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MENTORING AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING:  
ISSUES OF LEADERSHIP, POWER AND ETHICS

A thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements  
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## ABSTRACT

Mentoring has long been accepted as a means of personal and professional development. It is an accepted tool used in a variety of settings, including education and business.

This thesis aims to provide a theoretical study of mentoring. The intention is to see how leadership, power and ethical practice impact on the self-directed learning that is required for mentoring relationships to be successful. Insights into issues and practices in mentoring provide valuable insight for practitioners – mentors in particular, but also for educators of adults everywhere.

The research was based on a number of questions: What is mentoring? What constitutes a successful mentoring relationship? What role do leadership, power and ethical practice play in successful mentoring relationships? Why is self-directed learning important, and how is it influenced by leadership, power and ethics?

Philosophical foundations of the thesis are identified. Feminism and classical liberal thought are shown how they influence the choice of research project and methodology, and have an impact on data analysis and recommendations.

The researcher undertakes a review of literature on mentoring. This review, together with four mentoring stories taken from professional experience, provides the basis of the theoretical study, and generates data. In addition to the data obtained from a review of literature, four case studies provide insights into mentoring practice. Analysis of the data is followed by a number of recommendations for practice, addressing issues in a way that readers will be able to generate their own solutions to the problems identified.

# CHAPTER ONE

## MENTORING AND SELF-DIRECTED LEARNING

Mentoring relationships have been used in a wide range of situations as a learning tool, and, as such, have been shown to play a vital role to play in personal and professional development. The aim of this thesis is to provide a theoretical study of the role of mentoring. My intention is to see how leadership, power and ethical practice impact on the self-directed learning that is required to make mentoring relationships successful. The insight into issues and practices in mentoring will, I believe, prove valuable for practitioners in the future, making recommendations for future practice. This will address issues in a way that readers will be able to generate their own solutions to the problems identified.

The focus is on the role of mentoring, and the way in which it may contribute to positive learning outcomes in the protégé – learning which, to be successful, must be self-driven and directed by the learner. My choice of issues (leadership, power and ethics) arises from a number of sources. Firstly, there is a philosophical interest in feminism and libertarian (sometimes called *classical liberal*) thought, both of which address ideas of leadership and power. It also develops from my professional experience of mentoring and adult teaching – some examples of which are outlined in Chapter Four. Leadership is a central process in any mentoring relationship, where the mentor leads a protégé towards self- and professional development through learning activities. To be successful, leadership must address power issues and have an ethical focus.

To achieve this goal, I have also undertaken a review of literature on mentoring. This review, together with four mentoring stories taken from my professional experience, provides the basis of the theoretical study, and generates data. A number of significant research questions form the basis of my research: What is mentoring? What constitutes a successful mentoring relationship? What role do leadership, power and ethical practice play in successful mentoring relationships?

Why is self-directed learning important, and how is it influenced by leadership, power and ethics?

I will discuss some of the issues that have arisen, particularly as they impact on adult learning. The approach is a critical one, aimed at identifying, not only the value of mentoring, but also some potential drawbacks in relation to leadership, power and ethics. Given the limits of a Masters thesis, however, these data sources provide a mere snapshot of what is happening in the field.

I began working in adult education in the 1980s. Over several years I worked in a number of roles including mentor and coach, community tutor, and Learning Assistance Tutor working in conjunction with the government-funded Training Opportunities Programme. My tutoring has involved literacy and ESOL provision, training in life and vocational skills, and counselling. Other adult education roles included tertiary learning support, training groups of community volunteers, workshops on human rights legislation, and training mental health consumers in life skills.

A number of significant individuals have contributed to my professional journey and to my interest in mentoring. These have been individuals who are active in the community, in politics, in educational institutions and in government organisations – individuals who have had an immense impact on my thinking and activity. Their role has been one of leadership, professional guidance, job skills and coaching. This has resulted in major changes in career direction, the ability to think critically on my professional development, an acceptance of divergent viewpoints, and a freedom to stand up as a Tall Poppy when too many want to slash this off at the waist. Further philosophical influences came through feminism and libertarian philosophies, which shall be outlined in a later chapter, and the experience of disability.

Working within the field of adult education and training, I became interested in the concept of mentoring. I was particularly interested in the personal and professional benefits that could be gained from this type of relationship. I soon found myself involved in mentoring relationships – both as a mentor in formal programmes, and as a protégé in an informal relationship in a worksite. Three particular relationships are the subject of this thesis, and will be described in more detail later in this chapter. Feedback from clients has been positive, as they came to appreciate my style of working. Rather than seeing them as the helpless victim of circumstances who must be nurtured and spoon-fed, I operate from the belief that people have the resources they need to empower themselves. I merely act as a catalyst for, or facilitator of, change, providing the setting for the learner to do the spade-work for himself or herself.

Central to this thesis is the question “What *is* mentoring?” I will provide more discussion of the concept of mentoring in my Literature Review, but I believe some definition is necessary here, as the concept of mentoring needs to become less slippery (Sullivan-Brown, 2002). Mentoring relationships occur in a variety of settings, including education, business, and the community. It occurs primarily between individuals, but may include mentoring of groups. Professional and community development is a central focus, as is support for students from faculty advisers and student peer mentoring (McLean, 2004; Harper and Sawicka 2001; Allen and Poteet, 1999). Senior students might assist junior students with all aspects of integration into the academic setting, including social, psychological and academic. Mentoring is also used to address the career needs of members of minority groups, such as women, the unemployed, and the disabled – often with successful outcomes (McLean, 2004; Tahmincioglu, 2004).

Mentoring is typically valued as a caring, dynamic, learning relationship whose goal is the personal, educational or professional development of the mentee. This goal ‘makes it distinct from that of a supervisory relationship or even, that of a student-teacher relationship. The difference lies in the reciprocal nature of the mentoring

relationship that each member in the relationship gives and takes from the other in order to grow, to risk, and to change.... In a true mentoring relationship, participants are capable of being transformed personally and professionally through risk-taking, empowerment, and vision change. Though transformation does not occur within every mentoring relationship, the potential to transform is possible' (Martin, 2000). A mentor is someone who has experience, combined with specialist knowledge and expertise. He or she is committed to excellent business practice (Shaw, 1995) providing challenging assignments and helping with career moves. 'Our findings define quality mentoring as an active, engaged and intentional relationship between two individuals (mentor and protégé) based upon mutual understanding and serving primarily the professional needs of the protégé' (Enomoto, Gardiner and Grogan 2002: 210).

Mentoring is primarily focussed on learning outcomes for the protégé. As such, it shares much with the goals of adult education. So just what *is* adult education, and what is its role? Adult education is 'any set of activities or experiences engaged in by adults which leads to changes in thinking, values or behaviour' (Cranton, 1992: 3). It is formal or informal, and may lead to the development of vocational skills certified by awards and proof of achievement. It enables individuals to develop critical thinking and to make sense of their world. Learning occurs in multiple situations/contexts, through many different means and for many different reasons. Working outside formal academic structures is useful for many, and small-scale local initiatives generate solutions to local or individual needs. This doesn't mean that large or formal is less valuable.

The most successful learning is that which effects a transformation at individual, organisational or societal level. Transformational learning is a process that results in change in actions, frames of reference, and world views. 'We transform our frames of reference through critical reflection on the assumptions upon which our interpretations, beliefs, and habits of mind or points of view are based' (Mezirow, 1997: 5-7). This type of learning requires autonomy, independence and self-

direction on the part of the learner (Grabove, 1997), fostering critically reflective thought and imaginative problem solving.

Learning has a significant role to play in promoting success, whether on an individual, organisational, or societal level. Within learning organisations, it results in changes in perceptions, behaviours, beliefs and attitudes, strategies and policies (Rylatt, 2000). This is described as *double-loop learning*, which, when it ‘happens at an individual and team level would translate into learning at the organisational level i.e. people in the organisation would design their actions based on a revised set of assumptions’ (Frydman et al, 2000: 163).

## THEORY

At this point it is worthwhile taking a look at my philosophical standpoint. This will provide a framework from which to analyse the data, and to identify issues for mentoring practice. My philosophy is made up of a number of strands and influences, which I will now discuss in some detail. These primarily include feminism and libertarian thought. Because much of my thinking around mentoring is related to the learning relationship involved, I will also outline my current thinking on adult learning – particularly as it relates to mentoring relationships. I will also address Critical theory and the theory related to narrative research, as these have an impact on my methodology and interpretation of data.

