

‘MENTOR A CHILD; SCULPT A GENERATION’

AUTHOR

ARATHY.K.NAIR

PhD Research scholar

Institute of Management in Kerala

University of Kerala, Karyavattom campus

Trivandrum

CO-AUTHOR

DR.G.RAJU

Dean, Prof & Head of the Dept of Commerce

University of Kerala

Karyavattom campus

Trivandrum

ABSTRACT

‘MENTOR A CHILD; SCULPT A GENERATION’

*Arathy.K.Nair

**Dr.G.Raju

The article ‘Mentor a child; Sculpt a generation’ attempts to throw light on the significance of having a ‘mentor’ in every child’s life and the way in which an external facilitator could mentor a child, regardless of the back ground he/she comes from. Mentoring children in a positive attunement creates a life journey for them, sculpt out their otherwise perilous life, especially if the child is raised up in a noxious circumstance.

The theoretical article emphasizes on the mentor qualities conducive for the smooth going of the mentee-mentor relationship; in addition, it briefs on the mentoring phase and the essential procedures that needs to be carried out during each phase. The article also attempts to sum up an awareness on the various mentoring schemes existing in Governmental as well as non-governmental organizations in India so as to drive the will-full hands to join along as volunteers as the mentor-volunteers for their child empowerment ventures.

Key words- Mentoring, Child mentor, Children, future generation, schemes.

.....

*Ph.D Research Scholar, IMK, University of Kerala, Karyavattom campus, Trivandrum

**Dean, Prof & Head of the Department of Commerce, University of Kerala, Karyavattom Campus, Trivandrum.

‘MENTOR A CHILD- Sculpt a Generation’

INTRODUCTION

We often talk about building up a productive nation by creating an efficient generation. The greatest contribution that an older generation could offer the society is to nurture and develop a righteous, truthful and constructive folk of youngsters. Behind every confident adult there is a meticulously nurtured child.

Rearing and fostering a child into a capable adult, is often seen solely as the responsibility of the ‘parents’ or ‘teachers’ alone. The fact is that the fomenting of buoyant child is not just the responsibility of a specific person or group. Nation building or creation of a constructive and virtuous society will become an easy nut to crack, when we produce a future generation who is competent enough to serve the diversely scattered humanity, in a single golden thread of unity. The development of such an adept generation lies in the hands of a fervently committed adult. Subsequently the passion to rear up a discerning child makes him/her an effectual “MENTOR”.

MENTORING AND SOCIETY

A ‘mentor’ in a societal level, is not an official designation or profile. Children are reared up in varied backgrounds. Some of them enjoy being raised up in a financially well-off and supportive background while some others hail from a background which has deprived parental pattern, single parenting, less financial back up, street raised, orphans, tormented and abused, underprivileged and oppressed, enslaved and exploited etc. Stress or trauma of any kind, no matter the intensity, is usually perceived and tackled by children in varied ways. Unhealthy coping mechanism calls for negative consequences, where in they again get labelled and rejected from the main stream society. A self – determined ‘mentor’ could ensure a lot, standing by and supporting the children with varied needs.

A mentor is a ‘sounding board’, a guide, a facilitator, who support, assist, and give directions to a less experienced person for his/ her betterment in life. A mentor need not be a ‘designated post’ or a formal position, in a way ‘any one could be a mentor’ (Peggie Renny, 2016). Nonetheless, the ‘mentor’ should imbibe certain person qualities in order to cultivate the desired outcome from his/her mentee or prodigy (the one who receives mentoring).

ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS FOR MENTORING

The mentoring process becomes fruitful when the mentor possesses certain qualities of virtue. A mentor is the one person who the mentee trust, follow, internalize and at times imitate. Therefore, the mentor needs to be very cautious. Children may hardly be able to differentiate between what is right and what is wrong for their life. Destroying a child’s frame of mind and behavior is more or less like destroying a valuable constituent of the future generation. Hence, when we set out to mentor a child, one should have the self-confirmation that he/she is enough worthy to take up the role.

