



MENTORING IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORTS COACHING

EDITED BY
FIONA C. CHAMBERS

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Mentoring is a core element of any successful teacher education or coach education programme, with evidence suggesting that teachers and coaches who are mentored early in their careers are more likely to become effective practitioners. Physical education and sports coaching share important pedagogical, practical and cultural terrain, and mentoring has become a vital tool with which to develop confidence, self-reflection and problem-solving abilities in trainee and early career physical education (PE) teachers and sports coaches. This is the first book to introduce key theory and best practice in mentoring, for mentors and mentees, focusing on the particular challenges and opportunities in physical education and sports coaching.

Written by a team of international experts with extensive practical experience of mentoring in PE and coaching, the book clearly explains what mentoring is, how it should work, and how an understanding of socio-cultural factors can form the foundation of good mentoring practice. The book explores practical issues in mentoring in physical education, including pre-service and newly qualified teachers, and in coach education, including mentoring in high-performance sport and the role of national governing bodies (NGBs). Each chapter includes real mentoring stories as well as practical guidance and definitions of key terms, and a pedagogy toolbox brings together the most important themes and techniques for easy reference. This is a hugely useful book for all teacher and coach education degree programmes, for any practising teacher or coach involved in mentoring, and for schools, clubs, sports organisations or NGBs looking to develop mentoring schemes.

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Dedicated to

*Pat, Matthew and Georgie
And Maura and Michael*

Also, to my 'found' mentors:

Michael Darmody RIP

Jacinta O'Brien RIP

Kathy Armour

Pat Duffy RIP

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INTRODUCTION

Fiona C. Chambers

Vignette

Thirteen years ago, when I was pregnant with my daughter, Georgie, I enrolled in a Bog Oak carving weekend with my Mum. Within twenty minutes of registration, we were asked to go to a room filled with mossy, muddy pieces of bog oak, which had been extracted from the bog, pieces which were 5,000 years old. My piece chose me. I could see the beauty, the line, the majesty, the possibilities of my piece hidden underneath the moss and dirt. I cradled it and brought it with me to the meditation room to reflect on just why this piece had spoken to me. Over the next two days, I began to reveal its beauty, using chisels, rasps and sanders. Our mentor was an elderly gentleman who spoke quietly to us and did not impose. He told us that we were merely stripping away the layers to reveal the final piece and that we could not force our will on it. We were simply unveiling what was already there. The weekend was punctuated with much meditation and reflection about the process of finding the hidden splendour of our piece. And as the weekend drew to a close, a lasting memory was forged on the final morning in our candle-lit meditation room. The room was filled with our splendid individual bog oak pieces, each waxed and rich in colour standing proudly side-by-side, glistening in the flickering candlelight.

For me, this vignette captures two elements, the process of mentor training and the practice of mentoring to reveal the inner strengths and characteristics of the mentee.

The focus of this book: Mentoring as professional practice

Mentoring is a core principle of professional teacher education (McIntyre *et al.* 2005) and coach education (Cassidy *et al.* 2009). Mentoring develops ‘the knowledge, skill and professional identity’ of future teachers (Grossman *et al.* 2009, p. 273) and coaches (Cassidy *et al.* 2009). This book is a user-friendly *practical and theoretical* guide to the processes involved in effective mentoring. It is written for all those in sport and physical education who seek to use mentoring to support learning. It offers the reader a unique guide to the mentoring process by bringing theories and pedagogical practices of mentoring ‘to life’ using the voices and experiences of mentors and mentees in physical education and sport contexts.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a wide-ranging concept. It is often defined in relation to styles and types of relationships involved in mentoring, and to variations in perceived benefits of mentoring and mentorship (Patton *et al.* 2005). Mentoring is a profession-building endeavour as mentors and mentees are ‘co-learners on a voyage of discovery’ (*ibid.*). Zachary (2000, p. 3) proposes a model where:

[t]he mentee shares responsibility for the learning setting, priorities, learning and resources and becomes increasingly self-directed. When the learner is not ready to assume that degree of responsibility, the mentor nurtures and develops the mentee’s capacity for self-direction from dependence to independence to interdependence over the course of the relationship.

