the top of the screen and that they will automatically re-join the common room when the time is up. Alternatively, you can leave this box un-ticked and have

You can also give volunteers an extra warning by sending them an extra message warning them that their time is up shortly.

## Instructions

If you want, for example, that volunteers discuss a certain question or set of questions, as well as sharing them before they go into breakout rooms, you might want use the ‘Broadcast message to all’ feature to share them with participants again when they’re in their breakout rooms.

## Group Members

During your sessions, you might want to have volunteers work in the same groups as before or new groups. From experience, this sometimes does not work as planned, so let your volunteers know what to do in that case. E.g. you have told them they will be in new pairs, but they’ve ended up with the same partner they were working with before – what should they do? Just do the task in that pair, anyway? Give you a minute to sort this out? Re-join the common room or press the ‘ask for help’ button?

## Asking for Help

Let them know that while they are in their breakout room they can use the ‘Ask for help’ button if they have any questions and you will join them (Zoom feature, although other software will have something similar).

When setting up the breakout rooms, make sure you have ticked the option ‘Allow participants to return to the main session at any time’. This guarantees that they always have the option to ‘return to the main meeting’, if for whatever reason they feel they need to (e.g. because their partner has lost their connection and they’re suddenly alone in their breakout room or because something that’s being discussed in the group is making them uncomfortable etc.).

## Chat Box/Taking Notes

Make sure your participants are aware that while they can use the chat function in their breakout room, too, any messages will be lost when they re-join the common room. That means that if they are meant to take notes and ‘bring’ something back to the common room, the breakout room chat is the wrong place for this.

# Mentoring is…

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Volunteers think about different aspects of mentoring and what it includes – particularly in an intandem context.Insight given into what mentoring is through different definitions. | Groups of 3or pairs  | 20 mins overallBreakout rooms |

## Previous understanding assumed

A general idea of what mentoring is and what intandem is all about, e.g. gained by completing the “Role of the Mentor” module on the learning platform.

## Materials & tools

* Different definitions (see next page)

## Activity step-by-step

1. Tell your participants that you will divide them into groups/pairs shortly.
2. Together, their task is to come up with a definition of mentoring starting with “Mentoring is…”. This definition should be very short – just one or two sentences – and they can draw on the online learning as well as any other knowledge or experience they have of mentoring.
3. Set the terms: They have 5 minutes in their group/pair. Ask each group to have their definition written down and ready to share.
4. When re-joining the common room, ask each group/pair to share their definition. To do so, you can either use the chat function (easiest) or the whiteboard and annotate feature.
5. Take a minute to discuss the definitions and – potentially – clear up any misunderstandings. You can also take this opportunity to discuss that there are different types of mentoring and where intandem best fits in.
6. **OPTIONAL STEP:** If you have quite a lot of groups/pairs and definitions, have volunteers read through the others’ definitions, thinking about what these have come up with that their definition is perhaps missing. Put them back into their original pairs/groups and give them 3 minutes to revise and improve their own definition, then share again with the whole group.
7. Tell your volunteers that you’ve now got a couple of really good but definitions of mentoring and that it’s ok that they’re a bit different – there is no one correct definition and throughout the training you will keep coming back to what mentoring is (and isn’t).

## Possible variations

If you think that your volunteers do not have a good enough grasp of what mentoring is to come up with their own definitions straight away, you can get them to discuss the definitions included on the next page before they come up with their own.

Similarly, if they have come up with definitions that are not quite what you are looking for, you can use these definitions, too:

Have volunteers read through the supplied definitions, thinking about what these have included that their definition is perhaps missing. Put them back into their original pairs/groups and give them another 5 minutes to revise and improve their own definition, then share again with the whole group.

# Mentoring is…

“It is about one person helping another to achieve something that is important to them. It is about **giving and receiving support** and help in a **non-threatening and informal environment** and in a manner that is **appropriate to the recipient’s needs**.

When properly undertaken, the recipient (mentee) will value and appreciate the mentor’s involvement and will be **empowered and encouraged to move forward** with **confidence** towards what **they wish to achieve.**”

- Extract from ‘A Practical Guide to Mentoring: How to Help Others Achieve their Goals’ by David Kay and Roger Hinds

“While coaching and mentoring share some tools and approaches, coaching relates primarily to performance improvement, often in a specific skills area.

Mentoring is primarily focused on **longer term goals** and relates to the **identification and nurturing of potential** for the **whole person.**

It is the **holistic nature** of the mentoring role that distinguishes it from other learning or supporting roles.”

-David Clutterbuck

“To help and support people to **manage their own learning** in order to **maximise potential**... And **become the person that they want to be**.”

- Eric Parsloe

“Mentoring is a **goal orientated process** that **supports learning**. It seeks to **complement existing sources** of **learning, development and support**.