The factors that is required to be a supportive mentor of child, is conflated along with his personal qualities. Some of those factors are: -

1) PASSION

The first and foremost quality that is needed is the passion to mentor a child. This involves the altruistic mental frame to nurture a child, who might not be related or associated with you in any way before or it could be a child who is known to you but need not be your own child, sibling etc. An intense passion for the well-being, progress and development of the child is the core of a child mentorship. The passion should be exceedingly genuine which continues throughout the child's evolving journey.

2) A ROLE MODEL BY ONESELF

Infix highly desirable and righteous behavior which enables the child to model such behavior. The simple theory is when we set ourselves to advise someone, we should have the worthiness to do so. As discussed before, a mentor forms a reflecting mirror, from which the mentee grabs the image just as it appears. The trust is formed when the child accepts that the mentor ahead of him is an immensely reliable personality, and he/she is a true version of what he/she preaches.

3) POSITIVE MENTORING

A child's mind is in a 'tabula rasa' state, a blank slate in which, the stains of what's seen, heard, touched and experienced get captured and deeply imprinted almost over a lifetime. Negative stimulations and persuasions leave impressions of extreme negativity. The mentoring process should always include the things which create a positive personality and also the ideas spread through the mentoring should be beneficial for the overall advancement of the child.

4) GENEROSITY

The mentor should be wise enough to share the knowledge base to the child or children whom he/she chooses to mentor. He/she should not be over-ridden by ego or self-centeredness on sharing their academic, career or life experiences for the improvement of the child. A mentor should focus not only on making a difference in the child but how to make the difference. Generosity is a naturally occurring process which has a ripple effect. If an act of generosity is experienced, it gets internalized and this learnt behavior is practiced by the one who gets to experience it. A mentor's generous behavior naturally gets internalized by the mentee who will later practice it in his life.

5) STABILITY

The passion to mentor a child during the initial stages of mentoring should be maintained. This should be sustained during the child's repeated failures despite the mentor's attempt. Especially if the mentees come from disadvantaged backgrounds, they require much assurance to come up in life. Sometimes, even a genuine effort might not yield positive results all of a sudden. The mentors should have the endurance to bear the unsuccessful and frustrating failures that their mentees experience. In many cases, the priority of the mentor changes, so does his commitment in the mentoring venture he/she took up. So, ceasing the mentor-mentee association in half-way might cause serious setbacks in the prodigy's life. Therefore, a stable and consistent intervention is needed once a mentoring relationship has been established.

THE MENTORING PHASE

Mentoring mostly takes an informal route, yet a structured and systematic mode of mentoring could take its pace in the case of child mentoring. There are certain factors that has to be considered in the phase of mentoring.

- **Willingness/ readiness of the child to be mentored.**
Receptiveness of the child to be mentored is a core aspect. Resistance plays an important role, especially in the case of underprivileged group of children as in juvenile delinquents, children of prisoners, street- children etc. Help them to evolve gradually, breaking the frontier of resistance and by intervening in their emotional space.
- **Know the child**
Understand the child's wishes, aspirations, and his/ her inclination. Listen and recognize his verbal as well as non-verbal cues. Do not assume or apprehend what they look forward for. Infer it from their words and also understand by being there with them.
- **Problem Analysis**
A thorough empathetic approach is required to infer a problem condition from the child. Do not undermine their concern no matter how silly it might sound. Check where the child is stuck. Analyze what measures could be taken to uplift or to pull out the child from the problem situation.
- **SWOT Analysis**
The analysis of strength, weakness, opportunity, and threats of the child should be assessed during the initial mentoring process. The understanding of weakness and threats are the tunnel ways and indications towards the hitches that the child face. Necessary interventions also could be done based on the listed weakness and threats.
- **Action Plan**
The problems, concerns, aspirations or wishes that is discussed in the initial stages are dealt with or executed after laying out an action plan. All the aspect which is worth the intervention and execution has to be considered in step by step process. The child's behavioral, psychological and personality changes should be noticed throughout the execution of the action plan.
- **SOAR Analysis**
After a period of a month, three months, six months etc. a SOAR analysis has to be conducted in-order to re assess the strength and opportunities (after the intervening the child's concern). Evaluate and match the aspirations of the child and the previous results has to be assessed. Correction and improvement methods has to be planned by the mentor according to the results perceived.

