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INDIANA UNIVERSITY

The GMC Newsletter

November 2019

Dear Graduate Mentoring Community,

November begins what I call the season of *intentional* gratitude. Although we give gratitude throughout the year, the beginning of fall and entry into winter – transformation, and hibernation – invite us to slow down and to spend more time indoors, with ourselves, and with others. It is an optimal time to step back and away (if for no other reason to avoid the cold, snow, and ice).

This is also the season of unexpected grief and grieving. Spending more time contemplating change can remind us of what types of changes we have endured, with and without those we love. The joy and gratitude that others express can also be a time that remind us of what we don't have. This is a time when the turn inward can be frightening and lonely.

In this newsletter, I suggest you reflect on this semester and share how you are feeling and learn about the developmental stages of mentoring.

With these thoughts in mind, I'd like to offer you the following:

Regular check-ins. Check on or check in with someone you know. We all appreciate it when someone sends a note, makes a call, or stops by “just because”. In my community, a friend may call and say, I want to lay my eyes on you to make sure everything is okay. That means, coming to my door to do just that and then leaving after they are satisfied.

Journal or share what you are feeling. If you find yourself overwhelmed with finishing out the end of the semester, or with emotions about personal events, make time to write down what you are feeling and thinking. AND, let someone know what you are feeling and thinking. IF you need to talk to someone, do not hesitate to call or make an appointment with [CAPS](#).

Remember that you can also drop-in a the [Let's Talk](#) locations.

Practice mindfulness and compassion. Do not curtail your joy. Do be mindful that not everyone is able to be joyful at this time. Determine when and with whom you can share so that you do not become angry or disappointed with others who are experiencing a range of different emotions. Perhaps your joy can support them; perhaps it cannot. Remember to check-in and check-on someone to make that determination.

Practice gratitude . No matter where you are in the range of being during this season, I encourage you to take a moment – especially when you feel you cannot – take a moment to jot down quickly all the things you have accomplished this semester. Five minutes, as many things as you can. If that is too long, or you feel you've not done much, then be intentional about listing down three things. Don't compare yourself to others, or even your previous accomplishments. "Life is a thing, when you learn you grow," (Damien Marley). It could be as simple as this semester you got up ten minutes earlier, or you ate one less box of chocolate (my own case). Or maybe you took time to read this newsletter and thought to yourself: I can do that.

Most of all, I offer the words in the affirmative from Adrienne Marie Brown's [Emergent Strategy](#) (what we are reading in my A263 class). "...your existence – who and how you are – is in and of itself a contribution to the people and place around you. Not after or because you do some particular thing, but simply the miracle of your life" (57, online version).

Gratitude to each and every one of you who make my life and The Graduate Mentoring Center a place of refuge, miracles, authenticity, life-giving, and transformation.

Maria Hamilton Abegunde
Director

November 2019

Developmental Stages in Mentoring Relationships

Written by Jennifer Park

We are heading to the end of the semester, and it is a good time to review the relationships we have with our mentors and mentees. Do we have a particular type of mentoring style? What are some mentoring stages and their characteristics? Are we moving from one stage of mentoring to another?

Mentoring relationships are dynamic: They change over time and transform through various developmental stages of mentoring, which can be strengthened or weakened by the type of mentoring given/received in the relationship. Ideally, as mentors and mentees develop their relationships, they create communal norms that are especially “important in relational mentoring and developing close mentoring bonds” (Ragins & Verbos, 2007, p. 97).

Ragins and Verbos (2007) identified three basic relationship states: dysfunctional, traditional, and relational.

Dysfunctional mentoring relationships may include negative experiences. The interactions of mentors and mentees may consist of abusiveness or non-responsiveness, not providing necessary guidance to the mentee. If you are experiencing such relationships, it is recommendable to talk to a person you trust to seek for assistance.

Typically, in traditional mentoring relationships, mentors provide one-on-one career support for their mentees. Mentors transfer their knowledge and experiences to the mentees so that mentees can develop. This mentoring is the most commonly observed type of mentoring relationship. For some, this relationship may be adequate that meets the goal of their mentoring relationships. However, the relationship can get deeper as mentors and mentees develop into a reciprocal relationship in which both learn from each other.

Relational mentoring is one that includes mutual learning and a communal, dyadic, and reciprocal relationship which extends beyond the traditional standpoint.

Which stage are we in our mentoring relationships? Would you like your relationship to move towards a relational mentoring? What are the steps to getting there?

While the majority of mentoring relationships are traditional, only a small portion shows the frequency of relational mentoring. Traditional may work for some, but we may want to get to relational. In our upcoming newsletters, we will discuss further what makes strong mentoring relationships.

Events/Workshops

Thank you to Lekeah Durden and the Graduate Emissaries for providing dinner for our Wednesday writing group dialogue on October 30th.

What's Happening at and with The GMC in November?

- Sitting for Peace: Friday's 11 am – Noon, NMBCC, A221
- [Writing groups](#): Virtually (Monday's and Thursday's) and face-to-face (Wednesday's)
- [Researching the Margins: Conducting Qualitative Research in Quantitative Fields](#) (November 14th-15th, Social Science Research Commons Woodburn Hall 200)
- [Nuts and Bolts to Degree Completion - The Next Steps After Coursework](#): This workshop will cover topics such as filing for your candidacy to submitting your accepted dissertation. You can join us in person or via Zoom on November 21st from 1:30pm - 2:30pm. See flyer for additional information.

Other Events that May Interest You

- [A Call for Essay Submissions: Graduate Students of Color Reflect on Lessons Lived and Learned in the Academy](#).

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E546 Wells Library - 1320 E 10th Street
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