In general terms, mentoring is a form of learning; a process in which a (usually) more experienced person (the mentor) passes on know how to someone less experienced. **Mentoring tends to focus on softer skills, problem solving, decision making and working with others, rather than technical competence**.”

- Glasgow Mentoring Network

# Be the Mentor You Wish You Had

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Volunteers think about the qualities and behaviours that make a good mentor.Volunteers reflect on their own personal qualities as well as their experience of being a young person. | Group | 15 minsBreakout roomsWhiteboard & Annotation |

## Previous understanding assumed

A general idea of what mentoring is and what intandem is all about, e.g. gained by completing the “Role of the Mentor” module on the learning platform.

## Materials & tools

* None other than a ‘gathering’ tool, e.g. the whiteboard & annotation feature on Zoom.

## Activity step-by-step

1. On your whiteboard (or, alternatively, a PowerPoint slide you are sharing) show the outline of a person.
2. Tell your group that you will work together to draw and write what qualities and behaviours make a good mentor.
3. Give them a couple of minutes to reflect on the question: **If you had a mentor when you were young, what would you have wished they’d been like?** Encourage them to think about what a person *is* (i.e. a quality, e.g. friendly) and *does* (i.e. a behaviour, e.g. shows up on time). They can take notes while they reflect and turn their camera off if they are more comfortable that way. If you have a group that is a bit more withdrawn, you might want to give each a target, e.g. everybody should come up with at least 3 qualities and 3 behaviours.
4. When ready, have volunteers use the annotate feature to add their qualities and behaviours. Tell them they do not have to use words, but can also draw, e.g. a smile onto the face to symbolise ‘friendly’ and that it does not matter if there are repeats – that just shows what’s especially important!
5. Together, discuss what you have come up with as a group. Allow volunteers to add anything else they think is important. As them: What is more important to being a good mentor: qualities or behaviours? How are qualities and behaviours connected? Do you need to behave a certain way to *demonstrate* a quality you have, e.g. turn up on time to show that you are reliable? What does it take to be a good mentor, and can anybody be one?

## Possible variations

If you have a relatively big group, you might want to do step 5 in smaller groups/breakout rooms to make sure everybody gets a chance to speak and discuss.

# What a Mentor Does

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Volunteers gain an understanding of beginning a mentoring relationship in practice.Clarification is given on appropriate behaviours and approaches to mentoring | Small groups or pairs | 25 minsBreakout roomsWhiteboard & Annotation |

## Previous understanding assumed

A good idea of what mentoring is and what qualities and behaviours make a good mentor.

## Materials & tools

* Case study ‘Eilidh’
* A ‘gathering’ tool, e.g. the whiteboard & annotation feature on Zoom.

## Activity step-by-step

1. Tell your volunteers that you will now think about how a good mentor behaves at the beginning of the mentoring relationship.
2. Introducing the activity, add that this time, as well as discussing you will also include what a good mentor does not do because that is just as important.
3. Share the case study with your volunteers. You can either read it out loud (yourself or ask a volunteer with a good sound and connection) or give them a few minutes to read it.
4. In groups, their task will be to come up with a list of “dos” and “don’ts” for Eilidh’s new mentor. Stress that, as well as what they learned about Eilidh just now, they should draw on everything they know by now about what makes a good mentor and what is needed to develop a successful mentoring relationship. Also ask them to imagine that Eilidh’s mentor is one of them and has never done this before, so to be kind and understanding in their advice. One of them should take notes so that they can feedback later.
5. Give them at least 10-15 minutes for this task – you want them to really treat this seriously and bring in everything they know so far.
6. Back in the common room, get the groups to feedback one “do” or “don’t” at a time and add them to the whiteboard. Make sure to ask ‘why’ they have decided to make something a “do” or “don’t” and nominate group members other than the note-taker to explain. Add or elicit any other advice that you think is missing.
7. Ask your group to imagine that they will be Eilidh’s new mentor. Do they think it’s difficult or easy to follow all the “do’s” and “don’ts” they came up with? Which ones will be particularly difficult? How can they make sure they avoid the particularly hard or important “don’ts”?

## Possible variations

You might have to steer your groups away from too interventionist an approach on this case study. Highlighting that the initially unequal nature of the relationship (they know lots about Eilidh, her family and situation, Eilidh knows very little about them) and eliciting ways to have a non-judgemental approach and create more balance in the relationship.

If you have a relatively big group, you might want to do step 7 in smaller groups/breakout rooms to make sure everybody gets a chance to speak and discuss.

# What a Mentor Does

## Eilidh

After your intandem mentoring training, you are matched with Eilidh and are given some information by the volunteer coordinator to help you familiarise yourself with Eilidh’s situation.