CHILD MENTORING PROGRAM BY GOVERNMENTAL SCHEMES AND NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN INDIA - AN AWARENESS.

1) MENTOR-ME-INDIA

Mentor – me – India is a Non- profit organization which recruits graduate students, use social media outlets, alumni groups, personal networks to gather mentors in-order to empower the children from low- economic group. They intend to offer role models to the budding generation who don't have means to develop themselves.

2) MENTOR TOGETHER

The organization 'Mentor Together' conducts one to one mentoring relationships program. They focus on the upliftment of children from disadvantaged background within the age group within thirteen to twenty-one. They work on a fixed curriculum and schedule.

3) 'MAD'- MAKE A DIFFERENCE INDIA

The association assemble youngsters as facilitators and leaders for mentoring children who are in need of attention and protection. The project work towards promising a middle-class life standard to each child they undertake.

4) TEACH FOR INDIA

A mentor – volunteer could step into the platform as an external mentor in-order to share their experiences, skill base, knowledge etc. to assist personal development of the children who are associated with the organization. One could volunteer the service, once in a week by using their knowledge and skill in the field of expertise.

5) ATAL INNOVATION MISSION

The ATAL innovation mission is the Governments 'Ne plus Ultra' initiative, which is an umbrella of various programs coming under it. It aims at developing an array of innovative programs with two main divisions, viz, Atal tinkering lab and Atal Incubation Centers. The Atal Tinkering labs are dedicated to the students in Class 6th and 12th, where in they could experiment innovative ideas such as in Robotics, electronics developmental tool, 3D printers. The exposure and space they receive with the supervision of an expert facilitator enable experiential learning and idea generation which might, on a later stage, helps in transforming the face of India.

6) MENTOR INDIA INITIATIVES

Mentor India initiative calls for mentors who could assist the ATAL Tinkering Labs and Atal Incubation Centers to attribute the technical, technological, experiential know-how to assimilate the younger brains to state- of-art technologies and learnings. The subject varies from innovative designs to business entrepreneurship.

AN OVERVIEW

Children, across the globe experience challenges in various brooks of their lives, as in the family environment, physical as well as psychological development, bias, prejudices and stereotyping etc. The child rights and welfare organizations and protection units in connection with individual child mentors could do a great deal to the development and smooth transformation of the children. Informal mentoring could be imparted in families where in the autocratic or permissive parental pattern could be interchanged to a more authoritative-supportive mentoring approach.

A mentor as community service operator could bring about a massive change in the outlook in the children by one-to one interactive session as well as by group mentoring. The individual mentor could train a child or adolescent from a particular group so as to transform them into a peer mentor who would later, directly look on to the concerns of the individual subjects in the particular group.

The mentor could conduct an evaluative session where in a thorough assessment regarding whether the mentor's activities meets the mentee's expectations and vice versa is evaluated. Changes could be brought about in the working mode or in the action plan in accordance with the feedback received.

CONCLUSION

Being a mentor to a child is indeed a massive responsibility. The aptitude, attitude and the commitment to work up to become a mentor to a child itself plants the seed for a sturdy humanity. In this era, which is pooled up by extreme social evils and depravity, the presence of a true mentor serves as a blessing in disguise in the lives of the children in needy situations. Helping the children to acknowledge their problem situation, supporting them and encouraging them to valiantly confront the problematic scenario, could serve as a prodigious initiative from the part of the mentor.

REFERENCES

- 1) Gundlapalli Ravishankar, *The Art of Mentoring: Simple tools & techniques to achieve your full potential*, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform (March 23, 2017), 127 pages (ISBN-10: 1544604688, ISBN-13: 978-1544604688)
- 2) Sunil Unny Guptan, *Executive Coaching: A Practitioner's Guide to Creating Excellence*. New Delhi: SAGE South Asia Edition, SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd, 2012, 182 (ISBN: 978-81-321-0717-0)
- 3) <https://government.economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/governance/niti-aayog-ayesha-chaudhary-mentoring-gives-a-sense-of-higher-purpose-to-young-india/70766001>
- 4) <https://nhm.gov.in/>