Mentoring and professional learning

The presence of experienced mentors in formative field experiences is a vital component in ensuring meaningful work-based learning for pre-service teachers (McIntyre *et al.* 2005) and coaches (Cassidy *et al.* 2009). There is strong evidence that professional development and training should be centred on teachers’ learning, learning how to learn and transforming knowledge into practice for the benefit of their professional and pedagogical growth (Darling-Hammond 2006b; Darling-Hammond 2006a; Darling-Hammond and Rothman 2011). In fact, it has been argued that those teachers who are mentored early in their career are likely to be more effective practitioners (Evertson and Smithey 2000; Humphrey *et al.* 2000). There are a plethora of potential benefits of mentoring for beginning teachers, including reduced feelings of isolation, increased confidence and self-esteem, professional growth, and improved self-reflection and problem-solving capacities (Bullough 2005; Marable and Raimondi 2007; Lindgren 2005; McIntyre and Hagger 1996). In addition, mentees learn to sharpen classroom management expertise, personal time management skills, workloads and behaviour (Lindgren 2005; Malderez *et al.* 2007). More generally, mentors (experts) play an important role in the socialisation and enculturation of pre-service

teachers within the community of practice (Wenger 1998), a key professional learning site (Armour *et al.* 2012). Yet, although there is a growing belief in the value of mentoring in teacher education and coach education, questions remain about ways to make the process most effective in action. This book gives readers the opportunity to interrogate mentoring and to learn how to craft a mentoring approach which is meaningful and effective for both mentors and mentees in a physical education or sport coaching context.

How is this book organised?

The text is crafted to reach a variety of readers by explaining the theory of mentoring using the voices and experiences of a range of different mentors and mentees.

Overview of Section 1: Theories of mentoring

In Chapter 1, this section begins with the interrogation of the concept of mentoring. Here, Fiona Chambers, Tom Templin and Bryan McCullick explore practical and theoretical issues in relation to mentoring. They focus particularly on the role of the mentor and the effective mentor relationship characteristics. In Chapter 2, Kathleen Armour explores mentoring and professional development. She describes mentoring and professional responsibility, and highlights potential problems where the mentoring process is not clear to all participants. In Chapter 3, Fiona Chambers, Sinéad Luttrell, Kathleen Armour, Walter Bleakley, Deirdre Brennan and Frank Herold describe the pedagogy of mentoring.

Overview of Section 2: Socio-cultural factors and mentoring

This section allows the reader to step back and to address mentoring from a socio-cultural viewpoint. The section opens with Chapter 4, where Rachel Sandford considers the process of supporting the positive development of disadvantaged/vulnerable youth through mentoring initiatives. In Chapter 5, Liam O'Callaghan shows how physical education, in keeping with the practice of sport more generally, is a domain in which socially constructed notions of 'race' and ethnicity are clearly visible. He shares how this has impacted the experiences of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) trainee PE teachers. In Chapter 6, Hayley Fitzgerald considers how mentoring can enable Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) students to work towards inclusion for students with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and disabilities. Liam O'Callaghan returns in Chapter 7, emphasising how physical education is a domain divided along gender lines. He shows how this is visible in numbers of participants, the range of activities included on curricula, and socially constructed notions of masculinity and femininity. Finally, in Chapter 8, Julia Walsh explores the issue of volunteerism in sport, and how the volunteers are the backbone of youth sport. In particular she highlights how volunteers require and expect investment in their professional development though 'embedded' mentoring.