Eilidh is 11 and lives with her mum and, up until a few months ago, her stepdad. Around the time he moved out, Eilidh was having to meet with lots of different people who would ask her questions about her experiences of living at home and about her mum and stepdad. She had eventually had to go to a children’s panel with her social worker and an advocate and the panel decided to place Eilidh on a Compulsory Supervision Order. She was told that this meant she could stay at home with her mum but that she would have to receive regular visits from her social worker. Eilidh feels that this must have something to do with all of the fighting that used to happen between her mum and stepdad. He used to hit her mum and throw things when he was angry.

Eilidh’s mum says that everything will be OK once her ex-partner moves out. She has however told Eilidh that she shouldn’t tell people about what happens in the house. She said that if she does, she might end up getting taken into care and will have to live with a strange family. Eilidh is scared by this thought. She wants to just stay where she is with her mum.

Eilidh doesn’t know the area where she stays too well. She moved there about 6 months ago but tends not to go out as she doesn’t know many people who stay there. After the summer she will have to move to a new school as she will be going into 1st year but this won’t be the school that all her friends are going to, it will be one closer to where she now lives and this scares her a little.

# Unique & Shared

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Conversation skills which can be transferred when getting to know a young person are demonstrated | Small groups or pairs | 15 minsBreakout rooms |

## Previous understanding assumed

A good idea of the mentoring relationship and how intandem works.

## Materials & tools

* none

## Activity step-by-step

1. For both parts of the activity, use breakout rooms to split your volunteers into smaller groups. You can the same groups for both parts or rearrange the breakout rooms into new groups for the second part.
2. The first part is the “shared” part. Tell each group to assign a notetaker and list any common traits or qualities that the group all have in common. Ask them to avoid writing things that are immediately obvious (e.g. do not write down something like “everyone has hair” or “we are all wearing clothes”). The goal is for everyone to dig deeper than the superficial. Allow about five or six minutes
3. Come back to the common room and have the notetaker from each group read their list.
4. The second part is the “unique” one. Ask each group them to assign a new notetaker (or, if you’re using new groups, somebody who hasn’t been notetaker before) and, this time, record unique traits and qualities, i.e. items that only apply to one person in the group. Instruct the group to find at least two unique qualities/strengths per person. Again, ask them to look for qualities and strengths beyond the superficial and obvious. Allow another five or six minutes.
5. When time is up, come back to the main room and share the unique qualities in one of the following ways: (1) each person can share one of their unique qualities themselves; (2) have each person read the qualities of the person to their right; or (3) have the notetaker read a quality one at a time, and have the others guess who it was.
6. Reflect on the exercise all together and bring it back to mentoring and intandem: Do you think you would have learned these things about each other eventually through small talk? Why is it important to recognise both shared and unique traits? Can you use activities like this with your mentee and how can you adapt them (e.g. shared and unique likes/dislikes/interests etc.?

## Possible variations

If your volunteer training group do not know each other very well yet, you can also use this exercise as an icebreaker earlier on and simply do step 6 later, asking them to think back to the icebreaker.

If you did the What a Mentor Does activity, come back to it at the end of this exercise: While you were working in your groups, which of the behaviours did you show (e.g. listening, openness, showing interest etc.).?

# Positive Endings

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Positive Endings | Volunteers reflect on the benefits of positive endings | Pairs | 15 minsBreakout rooms |

## Previous understanding assumed

A good idea of the mentoring relationship and how intandem works.

## Materials & tools

* Whiteboard/flip chart (physical or virtual)

## Activity step-by-step

1. On their own, ask volunteers to think of a personal experience of an ending that has been positive for them and one which has been negative. They can think of endings broadly, here; it does not have to be a relationship. Also highlight that they should avoid thinking about anything distressing or something they are not comfortable sharing.
2. Divide volunteers into pairs (or breakout rooms with two members) and ask them to share and discuss these experiences of endings with their partner, focusing on what made them positive/negative.
3. Back in the common room, ask everyone to suggest what can make endings helpful and positive and what can make them negative or unhelpful, writing up their suggestions on the whiteboard.
4. Summarise the discussion and highlight how endings can be difficult for all of us, but especially for young people who have experienced a lot of change and loss in their lives, highlighting the importance of planning endings for intandem mentoring relationships to make them helpful and positive. Quickly summarise the expectations for mentors when it comes to ending the relationship (i.e. as much notice as possible, planning with coordinator).
5. All together, do a quick brainstorm for ideas about an ending strategy for a mentoring relationship – What can you do to celebrate and reflect on the relationship? Can you do something/create something to keep and take into the future (i.e. scrapbook, poster etc?).?
6. Point out that it is still likely some mentoring relationships will end in an unplanned way, because the lives of young people are often unpredictable. This can be distressing for mentors too, who should be made aware that they can contact their coordinator to talk through their feelings, if this happens.