



Session Four: The Power of Mentoring

Begin this session by watching the video **The Power of Mentoring**. In the video, students from Explorations Academy talk about the support they received from their school's peer mentoring program, and how the program has helped motivate them to achieve as well as to help others.

Consider these self-reflection and discussion questions:

- William Seda says that at first, he did not open up to his mentor because he didn't know him. What would it take for you to open up and receive support from a peer mentor?
- Desmond Bryan explains that the program "backs you up when you have fallen." Can you think of a time when you (or a friend) has gone off track? Who has been there for you? What type of person would you want to help you when you face challenges?

Student Activity: Mentors and Mentees

Read with your Peer Leaders the following excerpt about the origination of the term "mentor." (Or make copies and use the following page as a hand out.) Then discuss and/or answer these questions as a group or individually.

- What characteristics and adjectives describe an ideal mentor? Some examples might include trustworthy, responsible, good listener.
- What are some of the ways in which a "mentee" benefits from being mentored? (Some examples might be more confidence, more motivation, getting help with academics.)
- What are some of the ways in which a mentor benefits from his or her role? (Better social skills, feeling good about helping others, learning to better understand others).
- Now ask your Peer Leaders to consider and list their skills and talents. How can they best help someone else?



The Origination of "Mentor"

by Gordon Shea, author of *Mentor*

The story of Mentor comes from Homer's *Odyssey*. Odysseus, king of Ithaca, fights in the Trojan War and entrusts the care of his household to Mentor, who serves as teacher and overseer of Odysseus' son, Telemachus.

After the war, Odysseus is condemned to wander vainly for ten years in his attempt to return home. In time, Telemachus, now grown, ventures in search of his father. Athena, Goddess of War and patroness of the arts and industry, assumes the form of Mentor and accompanies Telemachus on his quest. Father and son reunite and cast down would-be usurpers of Odysseus' throne and Telemachus's birthright.

The word *Mentor* evolved to mean trusted advisor, friend, teacher and wise person ... Mentoring is a fundamental form of human development where one person invests time, energy and personal know-how in assisting the growth and ability of another person.

History and legend record the deeds of princes and kings, **but each of us has a birthright to actualize our potential.** Through their deeds and work, mentors help us to move toward that actualization.

Source: Shea, Gordon F. (1997) Mentoring (Rev. Ed.). Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications