



Mentoring Matters

November 2012

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What Do You Plan To Do To Celebrate National Mentoring Month?

JANUARY 2013

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[Click here](#) to share your plans for National Mentoring Month (January 2013). We will be featuring celebration tips and ideas in the next issue of Mentoring Matters. If your submission is selected, you will receive a free copy of The Mentor's Guide!

Upcoming Online Course!

This month we talk with **Laurent A. Parks Daloz**, Senior Fellow at the [Whidbey Institute](#). Dr. Daloz was the first academic dean of the Community College of Vermont, and served as mentor to adult students for many years while on the faculty of the Johnson College External Degree Program, the Norwich University Adult Degree Program, and the Lesley College Intensive Residency Option. He has also taught at Columbia Teachers' College. He holds two honorary degrees, one from the University of New Hampshire and the other from De Paul University. The reissue of his classic book on mentoring, [Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners](#) has just been published by Jossey-Bass.

Interview with Dr. Laurent A. Parks Daloz



MM: There is an explosion of interest in mentoring over the past several decades. In your opinion, why does the subject remain so important?

LPD: A quick answer would suggest that as the information revolution and technological change intensify the need for on-the-job learning in our businesses and other

institutions, it has made sense to augment formal training programs with more context-sensitive mentoring systems. Your own work, *Lois*, has made that abundantly clear and spelled out the myriad ways that can be accomplished in organizations.


But I think there is more than this. Although the term, "mentor" is relatively new in education, the function of mentoring is as ancient as our species and is a fundamental element of human culture. In every society older relatives, close family friends, and respected elders have long served formally as tutors and informally as wise keepers of tradition. They are integral to the networks of learning that we all grow up in. Over recent years as family ties have stretched and frayed, as our lives have become at once more complex and fragmented, and as the future becomes less certain, there develops an increased need for additional adults and experienced elders to hold a sense of meaning, purpose, and hope for younger people.

MM: While the examples you use are from the world of higher education, they feel universal in application. How

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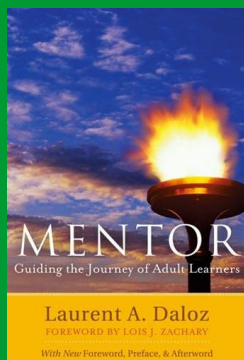
might someone who is not in the field of adult education benefit from reading your book?

LPD: Well, what it really demonstrates is how to respectfully get inside the meaning-making of another person and be in dialogue with them in a useful way. It shows how to listen to the way people are making meaning and then to help them do so with greater vision, more compassion, sharper focus, richer imagination. So the basic principles and many of the practices are applicable in any situation where the purpose is the growth and development of the learner. Providing a mix of challenge, support, and inspiration, for instance, are valuable practices for any mentor, whether in a corporation, on a construction site, in sports, a law practice, counseling, medicine....you name it. And the ability to listen well, to take the perspective of the other, to practice real dialogue, to offer more adequate maps of reality, and to suggest new language-these are all skills and practices that make us more effective mentors regardless of what field we are in.

MM: When your book was first published, there was only one other book on the topic in print; now there are dozens. Why do you think yours remains important? What is its unique contribution?

LPD: People have told me that they appreciate it because of the way it illustrates insights about learning and development with compelling stories, because it is written in accessible language, and because it draws on both current theory and ancient literature. Also, because it integrates developmental theory with mentoring, it has been able to make a contribution to transformative learning theory and provide a platform for valuable research in that realm.

Just Published!



Mentor: Guiding the Journey of Adult Learners

Someone once wrote a book about mentoring that purported to go "beyond" the myths and magic of mentoring. But it is precisely within the mystery of the mentoring relationship that the power of this art lies. There is a timelessness and universality to the mentoring relationship. It's no accident that the word itself invokes a mythic archetype, and I would like to think that the book has been called a classic because it speaks to both our personal, contemporary human experience and the deep knowledge of our species.

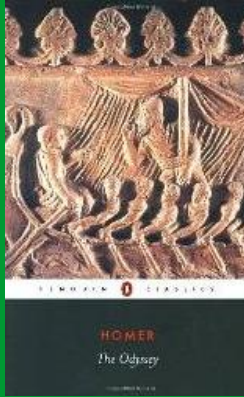
What Dr. Daloz Recommends Reading



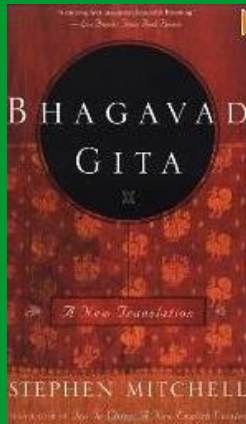
Faust by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

MM: New editions of books often include a new Preface, as does yours. But why did you add an Afterword as well?

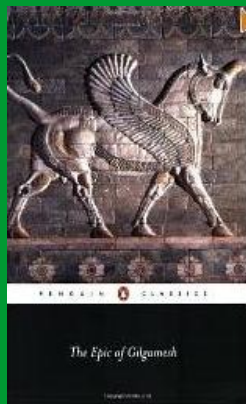
LPD: Well, since I am further along in my own life journey, I wanted to try getting some language around the evolving, outer edges of my thinking about mentorship. It had long been apparent to me that education is finally about the cultivation of wisdom, but ironically, the topic has only recently become a respectable one in our field. If the ultimate goal of the mentor is to cultivate wisdom, how would we know if we are doing that? Can we identify what it would look like? Or is it entirely dependent on context, developmental complexity, mystical intuition? And even if we can begin to name it, how would we actually cultivate it in another person? The Afterword is an effort to play with some of those questions and perhaps to sow in the reader some new and still more generative seeds. I'd like to think of it as a kind of gift to a new generation of writers, thinkers, and mentors.



The Odyssey by Homer



Bhagavad Gita: A New Translation by Stephen Mitchell



The Epic of Gilgamesh by Anonymous

MM: What books are you reading now that are must-reads for mentorship?

LPD: One of my primary reads last year was Goethe's [Faust](#). I have always been curious about the paradox of the hunger and perils of the quest for knowledge and found Goethe's sometimes bizarre telling of the Faust myth extraordinarily rich. So this summer I read Marlowe's Dr. Faustus to see how the two compared. Believe me, Goethe wins hands down, but both tales point to the dangers of conflating knowledge with power, and remind us of the moral dimensions of our work. Ultimately, we are required to respect the learners' journeys as their own, even as we work to help them become more intelligently critical, empathically imaginative, and expansively committed.

As adult educators, it is important for us to be in conversation with a range of other disciplines and alert to the role we have to play in addressing the pressing issues of our time. Paradoxically, I recommend augmenting our "professional" reading with an ample dose of ancient classical literature-[The Odyssey](#), Ecclesiastes, the [Bhagavad Gita](#), or the Gilgamesh epic. These myths help to anchor our knowing in soil enriched by eons of human experience and serve as a check on our cultural arrogance. At the same time, however, enormous leaps forward are happening all around us that we cannot ignore: in the new physics, genomic research, collective consciousness, neuroscience, and emergent technologies. And finally, what part are adult educators called to play in addressing the staggering reality of imminent climate change?

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What Are People Saying About the New Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkits?



"I really appreciate having these handy toolkits in my back pocket."

"The toolkits are welcome reminders."

"They help me stay on track and remind me about the questions I should be asking my mentee."

Mentoring Excellence Pocket Toolkits

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Toolkit #3: Strategies for Mentees: Mentoring Excellence

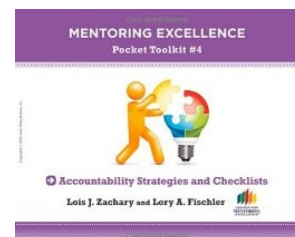
Toolkit 3 is organized around the four phases of successful mentoring: getting ready, establishing agreements, enabling, and coming to closure, which build on one another to form a developmental sequence. This pocket toolkit provides answers to many frequently asked questions about how to make the most of a mentoring relationship and offers tips to keep it on track.



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Toolkit #4: Accountability Strategies and Checklists: Mentoring Excellence

Toolkit 4 covers the very important process of setting goals. It offers accountability strategies and checklists for mentoring excellence that can be used during each phase of the mentoring relationship. They can be used to guide mentoring conversations, gauge progress, and promote mutual accountability. These checklists can also be used to determine readiness to move on to the next phase.

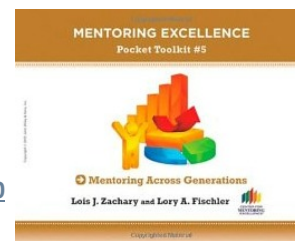


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Toolkit #5: Mentoring Across Generations: Mentoring Excellence Pocket

Toolkit 5 helps mentors and mentees understand the differences among Boomers, Gen-Xers, and Millennials in mentoring relationships. It gives valuable guidance, tips, and checklists to help all ages get the most out of their mentoring relationships.

[Order Your Toolkit #5 Today! Amazon Price \\$12.00](#)



A Note to Our Readers:

We believe that leaders cannot be effective without a strong and ongoing commitment to mentoring excellence. This belief, our passion for mentoring excellence, and our extensive experience in the field with organizations led us to create the Center for Mentoring Excellence. At our virtual center, www.centerformentoringexcellence.com, you will find mentoring tools and resources, expert advice and a forum for sharing best mentoring practices. We hope that you will visit us there and let us know how we can continue to help you raise the bar on mentoring in your organization.



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