Overview of Section 3: Mentoring and physical education

In this section, the focus is on mentoring in the physical education context. The section opens with Sinéad Luttrell's account in Chapter 9 of how the process of learning to teach, scaffolded by mentor support, is outlined in policy and enacted in practice. This leads to a description in Chapter 10 of the Capability Maturity Model for Mentor Teachers (CM³T) by Fiona Chambers, Sinéad Luttrell, Kathleen Armour, Walter Bleakley, Deirdre Brennan and Frank Herold. CM³T is both (a) a diagnostic tool for mentor training needs and (b) a planning tool for designing bespoke training programmes for mentors at each phase of the Mentor Career Cycle. Fiona leads on from this in Chapter 11 to outline the development of the Telemachus Project, i.e. cultivating school-university partnerships as learning organisations to support the transition of cooperating teachers to a mentoring role in pre-service teacher education. Staying with this theme, in Chapter 12, Pilvikki Heikinaro-Johannsson, Mirja Hirvensalo, Sanna Palomäki and Terhi Huovinen examine the experiences of both mentees/pre-service teachers and physical education teacher educators as they experience the mentoring process. Louise McCuaig, Simone Hare and Sue Monsen, in Chapter 13, look to an alternative mentoring configuration and review one strategy in which a high-performing, fourth-year Health and Physical Education Teacher Education (HPETE) peer-mentor was added to the typical practicum triad. Closing this section, in Chapter 14, Nate McCaughtry, Pamela Hodges Kulinna, Donetta Cothran, Michalis Stylianou and Ja Youn Kwon examine the use of e-mentoring in the professional development of physical education teachers.

Overview of Section 4: Mentoring and sport coaching

The penultimate section shines the spotlight on sport coaching. In Chapter 15, Tania Cassidy, Joan Merrilees and Sally Shaw interrogate how mentoring supports females to 'become' elite performance coaches. In Chapter 16, Chris Cushion outlines how mentoring in coaching remains unstructured, uneven in terms of quality and outcome and uncritical in style, leading to reproduction of culture, power and poor practice. Mark Griffiths, in Chapter 17, corroborates this and describes how mentors are learning facilitators who create transforming environments by assisting the learning process, and in spite of this demanding pedagogical role, mentors are often given little guidance beyond an introductory 'workshop'. In Chapter 18, Clifford Mallett, Matthew Emmett and Steven Rynne outline how despite ill-clarification, the concept of mentoring in sports coaching can generally be conceptualized as 'guidance by a trusted other.' Drawing upon results from an extensive multi-year case study, this chapter aims to identify principles of mentorship effectiveness within the high-performance coaching domain. Julia Walsh and Fiona Chambers draw this section to a close in Chapter 19, emphasising how the quality of sports programmes depends on the quality of coaches who have been trained to be mentors in context.

Overview of Section 5: The Mentor Pedagogy Toolbox: An ecological systems perspective

In Chapter 20, Fiona Chambers synthesises the ‘Lessons learned’ from each chapter into Chandler *et al.*’s (2011) multi-layer ecological system of mentoring. This consists of three layers: (1) individual mentor characteristics (Ontogenic system); (2) three Microsystems – (a) Mentor-Mentee (dyadic microsystem), (b) Mentor-Mentee within Partnership Organisations (Developmental Network/ Multiple Microsystems) and (c) the formal mentoring programme (Organisational Microsystem); and (3) societal influences (Macrosystem). The Ontogenic, Microsystems and Macrosystem layers combine to form the ‘Terroir of Mentoring’ schematic, an ecological view of mentoring. This is the Mentor Pedagogy Toolbox.

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SECTION 1

Theories of mentoring

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1

MENTORING

A primer

*Fiona C. Chambers, Thomas Templin
and Bryan McCullick*

Ward “Piggy” Lambert never seemed to see limitations . . . only possibilities. With him, I gained one of the most important mentors of my career. From Coach Lambert, I learned the philosophies that were to become my trademark both on and off the court: conditioning, skill, and team spirit. He demonstrated the importance of unity and cohesion for making a team, and this was a lesson I never forgot. He modeled the importance of decisive action and taking risks, but he also cautioned . . . not to be reckless. He showed . . . responsibility, compassion, and (perhaps above all else) how to bring your personal principles into your career . . . His example gave me both the immediate counsel I craved and the confidence to trust my own instincts. As a mentor, he was a giant.

Wooden 2009, pp. 49–50

As you might have guessed, this vignette is not derived from data collected during empirical studies of effective mentors’ qualities. In fact, the story is taken from a popular book written by a famous coach and teacher, John Wooden. Wooden was the legendary University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) men’s basketball coach and he wrote this piece to describe his own mentor, i.e. his college basketball coach. As it turns out, Wooden (2009) had several people he considered mentors for and at different parts of his life. His description, however, of his coaching mentor paints a picture that probably resonates with many of us. Quite eloquently, Wooden describes Ward “Piggy” Lambert’s personal characteristics and mentoring actions that made him such a powerful influence on Wooden’s coaching career.

Oftentimes, theory and research findings are believed to be at odds with what many consider the ‘real world’. With a combined total of sixty-five years of both mentoring pre-service teachers and working with practicing teachers, the authors have heard arguments from both sides: ‘Dr Templin, what you are teaching us is

good . . . in theory', an undergraduate has been known to say, or at a conference we'll hear a researcher intone, 'Teachers just don't understand research, so that is why they don't put stock in it'.

We are not worried about which side is 'right', we just believe that when it comes to identifying the qualities of effective mentors, science and the real world align quite nicely. The combined knowledge from (a) mentoring literature, (b) first-hand accounts of mentoring relationships and (c) the biographical information from recognized teachers of sport and physical activity show that the qualities of effective mentors align. The language might differ, but the ideas and concepts expressed are in essence comparable.

In this chapter, we want to explore mentoring so as to 'set the table' for the rest of the book. Specifically, the three-fold purpose of this chapter is to (i) provide a background to and definition of mentoring, (ii) identify practical and theoretical issues surrounding the construct of mentoring and (iii) discuss the place of mentoring in teacher and coach development. In the end, this chapter should provide a nice segue into the remaining chapters in this text that present how mentoring occurs in various contexts, and culminate in the production of a mentoring schematic of lessons learned from each of the remaining chapters.

Background and definition of mentoring

The term 'mentor' is first mentioned in Homer's *The Odyssey*. In this mythological tale, Mentor (or Mentès), the son of Alcumus, an Ithacan noble and trusted friend of Odysseus, was charged with looking after the welfare and education of Odysseus' son, Telemachus, when Odysseus left to fight in the Trojan War. The French archbishop, theologian and writer François Fénelon wrote of how Athena, goddess of war, handicraft and wisdom, assumed the guise of Mentor when she accompanied Telemachus in search of his father. *Les aventures de Télémaque*, published in 1699, was written to educate the grandson of Louis XIV and includes the first recorded modern mention of mentoring (*Encyclopaedia Britannica* 2008). Interestingly, this definition of mentoring has endured in the midst of much debate on the subject. Theorists have agreed on the function and focus of mentoring.

Currently, literature on mentoring offers a broad view of the construct of mentoring and defines it vis-à-vis the mentoring relationship and how the mentor behaves within that relationship. This commentary is specifically related to the perceived benefits of mentoring (Patton *et al.* 2005). Turning to the etymology of the noun *mentor*, investigations reveal that it emanates from the noun *mentos* meaning intent, purpose, spirit or passion; wise advisor; 'man-tar' one who thinks; and 'mon-i-tor' one who admonishes (*Online Etymology Dictionary* 2007). The dictionary supports this pastoral and professional description, describing the mentor as 'a wise and trusted guide and advisor'; 'a wise and trusted counselor or teacher'; an 'experienced advisor and supporter'; 'a guide, a wise and faithful counselor'; and 'a person who gives another person help and advice over a period of time and often