### Adult learning

My context for this thesis is specifically on adult learning, and the outcomes that leadership, power and ethics play in supporting successful learning outcomes from the mentoring relationship. Context is important in helping identify a focus. While much of my literature, and many of my examples, come from a business or employment setting – as is to be expected when looking at mentoring – the primary focus is on the adult learning that is achieved.

In this section I want to look at the relationship between mentoring and adult learning, and then identify which theory of adult learning is appropriate for mentoring. Learning is typically described as a process of acquiring knowledge and skills. It is more than this, however. It is developing the ability to think critically, that leads to informed decision-making and behavioural change (Grabove, 1997). It is the ability to use knowledge to gain access to services and achieve one's goals.

The main type of learning that may help achieve these goals most successfully is self-directed learning. This type of learning occurs where learners' intentions 'are significant determinants of the learning processes which occur' (Webber, 2004: 260). It occurs where there is an active decision by the individual to learn, based on a perceived discrepancy between past and present experience. The learner is responsible for seeking out learning topics, settings, and outcomes, and may have some role in identifying assessment methodologies (Cranton, 1996).

Much of the debate surrounding self-direction centres on the dichotomy between the potentially contradictory roles of individual and society in learning. On the individual front, learners, to be successful, need to take responsibility for their own learning. Only then can they empower themselves. This necessarily involves being clear about what they expect from learning. Motivational factors that will foster learning include a need for acceptance and belonging, life transitions, and recognition. Learning will be assisted by an environment where there are positive relationships with teachers, achievement of goals, and students do not feel cajoled or forced into learning (Ridley and Walther, 1995). Personal responsibility and independence in learning will be encouraged by challenging learning that has a sense of purpose attached, as well as an active engagement and involvement, rather than boredom, in the learning environment. It is important to note that life gets in the way, sometimes, and may hinder successful learning from happening if issues are not addressed.

Self-directed learning is a contentious issue, however. Jarvis (1992) identifies a concern that, while theories of autonomous and self-directed learning assume that all are free to pursue own interests, there are constraining social and political forces on action. Likewise, Brookfield (1986) locates self-direction within a wider context. Brookfield agrees that self-direction is important, but is impacted by the wider social and political framework, such as curriculum requirements, grading and evaluation criteria, and the readiness of the individual for self-direction (ibid).

What does this mean for mentoring activity? Adult education is 'any set of activities or experiences engaged in by adults which leads to changes in thinking, values or behaviour' (Cranton, 1992: 3). Mentoring experience provides protégés with the opportunity to think through ideas about matters of importance, and offers with developmental support (Holbeche, 1995) with successful learning outcomes. This is why mentoring is becoming increasingly employed in occupational settings. Mentoring activity encourages and facilitates informal or open learning, particularly as traditional formal learning approaches are increasingly criticised for not delivering enhanced capability and performance (Garvey and Alred, 2001).

Effective mentoring practice will foster adult learning by getting learners involved at all levels, involving them in assessing their own behaviour and learning wherever possible. It deals with issues of the present and future, rather than of the past, and guides students to create plans for the future. Commitment is fostered by giving feedback and reinforcement, allowing plans the time to work, while not allowing excuses for non-performance (Ridley and Walther, 1995).

Mentors, like other educators, have a central role in facilitating self-directed learning. If teachers 'are to be successful in fostering meaningful learning, they must strive to meet ... student needs' (Ridley and Walther, 1995: 24). Teachers and mentors can foster learning by creating a supportive environment, and making learning interesting and relevant. They may assume students are capable, encouraging students to think and to become actively involved in all stages of

learning and assessment (ibid). By modelling risk-taking, they may foster an attitude of self-confidence and personal responsibility.

‘Mentoring informs best practice when it provides opportunities to assist the novice to grow and change. Change is risk. Taking risks empowers one to see in new ways, to try new ideas, and to change one’s vision. Vision change transforms, and the transformative process achieved through mentoring is defined as transformational learning’ (Martin, 2002: 123).

It is easy for mentors and educators, however, to assume they have the correct knowledge, and that others will accept it once exposed to it (Soady, 2002). This is not necessarily what happens in the real world, and my goal is to provide the conditions that enable learners to take more responsibility for their own learning and professional development

### **Critical theory**

My philosophical foundation borrows heavily from, and builds on, critical theoretical perspectives. Critical theory grew out of, but is not limited to, social and political movements committed to addressing issues of power and human rights. Challenging what they see as social and political inequities, they promote the value of diversity, community initiatives, increased participation by service users, and equal access to education and other services – services typically seen as the role of government. These movements share a tradition of radical pedagogy and seek to challenge what they see as oppressive practices (Jones, 1999; Media Studies, 1994; O’Shea, 1999).

Critical Theory is a theory or research method that challenges the status quo. It is a philosophical stance, but goes further than this. At its centre is an active process involving analysis, critique, and solution building – a willingness to critique practices and theories. What is important is the notion of being critical – the ability to analyse and make judgments on an issue. As a research methodology, it is an

attempt to explain the origins of everyday practices and problems – socially and politically – and a commitment to enabling change towards a more just and rational society. It identifies biases and distortions that prevent healthy personal and social growth, enabling professionals to free themselves from those constraints. It questions orthodox scientific assumptions that facts are value-free, and that those facts can be described/examined in language that is neutral and objective. Objectivity is deferred in favour of commitment, relativity and subjectivity (Gibson, 1986).

I build on Critical theory by adopting a philosophical stance that critiques existing ideas and practices, while offering alternative solutions. According to Cox (Morrison, 2002: 10) critical theory is critical ‘in the sense that it stands apart from the prevailing order of the world and asks how that order came about. Critical theory, unlike problem-solving, does not take institutions and social and power relations for granted but calls them into question by concerning itself with their origins and how and whether they might be in the process of changing.... As a matter of practice, critical theory ... takes as its starting point some aspect of a particular sphere of human activity ... the critical approach leads towards the construction of a larger picture of the whole ... and seeks to understand the processes of change in which both the parts and the whole are involved’.

Critique makes some assumptions about the value of education in enabling social and political change. Popular education has since been energised by the desire to change and a different way of life (Steele, 1999). Steele details the rise of the WEA, for example, in response to the working class need for education – a rise based on the ideals of radical adult educators of the university extension movement, who believed in self-improvement through culture, and on the actual development of working-class collectivist institutions which signified an emergent alternative and, at times, oppositional, culture (Steele, 1999). Foucault, too, provided a critical analysis of dominant regimes of truth and power, and their effects. His was – and is – a criticism which translates into political activity of a specific kind – assisting in

the creation of the conditions necessary to allow those directly involved in a struggle to act on own behalf (Smart, 1986).

Critical theory is a philosophical position that underlies emancipatory interests, which grow out of a desire for professional and personal development. People are interested in self-knowledge, self-awareness, and an understanding of how their past has shaped their way of being. This includes a desire to be free from self- and social distortions of knowledge (Cranton, 1996). My critique adopts a stance that is both feminist and libertarian in its approach.

Critical theorising is based on the belief that criticism is not value-free. As such, it cannot be kept separate from one's philosophical or political position. Its value stems 'from its ability to remain politically engaged' and represents 'an intervention into a much wider debate'. It critiques ideology and seeks to expose hidden agendas, unseen unacknowledged controlling forces. To be a critic is also to be a theorist (Sim and Van Loon, 2001). From my own position, libertarian thought provides a framework for critique of existing practices from an individualistic viewpoint – the role of the individual within an organisation. It is critical of organisational practices that unnecessarily constrain the individual, and seeks solutions that enable the individual to take responsibility for their own professional development and learning where possible. Critical theory, including as it does a wide range of philosophical foundations and viewpoints, allows people to make their own judgments, as do libertarians. Individualist feminism provides insights into ethical issues as well.

### **Feminism**

Feminist theory emphasises gender as a central category of critical analysis (McElroy, 2002), identifying of sexism as a negative force in women's lives. Social and political change lies at the heart of the feminist agenda, emphasising connections between women's oppression and other inequalities. Feminism seeks

to critique existing power structures, and to provide a less oppressive alternative. The stated goal is to see a world where women have complete self-determination.

There are two significant schools within feminism – gender feminism and libertarian (or individualist) feminism. Gender feminism (McElroy, 2004) is a conflict approach that challenges conventional sociological concepts of power and social structure. It sees gender as a ‘fundamental principle of social organisation’ and a dimension of social inequality (Edwards, 1988). The approach is collectivist, analysing women’s experience in terms of their membership of the group ‘women’, rather than as individuals (Hirschmann, 2003). The individual is socially locatable, which leads to an analysis which is deterministic, with women subordinate to men and influenced by that subordinate status (ibid).

Sometimes known as radical feminism, it draws on Marxist notions of oppression, replacing the proletariat with women as a category of oppressed group. It sees the ruling class as made up of men, and aims to challenge this patriarchal system (Narayan, 2001). The goal is change – an outcome where women are freed from that oppression (Zepke, 2000). However, because of the collectivist stance of gender feminism, the solutions offered are also collective. The aim is for gender justice and equity for women as a class (McElroy, 2002).

The concerns I have with gender feminism relate specifically to the collectivist approach, and the determinism that arises from it. Assumptions are made about patriarchal systems of oppression. Generalisations about men and their attitudes, claim, for example, that they are all hopelessly phallogentric and oppressive in their behaviour. A central assumption is that ‘If it isn’t feminist, it’s androcentric’, yet sexist stereotypes (for example, identifying “women’s” ways of being, working, doing, relating, thinking) still exist within gender feminism (McElroy, 2004). While there are some efforts a redesigning a woman’s view of the world, where women and men are free to move in and out of whatever lifestyle they choose, there is still a huge commitment to the existing paradigm.

Gender feminism emphasises the social at the expense of the individual. Deterministic theory claims that women are determined entirely by factors external to themselves, and that solutions are sought on the basis of that group membership (McElroy, 2001; McElroy, 2004). This contrasts with an individualist feminism where women are free to take responsibility for their own outcomes, rather than being dependent on membership of the group 'women'. Women are, of course, still subject to social and political constraints, but are no longer dependent on them (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 2002), having real choices to make (Hirschmann, 2003) based on their own needs.

That sexism exists is not at question (Hirschmann, 2003). What is important is our reaction to it. For libertarian feminists, the use of force and coercion is the salient factor. Women are regarded as able and willing to make their own choices. Choices between consenting adults are defended, reflecting the central importance of informed consent and responsibility for the outcomes of one's own actions. Affirmative action unfairly advantages women, creating an enforced inequality between the sexes and leading to gender conflict (McElroy, 2002).

While women's lives *are* affected by the social, political and economic conditions in which they are located, this too often leads to a culture where the needs of the individual are subsumed into the needs of the group, which further risks minimizing the responsibility of the individual for their own life. Women seeking to develop power and independence in their lives need to follow their own ways of doing without being required to conform to a philosophy that may be seen to stifle real debate. This conflicts with the approach of the left, which binds women into what Kaminer (2002) calls cultural and political essentialism. This is 'the notion that women continue to share subordinate status today because of their shared history' (Kaminer, 2002: ix). This viewpoint works against individual women.

Libertarian (individualist) feminism is based on the ‘belief that all human beings are sovereign, or self-owners. That is, every human being has a jurisdiction over his or her own body which no other human being can rightfully violate. Individualist feminist demands equal respect for the natural rights of *all* individuals’ (McElroy, 2001: 1). Hormones and biological sex differences are more valid than rigid social constructionism (Paglia, 2002: 28).

I remain convinced that feminism *can* make a significant impact on educational practice. Mentoring, for example, will be enhanced by an awareness of the connection between work, self-determination, and the abuse of power. A commitment to change is important, where one sees that change is necessary, or existing structures are not working to the benefit of participants. Likewise, it is easy to make assumptions about people on the basis of what we see with our eyes. Individuals must take responsibility for their own actions, but may link in with resources in the wider community in order to achieve their goals.

For feminists involved in educational research, the primary focus is on gender inequalities, and on epistemologies that provide greater understanding of those inequalities. It searches for ideas that provide an explanatory framework for existence and persistence of oppressive power. A critical framework questions this continuance, and is critical of research that treats the subject as object, claiming that objectivity and value-neutrality are not possible. Research should empower, not exploit, and is more generally interpretive, but provides a source of politicisation – raising women’s awareness about the wider functioning of society. Because I wanted to evaluate mentoring practices, I focussed on this methodology, because of its analytical – rather than merely descriptive – approach (Morrison, 2002).

### **Libertarian philosophy**

Libertarian thought – sometimes called classical liberalism – is an explicitly individualistic philosophy, based on the notion of self-determination. Individuals

own their own life, but must take responsibility for the choices made, rather than expect others to take care of them (Upton, 1987; Hirschmann, 2003).

Individualism, according to Tibor Machan, focuses on the ultimate value of individual sovereignty and the requirement of self-governance. It includes the right to liberty and to trade freely with willing others, while not precluding community, but prohibits the making of community mandatory or enforced by the state (or anyone else). Acknowledging that human behaviour is not caused entirely by factors outside our control, it seeks to do away with the culture of blame, and centres on free will. We are initiators of our own behaviour, but need to be willing to live with consequences (Machan, 1998).

While life 'is inherently social, in the sense that one pursues happiness while rubbing up against others doing the same' (Bass and Steidlmeier), at the heart of libertarian philosophy is the principle of voluntary association and interaction between individuals. It is grounded in the Enlightenment concepts of individual liberty, the autonomous, self-responsible individual, rational consciousness and free will, and the free market as the foundation of a free society (Tame, 1985). It rejects all forms of collectivism, determinism, and big government (including interventionism and welfareism), returning to individuals the freedom to think for themselves.

Balanced against the individual's freedom to live their life as they choose is the requirement that he or she must allow other individuals the opportunity to do the same, and act accordingly (Ashford, 1985). Challenging orthodox, deterministic views of the world, it frees individuals from 'coerced involvement in the schemes of others' (Upton, 1987: 5), promoting instead the principle of voluntary association with others for mutual benefit while doing no harm to others (Burke, 1994). Under liberalism, individuals are free to enter into whatever contracts they wish, and conduct whatever business they want, as long as they do no harm to others (Burke, 1994; Hirschmann, 2003). The absence of regulation benefits everyone.

Individuals who are free to act on their own biases will more likely choose to act in accordance with their own best interests, whereas regulation tends to restrict freedom of speech, movement and choice (Kaminer, 2002).

Many who critique individualism claim it is unfeeling, unconcerned with the needs of the community. The alternative they support promotes a social system based on compulsion and regulation of human exchange – one that seems to believe it has the duty to tell others how to live their lives (Machan, 1998). Human rights are too often used as an excuse for knocking Tall Poppies, for preferential treatment on the basis of membership of a ‘marginalised’ group. However, to provide services on account of membership of some ‘marginalised’ group does no one any favours. Jobs, awards, high income ..... must all be allocated on the open market, on the basis that they have been earned through merit. Nothing else is fair, humane or just.

Self-interest enables individuals to pursue their ‘own interests, the individual benefits society as a whole’ (Upton, 1987:7). Only when individuals are free to follow their own best interests, can they peacefully co-exist with other human beings (Upton, 1987).

While libertarian thinkers have, as yet, had little to say on mentoring practice, they have much more to say on leadership, power and ethics? Contrary to what many may think, libertarians challenge authoritarian approaches that limit personal liberty, opposing any expansion of power by the state or individuals, whatever the justification (Kelley, 1997; Upton, 1997). It questions the legitimacy of ‘power-over’, rather locating personal power as the source of all freedom. Freedom includes the right of people to ‘sustain and improve their lives by engaging in any economic enterprise without permission of the state (‘free enterprise’), to engage in mutually beneficial transactions with anyone in the world’ (Hornberger, 2002: no page number). A minimal role for the state includes the narrow functions of protection of the individual from external force and fraud, and from the harmful consequences of state action, and enforces contracts (Ashford, 1985).

While it can be said that ‘no individual has ever survived alone’, it is also true that ‘we cannot exercise our full human potential if our individuality is stifled, suppressed, and banned by the mass of men who call themselves society’ (Tibor Machan, 1998).

The libertarian ethical stance is based on the principle of ‘do no harm’, and on the requirement for personal responsibility for the outcomes of one’s actions. It challenges deterministic philosophies that blame factors external to the individual for the outcomes of human endeavour (Upton, 1987). While human beings have a right to pursue their own life in the light of their own values, and to retain what they have produced, the use of force to obtain one’s goals is completely unjustified and unethical. It denies others the right to pursue own lives without hindrance (Ashford, 1985).

There are limits to freedom, however. Freedom and the right to live one’s own life entail responsibility for the actions and the choices – and the outcomes (Upton, 1987). This is where a code of ethics begins – in recognising the impact of our choices on other people, and modifying our actions in accordance with the perceived outcomes.

Libertarians find that laws ‘cannot change people’s minds (Nason, 1999), and that there is no such thing as *coerced morally right conduct*. Classical individualism provides principles of community life that are necessary for a social existence that is morally independent, peaceful and productive (Machan, 1998). Coercion is never ethical, whatever the outcome may be (Upton, 1987). Legitimate authority must be based on principles of justice, or it becomes nothing more than ‘an intrusion, an absurdity, an usurpation, and a crime’ (Spooner, 2003: 54).

What does libertarian thought mean for educational practice? Essentially – choice (Walford, 1996). The focus of a libertarian pedagogy is on a respect for the

learner's autonomy, which precludes any form of coercion. It is a pedagogy which builds on the learner's own motivation and abilities (Smith, 1983). Excellence is fostered at the expense of mediocrity.

Learning can only develop fully in an environment of freedom, where the learner is encouraged to be self-responsible. Much learning occurs outside formal classroom situations. Libertarian practitioners have a fundamental respect for, and belief in, autonomy of the learner's ability to control and direct his or her own learning (Shotton, 1992). State schools, by contrast, according to Dale (1982) cannot choose what they teach, and are only indirectly accountable to clients. The subjects and quality of teaching offered are not determined by clients' perceived needs, but by government policy – a system that restricts choices available to parents, learners and schools.

The role of classical liberal education includes the development of autonomy in the learner, and the fostering of critical inquiry, toleration, and reflectiveness. It seeks to avoid tyranny of state power (Levinson, 1999). Teaching practice values rational methodology and the scientific method (Smith, 1983). Of central importance is the ability to think critically, and to make sense of one's world.

As previously stated, government control of education would be abolished, as it merely perpetuates a system of control where ideas are used to perpetuate power and control (Levinson, 1999; Spring, 1994). The coercive power that is often justified in the name of the state, while it is ultimately sustained by the consent of the majority, works against innovation and resists progress (Von Mises, 2003). Libertarian education, by contrast, insists on a less directive approach to adult learning, emphasising the dangers of totalitarian indoctrination. It increases the worker's freedom in the job market by providing wider range of knowledge and critical skills (Smith, 1983).

There are clear links between this type of thinking and self-direction. Libertarian philosophy works to preserve the individual's right to see, hear and produce materials of her choice without the intervention of the state *for their own good*. This results in minimal government involvement in educational practice. Through self-determination and individual sovereignty, human beings are responsible for learning and its outcomes. Teaching occurs in an environment of voluntary association and ethical practice, where intellectual property rights are respected, and there is freedom from bureaucratic incompetence, coercion and indoctrination.

Knowledge is individual. It 'is not possessed collectively but individually', resulting in an 'insuperable difficulty in reaching a single view of common interests and goals' (Upton, 1987: 4).

Libertarian philosophy leads itself easily to the concept of self-managed learning. The focus of this type of learning is on the role of the individual learner in managing their own learning – taking responsibility for deciding what, how, when, where and why they learn (Cunningham, Dawes and Bennett: 2004). To be successful, self-managed learning requires a contract be drawn up between learner and teacher or mentor, outlining goals, process and measurement of outcomes. The process is fundamentally driven by the learner and the needs they have identified.

Self-managed learning has limitations as a concept. It requires that the learner take full responsibility for the outcome, which may not be entirely possible in a situation such as formalised mentoring programmes, where learning needs may be in part driven by the needs of an organisation or employer (Cunningham, Dawes and Bennett: 2004). There is also the risk that it become entirely subjective, a tool of individuals to follow any learning goal regardless of whether or not it matches real needs of an organisation or educational institution.

While there has been some debate over the definition of what self-directed learning is, Cranton (1996) identifies a number of features that fit with a libertarian view of

education. Independence, democracy, an individualistic focus, egalitarianism, and a humanistic focus all contribute to the development of a self-directed learner.

What impact can libertarian belief have on mentoring practice? Mentoring is a two-way process. The individual owns their own life, and, given the opportunity, will take responsibility for it. In fact, they must take responsibility for their learning, or the mentoring relationship will go nowhere. Membership of special groups is no excuse for non-performance. And for the mentors themselves, ownership of one's *own* life means that the individual must allow clients to determine for themselves what the best course of action is.

### WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The following chapters will discuss the research undertaken. Chapter Two provides an overview of, and justification for, my research methodologies, and In Chapter Three I review a sample of the literature on mentoring, particularly as it is illuminated by the issues of leadership, power and ethics. An analysis of the central issues, along with a description of four case studies, occurs in Chapter Four, while Chapter Five gives meaning and interpretation to the issues and findings, and makes recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### RESEARCH PROCESS AND ISSUES

This thesis is about mentoring relationships and rests on a complex theoretical foundation. Chapter One has introduced the thesis topic and identified a number of research questions – questions which seek to investigate mentoring and self-directed learning through the issues of leadership, power and ethics. In Chapter Two I outline the method I have used to investigate mentoring.

Educational research is critical inquiry aimed at informing educational judgments and decisions in order to improve educational action (Bassey, 1999). For this reason, and because of the assumptions I hold about the value of learning in informing personal and professional development, I wanted to make use of methodology that could allow me to inquire into mentoring practice. I have chosen narrative as a primary method of gathering data, supported by a literature review, and feminism and classical liberal ideas as tools for analysis. This is a form of evaluative research – inquiry carried out in order to understand and evaluate (ibid). It is informed by qualitative research, being focussed on understanding and building on the insights of research subjects (Blake, 1998).

When considering what methodology to use in my research, I considered my background in social change and an interest in politics, and the professional experiences that inform my interest in mentoring research. I wanted to identify a research methodology that would not only reflect these interests, but would be appropriate to the subject matter and fit with my feminist and libertarian philosophical foundations.

An initial interest in critical theorising arose out of my desire to see and use research as a tool for social and political change in the world I live in. This was offset by an understanding of the value of narrative research in locating sources of data and understanding the issues that have arisen from my own professional

practice. This process involves, and results in, identifying good practice, looking at what can be improved, and an identification of areas that can be used as tools for development.

## NARRATIVE

My main method of information gathering, outside the literature, is the use of personal narratives. Narrative methodology is a growing area in educational research (Bassey, 2002; Elbaz-Luwisch and Pritzker, 2002). I use narrative as a snapshot, identifying and recalling events that occur at a point in time (Eakin, 2004). This is an effort to put meaning to experience and to identify issues that may impact on professional development (ibid).

I have chosen to use Narrative method because I believe it offers insights from experience that may not be obtained any other way. Narrative is an autobiographical approach to qualitative social research, using the lived experience of the researcher, subject or educator as the basis for research, professional development and practice (Willis, 1998). It is not verbal material that is purely descriptive, expository, or disconnected from their life, but provides an opportunity to analyse life events. It is characterised by perspective – the point of view of an individual at a point in time – and by context, in which external influences on the narrator, and the ways in which the narrator constructs the narrative, have an impact on the resulting text. The narrator's frame of reference is also significant, for he/she will reflect his/her prior experience, against which new experiences are measured and interpreted (Smith, 2000).

It addresses the notion of the conceptual self – self as 'a concept created by reflection' (Bruner, 1990). This form of research allows individuals to attempt to rethink and remake what has been handed down to them. In an extension of personal efforts to re-present lives and inherited worlds, individuals can seek to recreate inherited realities – to make more sense, and be more just, more tolerant of

diversity, and more conducive of learning (Neumann and Peterson, 1997a). It is central in human meaning making (Rossiter, 1999). In addition to the overt, written word, it develops ideas from innuendo, suggestion, and the meaning hidden within a text (Rix and Gold, 2000).

Narratives organise events in space and time, bringing together fact and fiction as told by people in the process of ordering and reordering events they consider relevant to their own lives. Personal narratives represent internally consistent interpretations of the *presently* understood past, experienced present, and anticipated future (Hermans, 1997). The main purpose of narrative analysis is to encourage stakeholders to reflect for themselves on a current or recent situation, and to consider new ways of moving a project forward (Rix and Gold, 2000).

Our personal narratives are not merely a way of describing our lives: they are the means by which we make sense of our setting and organise our experiences and the information we gather. Through narrative, we make meaning and create stories in the context of real and imagined relationships, and learn about our social world and are shaped by the narratives of our culture (Gilbert, 2002). For example, those working in institutional settings may be enabled to clearly understand organisational politics, and the individual's place within it. It can also supply resources necessary to understand own life and at least partially control its outcomes (Neumann and Peterson, 1997b). For mentoring, it identifies decision-making processes of powerful actors and organisations. Narrative helps avoid the artificial nature of quantitative research, and portrays the progression of each pair's relationship (Lucas, 2001).

We confirm our theory by observations. The self as narrator 'not only recounts but justifies' (Bruner, 1990: 104-121), thus reflecting the use of narrative as a tool for analysis. As such, narrative is subjective. A person's 'efforts to re-present her everyday life reflect a deeper impulse to know and learn authentically – from her own questions, concerns, and understanding – rather than to assume

unquestioningly the perspectives of presumably more knowledgeable others' (Neumann and Peterson, 1997a: 229). Self-organisation is not restricted to childhood, but extends across the lifespan. There are 'changes in self-organisation that are not resolved at a certain point in life or at a particular age but rather are life-long, ongoing processes of integration (and probably also of differentiation)' (Bamberg, 1997: 218).

The most successful outcome of storytelling is the creating of alternative realities, resulting in the creation of new knowledge and discourse (Neumann and Peterson, 1997a). In re-presenting ourselves we then return to everyday life with deepened insight – a clearer perspective and understanding of issues. We may act in different ways to what is expected of us, and thus induce change by teaching others what we have learned (Neumann and Peterson, 1997a). 'The process of telling and writing personal stories has been shown to be a powerful means of fostering teachers' professional growth' (Elbaz-Luwisch and Pritzker, 2002).

Narratives are representations of a lived experience, and are subject to change and reinterpretation. They are, as such, evolutionary, changing with each telling, sometimes dramatically, sometimes incrementally. New information is gained in later tellings which will influence the understanding and deeper interpretation of the story elements. The historical truth of an individual's account is of less importance than the interpretation given to that account (Gilbert, 2002). For this reason, I have chosen to analyse my narratives from the point of view of a libertarian philosophy.

In writing a narrative of my own experience, I chose four case studies from my professional experience in mentoring. Case study is a form of enquiry, an exploration of the unknown, whose purpose is to probe deeply and analyse phenomena (Bassegy, 1999; Bassegy, 2002). The focus is on a particular situation, event or programme, aiming to illuminate the reader's understanding of the phenomenon under inquiry (Merriam, 1988).

There are, however, some issues that may need to be addressed when researching people's stories. Of central concern is the fact that others may not appreciate what we have to say. Lagemann (1997) relates an example of a time she was condemned by women's groups for *not* making lesbianism a central focus of her own work. She was loudly and personally condemned for not discussing the lesbianism in the lives of leading women – an omission which was labelled a vicious homophobic denial. What her critics ignored was her need to relate her own story as she saw it at that time in history, a story in which lesbianism was not central in importance.

A further issue is that, within narrative, the popular dualism of personal and professional blurs – so much so that the two can often not be pulled apart. This is complicated by the fact that individuals have multiple selves that transcend this binary distinction (Neumann and Peterson, 1997b). How this issue is to be dealt with may be a subject for ongoing research.

Next, individuals are participants in their own narrative. It is important to ask whether there are any concerns in relation to insider research. Firstly, it can be argued that insider work lacks objectivity. But is objective outsider research any less valid? Secondly, there is the issue of the researcher's philosophical standpoint. The answer to the question 'Why we are doing this?' may be interpreted as political. Many researching in the field of disability argue that no research about people with disabilities (PWD) should be done without their full, informed participation. This may be interpreted as territorialism. Thirdly, there is the issue of data, which may be interpreted in many possible ways, which may vary over time and space. Individuals may even have more than one interpretation running concurrently. Lastly, it may be important to ask the questions: How significant are other participants? Why? What is it that makes one interpretation more significant/important than others? Why? Is it ethical to give up responsibility for our own narrative/interpretation, in favour of someone else's? Why, or why not? We may be aware of significant personal or role conflict if required to participate in someone else's narrative.

Finally, Narrative enables the framing of experience and our memory of it. However, it is one person's story, and we may need to take culture into account in our analysis (at the risk of losing much that is important). Social and cultural groups are held together by myths and stories, which enable those groups to address, and make sense of, external circumstances (Bruner, 1990). Human beings, 'in interacting with one another, form a sense of the canonical and ordinary as a background against which to interpret and give narrative meaning to breaches in and deviations from 'normal' states of the human condition' (ibid: 67).

Stories play an important role in the recording and transmission of experience and knowledge. They are valuable sources of insight into how individuals have influenced events and the way in which they apply learning to their lives (Collins, 2004).

## CASE STUDY RESEARCH

Case method is a reflection of the need to maintain the relationship between theory and practice. Too often 'the disciplines and fields of educational theory ... have appeared in classes in the form of decontextualised and disembodied abstractions' (Middleton, 1998: 114). Researchers are typically concerned with understanding and explaining educational action, aiming to enrich thinking and discourse of educators by the development of theory and the refinement of practice through reflection (Bassey, 1999).

Educational case study is conducted within a localised boundary of time and space, into *interesting* aspects of educational activity, programme, institution or system. Data is gained within a natural context, from an ethic of respect for persons. Sufficient data must be collected for researcher to explore significant features of the case and to create plausible interpretations of findings, while constructing a worthwhile argument or story from which to base those interpretations.(Bassey,

2002: 109). The validity of data is confirmed through triangulation, using multiple sources.

My focus on case studies will, I hope, illustrate common threads and issues to be addressed by those working in the field of mentoring (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995a). What I am trying to achieve is the creation of a synthetic space in which I might reconstruct previously divided images of self and community (Neumann and Peterson, 1997a). In doing this, however, I need to be aware that all 'projects of change are subject to multiple interpretations of what the change is, why it is occurring and how it will occur' (Rix and Gold, 2000). My aim is to present interpretations of the data as I see them at this point in time. I am aware that my interpretations will not be the only ones, and this reflects my awareness of the value of alternative discourses. Multiple discourses, and multiple interpretations of those discourses, are commonplace.

I chose to use evaluative case studies. These are enquiries which 'set out to explore some educational programme, system, project or event in order to focus on its worthwhileness' (Basse, 2002: 114). They may be either formative (in helping the development of the programme) or summative (in assessing it after the event), drawing on theoretical notions but not necessarily intended to contribute to the development of theory. In terms of mentoring, they may be tightly structured as an examination of the extent to which the programme's stated objectives have been achieved. Generalisability in terms of data is not necessarily seen as an essential outcome by all commentators (Basse, 1999).

I will now outline the steps I took in my research.

## STEPS IN THE RESEARCH PROCESS

I began by *identifying the purpose of the research*. In this case, it was an issue to be explored in relation to mentoring, as outlined above. The aim of the research is a

review – a critically useful interpretation and unpacking of a problem. It is not designed to be exhaustive, but is situated and partial, and reflects a perspective (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002). It is primarily a search for understanding of the issues involved, and the process of mentoring itself, coloured by a need to be aware of philosophical underpinnings throughout the process (Watling, 2002). Research questions were formulated in a way that set the immediate agenda for research, and established how data is collected (Bassey, 2002). I then identified ethical concerns related to the research project.

Before any research begins, it is important to *identify the ethical issues* that may impact on the project and its participants. The central issue in relation to ethics is whether or not you are doing harm to another person. This requires that free, informed consent be available. Underlying educational research are a commitment to honesty, an avoidance of plagiarism, and a respect for the dignity and privacy of research subjects (Busher, 2002; Bassey, 1999). To this I would add the necessity of obtaining a balance between democracy, truth and individual needs for privacy and protection of their data. The freedom to investigate must be weighed up against the wish for truth, and subjects' wishes in relation to the information they provide.

Further ethical research principles are identified (Busher, 2002; Morrison, 2002). Researchers need to weigh up the balance of harm that might occur if they do not intervene or deprive people of opportunities or information from which they might benefit. Protection of identities is generally necessary, unless participants specifically state otherwise. Feminist researchers feel that research should empower, not exploit, the subject, and libertarians agree that it is unethical to cause harm. Therefore I made sure that I only reported data that was specifically required for the purpose of this research. Participants whose lives were being reported on were given a choice as to whether or not to participate, and their data stored securely.

The next step was *generating, collecting and storing the data*. Generating data occurred in two ways – a review of the literature on mentoring, and three case studies from my own professional experience. I selected one case each from business, education and community settings. In each case, critical incidents were identified. These are useful for the data they provide, but may also serve as a catalyst for transformational learning and lead to change in perspective (Grabove, 1997). They took the form of vignettes – short, descriptive pieces, more of a sketch compared to a full picture (Bassey, 1999). I used a descriptive style of reporting, drawing a picture in words, based on careful probing and thoughtful analysis (Bassey, 1999).

I complemented the stories with a *review of the literature on mentoring*. This required me to make some decisions. For example, I needed to know what literature, themes and perspectives I was looking for, and to select literature with this in mind. I then conducted an analysis – editing according to the themes and perspectives I had identified – and re-read to see if all relevant data had been gathered. Throughout this process, I needed to conduct a constant comparative analysis on data to identify themes and categories, and discontinue analysis once saturation occurred and no new themes emerged (Kochan 2002).

Data gathering and storing needs to be a systematic process. I answered questions such as: What happened, to whom, when, where and how? The result is a series of descriptive stories in addition to the review of the literature. I also took the advice of Reynolds (1980) and Bassey (2002) who advise researchers not to collect any more data than they realistically have the time and energy to analyse (Reynolds, 1980; Bassey, 2002).

This was a phenomenological approach to data collection and analysis. ‘The aim of phenomenology is to describe particular phenomena, or the appearance of things, as lived experience. The process is inductive and descriptive and seeks to record experiences from the viewpoint of the individual who had them without imposing a

specific theoretical or conceptual framework on the study before collecting data' (McGrath, 2001: 200). Theories started to form during this stage – theories which may be tentative, provisional or unfinished (Watling, 2002) and may be dispensed with later, as needed, or modified as appropriate.

Autobiographical material is a unique source of information on the course of human lives. It is not intended to replace quantitative measurements or observation, but provides insight into life experience scientific that measurement cannot. On offer is a rich source of data, which, if used in conjunction with other sources of information supplement it and provide further insights (Birren and Birren, 1996). What it does is provide a description of events that impact on individuals; it provides histories and themes. While it is useful in our search for understanding, it is not, however, designed to be a therapy or cure (ibid).

Collection of data this way provides us with opportunities to learn from a wider variety of experiences (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995b). For example, in relation to mentoring, there is a wide diversity of people who have the capacity to be mentors, and we gain new insights into what works and what does not. It is possible to identify successful relationships across cultural divides, geographical distance, and age/gender/personality differences, but must ensure that definitions of terms and concepts are clear in order to avoid misunderstandings.

From here, I moved on to *question and analyse the data*. As I reviewed mentoring and self-directed learning, I identified a number of central issues. As categories and themes emerged, I began the analysis process, reviewing each chapter and case several times until I felt enough issues were identified (Kochan, 2002). I asked a number of questions of the data, including What does it say about mentoring? What does it say about how relationships are managed? What is good ethical practice in mentoring? According to whom? What is the role of leadership in mentoring? What makes a mentor a good leader? Which leadership model is appropriate?

Why? In what situations? What happens when there are conflicting narratives or points of view? What if my narrative differs from your telling of the same story?

My wide knowledge of adult learning, teaching, and mentoring enabled me to easily locate answers. One potential difficulty in identifying themes and patterns was that relationships have differing dynamics and histories (Lucas, 2001) – a large number of issues may have been thrown up, making analysis difficult. This was not the case, however, as a number of the issues appeared in more than one data source. This made it easier to reduce the amount of data to a manageable level, by noting patterns and themes, clustering by conceptual groupings, and making contrasts and comparisons (Watling, 2002).

Analysis of descriptive data was thematic, aimed at identifying emerging themes or categories (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002). This necessarily involved a series of deliberate, critical choices about the meanings and values of the data gathered, and resulted in the generating and testing of analytical statements. –some of which would stand and need modifying, while others would be rejected (Basse, 2002). I identified a libertarian standpoint as the basis for my analysis, with a focus on the benefits of mentoring for the individual, personal responsibility for learning process and outcomes, and the fostering of excellence in mentoring practice.

A complication, according to Buss (2002), is that memory is precarious, infirm and subject to change. An individual may revise their perception and understanding of themselves many times over the course of a lifetime, often as a result of changes in political and religious belief. It may be inferred that the data thus gained is unreliable. This raises issues in relation to narrative methodologies and the documentation of memory. Which memory are we documenting? At what point in time? If we are documenting the memory of something that happened in the past, how is the memory interpreted by the individual? In an effort to answer these questions, I deliberately chose to record data over a period of time, to ensure as much of the data as possible was included.

Narrative 'specialises in the forging of links between the exceptional and the ordinary'. A person's story is always told with meanings (Bruner, 1990: 47, 49). Therefore, I chose to focus on the voice of the protégé in each case, and highlight issues that appear important for them. It is important to note here that this is *my* understanding of the issues. In telling the story of someone else, we are making assumptions about them.

Following analysis, I attempt to *interpret the results, and form conclusions and recommendations*. In my interpretation I addressed key issues for discussion, giving priority to those themes that appear regularly in the data. These were to be discussed in more detail. This began with an interpretation or explanation of the analytical statements in an attempt to provide understanding of the way things are (Bassegy, 2002). As stated earlier, my interpretation was necessarily coloured by feminist and libertarian ideas in relation to research and teaching. It has been an evaluative process of issues, but no more than a snapshot look at mentoring. The planned outcome is for recommendations for future practice.

This involves a summary of my findings and of the analysis I had made. This created the setting for recommendations and suggestions for issues such as the future of mentoring, and the benefits and uses of narrative research. Because the aim of my research is to ask questions in relation to mentoring, these recommendations will be open and flexible enough for people to take away what they need for their own practice.

## IN SUMMARY

I have dealt with theoretical and methodological issues. The thesis will now turn to an introduction of the data. Chapter Three reviews literature pertinent to leadership, power and ethics in relation to mentoring. Chapter Four introduces case studies, and analyses these and the literature in relation to the issues identified.

## CHAPTER THREE

### A REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON MENTORING

The literature on mentoring is rich. I have, in an effort to gain an understanding of some of the issues that are currently being discussed, chosen to narrow my focus to literature from education and business, primarily from the last twelve years (1993-2004).

This is a review aimed at generating data. I have chosen to look more closely at issues relating to leadership, power, and ethics. These issues are ones that have arisen partly from the case studies outlined in Chapter Four, and are also informed by my own areas of philosophical interest. I am also interested in data that addresses my research questions outlined in Chapter One - What is mentoring? What constitutes a successful mentoring relationship? What role do leadership, power and ethical practice play in successful mentoring relationships? Why is self-directed learning important, and how is it influenced by leadership, power and ethics?

A number of authors' names appear quite frequently, in spite of a conscious effort to choose randomly. This is because these authors are acknowledged leaders in their field, having researched and taught widely in academic and business settings on the subject of mentoring and training.

Firstly, it is important to review some definitions and settings. As stated in Chapter One, typical definitions describe mentoring in terms of the roles, relationships and outcomes of formal mentoring programmes. My preference is the approach that defines mentoring as 'offline [separate from immediate supervisors and line managers] help by one person to another in making significant transitions in knowledge, work or thinking' (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995a; 1995d).

This addresses mentoring that occurs in a wider variety of settings, and includes a number of types of informal relationships – not restricted to business and education settings – whose goals and outcomes fit within the parameters of this description and follow similar processes. Two broad types of mentoring exist. The first is what Dennis (2000) calls *natural*. It is a relationship that develops informally, originating from sources such as friendship, collegial relationships, coaching and counselling relationships. Participants pair up without any organisational intermediary or support, as and when required. The second is identified by Dennis as *planned* – occurring formally through structured programmes in which mentors and protégés are selected and matched through formal processes.

Saur and Rasmussen (2003) point out that ‘any relationship that involves contact between an inexperienced novice and a seasoned practitioner is called mentoring, whether the relationship has any lasting quality or not. However mentoring is not so simple in practice that merely putting together an expert and a novice will automatically result in a good relationship, beneficial to all’. This is an important point, acknowledging that these relationships are significant in terms of the learning outcomes they achieve (Brookfield, 1986; Cranton, 1998, quoted in Cranton and Carusetta, 2002).. Potentially negative outcomes will be discussed further below.

Mentoring definitions focus on the components of the process, focussing on learning, assistance with career and professional development, psychosocial support and role modelling. While mentors have greater experience, influence and achievement, both parties benefit from the relationship (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003). Mentoring is first and foremost a *relationship*, from which learning necessarily follows. It is a collaborative relationship facilitated by the mentor, in which the learner takes responsibility for his or her own learning. The facilitation of learning is assisted by reflection, support, change, vision, and is aided by strategy and knowledge of learning styles (Zachary, 2000). ‘Support and challenge are needed in order to foster change and independence’ and growth (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003). Leadership is therefore fostered through mentoring activity.

Successful learning is driven primarily by the learner (Fuller et al, 2004). Allen and Poteet (1999) identify a number of leadership qualities identified by protégés. These are qualities that foster self-determination – communication skills, people-orientation, knowledge sharing.

Mentoring is typically valued as a caring, dynamic, learning relationship whose goal is the personal, educational or professional development of the mentee. This goal ‘makes it distinct from that of a supervisory relationship or even, that of a student-teacher relationship. The difference lies in the reciprocal nature of the mentoring relationship that each member in the relationship gives and takes from the other in order to grow, to risk, and to change.... In a true mentoring relationship, participants are capable of being transformed personally and professionally through risk-taking, empowerment, and vision change. Though transformation does not occur within every mentoring relationship, the potential to transform is possible’ (Martin, 2000). Mentoring is a useful training and development tool, and is seen as a means to achieving development of skills and adding value, but requires effective management to be successful (Ellsworth, 2002), ‘geared to promoting and encouraging the development of the extraordinarily diverse range of talents and skills and accomplishments of which humans are capable’ (Gregory, 2003: 17).

The mentor is an interpreter of events, change agent, and intervener (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003) A mentor is someone who has experience, combined with specialist knowledge and expertise. He or she is committed to excellent business practice (Shaw, 1995) providing challenging assignments and helping with career moves. ‘Our findings define quality mentoring as an active, engaged and intentional relationship between two individuals (mentor and protégé) based upon mutual understanding and serving primarily the professional needs of the protégé’ (Enomoto, Gardiner and Grogan 2002: 210).

There are two important requirements for the success of mentoring. The first is the central place of vision in setting direction and achieving the results. With no vision,

the relationship has little to work towards, unclear direction and goals. Secondly, role clarification and the importance of a learning environment. A teacher teaches, and a coach coaches. An ideal mentor is someone who has done these and more. He/she has achieved extraordinary success in a similar endeavour, and actively uses the information and processes in which he or she coaches the learner (Scott, 2004), while at the same time fostering an environment in which learning outcomes may be achieved.

There is a need to focus on the issues that make mentoring successful, address negatives, and look at leadership, power and ethics. A successful mentoring programme is one that is simple (making a difference to one person), direct (cutting through red tape wherever possible), highly sympathetic, legitimate (a sanctioned role), bounded (has limits), and plastic enough to accommodate whatever attribute people want to give it (Freedman, 1993: 56-58). Political and ethical issues must be addressed. Many problems could be reduced by communication, or by informal mentoring programmes that focus more directly on the relationship and less on the bureaucratic processes that accompany formal settings.

It is important to ask potential mentors a number of significant questions at the beginning of a relationship (Scott, 2004). What degree of success has he or she personally achieved in an area of expertise? How legitimate are his or her credentials? Is he or she a person of integrity? Does their personal experience reflect the degree of success you dream of achieving?

How significant is mentoring in adult learning? It arises primarily out of the changing role of training and development, and the need to add value to the human resource function – often where transitions are necessary (Garvey and Alfred, 2001). The aims of mentoring include the provision of professional development experience and expertise, an opportunity to develop one's craft, and a raising of the level of professional involvement. It also enables an enhanced ability to reach and develop underserved and at-risk populations, and to cut the dropout rate from

professions (Templeton, 2003; Sivan and Chan, 2003). It provides an opportunity for those with specialist training skills to utilise these, particularly where line managers have difficulty dealing with broader developmental issues. It develops an atmosphere of trust, where growth can occur, and, as such, provides the basis for transformational learning.

In the student-teacher relationship, the teacher establishes a climate in which caring is nurtured and valued. Caring is a necessary prerequisite for the development of skills in problem-solving and rational thought. Learning is further enhanced by authentic activity that bears a close relationship to the real world of work (Evans and Bendel, 2004). The role of the mentor may change with need, from one of authority to one of a guide, and eventually colleague and friend; (McLean, 2004).

Because of the successful outcomes it often engenders, mentoring is a valuable alternative to traditional models of instructional design, placing learning activities under the control of the learner, focussing on process rather than on content. Learners bring their own particular experiences, skills and learning needs into the learning situation, while the facilitator (mentor) works with what the learners contribute. Students are no longer regarded as passive recipients of knowledge, but rather as equal participants in the process (Rapamund and Moore, 2002). To achieve this, however, facilitators need to remain open to the learners' processes, and not try to force learners into a direction that suits them. This approach assumes that both parties are self-directing, and able and willing to articulate their own needs and viewpoints.

Despite the acknowledged benefits, however, there are a number of potential pitfalls which need to be addressed (Meyer, 2002). Firstly, mentoring activity, for example, is not always recognised or valued within the work environment. It may be that the benefits of the scheme have not been adequately presented to staff, or there may be time or other constraints on people that mean they are not able to give the issue their full attention. There may also be the perception that mentoring is a 'management

tool' to fast track employees seen as having exceptional talent. This may discourage active involvement by protégés, and encourages mentor control and manipulation (Garvey and Alred, 2001).

Secondly, the authority which comes with a direct line management position is not appropriate in a mentoring partnership. Mentoring is concerned with learning and development within a trusting relationship, where sensitive work or development issues are discussed, and this may mean that mentoring through line management may not be appropriate. Thirdly, mere participation in a mentoring programme does not guarantee the frequency or quality of interaction between partners. It requires commitment from all parties (management, mentor and protégé) to making the relationship work.

Fourthly, some mentors have nothing other than the title to support their work. Without adequate institutional support, resources and planning, the success of mentoring may rest on mentors' good will, intuition, and commitment. This does not guarantee success, however, and support structures should be put in place within the organisation. Fifthly, there is the issue of skill. Success at one's job, or the possession of seniority and experience, will not necessarily predict a mentor's skill at working with novices.

Next, while there are many stories of compulsory programmes identified in the literature, there are few documented examples of their success, or of the outcomes achieved for participants. Were more examples to occur, it may do much to improve the profile of mentoring and to motivate individuals to participate.

The next issue relates to the management of relationships themselves. Mentoring relationships exist on a continuum with highly satisfying relationships at one extreme and dysfunctional or harmful ones at the other (Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004). There are a number of problems within mentoring that may impact on learning (Megginson, Banfield and Joy-Matthews, 1999). Protégés may have

both positive and negative experiences with the same mentor (Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004). These are issues that relate primarily to the relationship itself, and the interplay of power within that relationship, and need to be addressed at each stage of the relationship if learning is to occur successfully. Issues may include learners who are uncertain about what new behaviours they are supposed to be learning; who makes decisions on the intended outcome of the relationship; confusion between a lack of performance and a lack of ability; lack of motivation; and learners' disillusionment with apparent lack of progress.

Negative aspects of mentoring include mismatch between mentor and protégé, inadequately trained mentors, manipulative mentor behaviour, absence of mentor support for the protégé's learning, and lack of mentor expertise. Success may be further complicated by mentors who are overly critical, excessively demanding an authoritarian, and who may sabotage protégés' careers. Lack of time for mentoring itself, or to prepare for sessions, will have an impact, as will a lack of time to reflect adequately (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002; Sivan and Chan, 2003; Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004). Boundary issues need to be addressed, and will be discussed below (Steele, 2003). However, individuals who lack mentors may be more vulnerable to educational and career failure, lack of career goals or focus, and decreased enthusiasm for the task in hand. This impacts further on creativity and fulfilment experienced on the job (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002). Further concerns from student mentoring systems – concerns which can be carried over into other mentoring programmes, include timetable clashes, Irregularity of meetings, and participant apathy (McLean, 2004). These need to be addressed to gain maximum benefit for all concerned.

Finally, a concern is often expressed that mentoring fosters elitism. The elite status of many people 'came about through the alignment of their cultural and economic interests with those of the colonizing group rather than with their own society' (Smith, 1999: 64). In contrast to the awareness of mentoring as a tool for development and change, Enomoto, Gardiner and Grogan (2002) criticise mentoring

as a tool that may be used to perpetuate the status quo. They claim that traditional programmes reproduce existing power structures and privileges, that all relationships between white men and groups such as women and blacks are abuses of power, and that all male/female relationships are premised on sex. The fear is that there are dangers inherent in mentoring that may negatively impact on marginalised groups. These issues can be problematic, and the solution may be that mentoring models be designed that are transformational. Accusations of elitism are thus typically aimed at those who are on the receiving end of mentoring programmes, by individuals who may, for one reason or another, not participate themselves. Complaints such as these need to be well managed, with issues and concerns addressed as they are raised, before they become deeply ingrained.

## ISSUES

I have chosen the issues of leadership, power and ethics for a number of reasons. These themes are apparent in the literature and philosophy of both feminism and classical liberalism. They impact on professional practice and on learning outcomes, and may have an influence on the degree of self-direction a learner experiences.

### Leadership

Firstly it is important first to define what I mean by leadership. Simply put, leadership is getting people to do what you want (Robbins and Finley, 2004; Tarr, 1995). A leader is a person who acts on the belief that competitive advantage is based on development and growth of people, working through, and developing, the talent of people. A leader creates an environment where healthy dissent is encouraged, but requires followers.

Qualities typical of a leader include relationship development, training skills, influence, and knowledge. Leadership requires honesty, credibility, wisdom and charisma (Yudelowitz, Koch and Field, 2002; Robbins and Finley, 2004; Pegg,

1999). Leaders are also persistent, actively seeing plans through to completion (Egan, 1988). Leadership requires shared purpose. 'Followers do not simply submit themselves to the leader as in pure power relationships, neither do they exchange their contribution only for the material benefits offered in purely transactional relationships' (Cammock, 2001: 14).

Leadership also involves possession of certain types of power which may be accessed by the mentor as required in their work (Clutterbuck, 1998). Resource power and knowledge power are of some use, particularly where a protégé is in need of contacts in the industry, or particular knowledge that the mentor may have. Effective mentors use their expertise sparingly – seeing its role as one of fostering growth, development and independence. Decision-making power may not be entirely useful in a relationship focussed on learner centred learning. It may, however, be valuable when the relationship has reached an impasse and decisions need to be made that are beyond the skill or knowledge of the protégé. Authority power enables the mentor to establish genuine rapport, to effectively manage the relationship, and to influence their own networks in favour of their younger colleague.

Why is it important to look at leadership in a mentoring context? To understand the relationship between mentoring and leadership, it is important to be clear on the role of mentoring itself. Mentoring, according to Megginson and Clutterbuck, is about 'major transitions, and this does seem to be one of the features that differentiate it from most other development methods, whether they are carried out at work or on some other event' (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995c: 234). Style of leadership needs to be appropriate to the situation. The nature of the relationship between leader and follower is 'a major determinant of whether subordinates adopted routine or innovative learning roles' (Webber, 2004: 261).

A link between mentoring and leadership is not clearly spelt out in the literature, suggesting that little research has yet been done in this area. The nature of

mentoring, however, is such that leadership occurs as a central role in the relationship. The mentor, for example, is recognised as a leader in his or her field. He or she promotes learning and professional development in the protégé, motivating them to move in new directions. Organisations are built by leaders. The type of leader in an organisation will prove a major influence on organisational direction; culture and practices, and as such must be chosen carefully. A review of leadership models and practices may provide a framework for analysing mentor practice. Many of the identified practices and roles of a mentor are also those undertaken by a leader, and will have an influence, through the protégé, upon the organisation at large.

Mentoring shows a number of leadership elements. Its primary role is the development of people – helping them learn, acknowledging individuality. It is a facilitative role, assisting the individual to take charge while using a non-directive, non-judgmental process (Yudelowitz, Koch and Field, 2002). Mentors need to ‘have life skills to be able to provide valuable advice in terms of how to work through issues and whom to consult regarding more serious concerns’ (McLean, 2004). The role of a mentor is identified as that of interpreter of events, change agent, and intervener (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003). It is more than just a faculty adviser or teacher. For mentoring to succeed, it is vital to have a clear sense of the qualities required of a mentor (Freedman, 1993; Anderson and Shannon, 1995; Rylatt, 2000).

Central to the mentoring relationship are the experience, knowledge and skills that they mentor has available to pass on. He or she will also have good political knowledge – a sound, seasoned knowledge of the organisation and its political structure. In developing relationships, the mentor must be willing to be client-driven, involved in the protégé’s development. This will involve the ability to manage the relationship by encouraging, nurturing, teaching, offering mutual respect, and responding to the needs of the protégé. He/she will be a good listener, respect boundaries, be sensitive to differences, and offer mutual respect and

encouragement. Yet he or she also needs to provide support and challenge, fostering openness, trust and mutual respect. The mentor must also have a good record of developing others and a genuine interest in their advancement, coupled with an ability to share experience, knowledge and observations. In demonstrating what is expected of others, he or she will encourage development of autonomous, self-directed learning, which will ultimately empower the protégé beyond the mentoring relationship. The mentor will possess influence, with their own network of contacts, and an ability to promote change and development. Marketing skills are useful.

However, a person should not be rejected for participation in a formal mentoring programme merely because they appear to lack some of the key skills identified above. What is important is that they have a commitment to an ethical position that is focussed on the needs of the protégé. This will be assisted by a degree of flexibility in terms of practice, particularly as the changing requirements of individual roles over time require differing leadership attributes.

One of the core principles of western philosophy is that leadership derives its authority from the consent of the governed – a principle that rises to the ‘defence of individuality, self-determination and due process’ (Bass and Steidlmeier). Mentoring, as a form of leadership, needs to take these issues into account when planning programmes and addressing relationship issues. There are a number of important issues impacting on leadership in mentoring, which need to be addressed if the relationship is to be successful. It is important, for example, to deal with relationship and leadership issues as they arise. Organisations need to have formalised processes in place for dealing with bad leadership, and encourage participation. An awareness of the multiple forces affecting leadership, including organisational culture, the need to satisfy multiple stakeholders, and the value of a competent personality will have an impact on this (Hennessey, Killian and Robins, 1995; Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

‘Capricious, murderous, high-handed, and evil leaders are effective and everywhere – except in the literature of business leadership’ (Kellerman, 2004: 41-42). What this suggests is that leaders have a dark side, though few are aware of it. They may be both trustworthy and deceitful, cowardly and brave, greedy and generous. It is important not to be blind to the reality of the human condition (Kellerman, 2004), but to address potential concerns over leadership when managing mentoring relationships.

There is little discussion in the literature on the potentially negative effects of poor leadership. Clutterbuck (1985) does identify, however, a number of characteristics to avoid. Mentors who are heavily engaged in corporate politics may mean that the protégé is at risk of becoming a pawn in power games. A mentor recently appointed to a new position will have little time available to devote to a protégé, as they are still learning the job. One who is involved in work of little importance in the business may not represent a direct line to promotion – if this is what the protégé is looking for. Likewise, a mentor whose career is in decline may lead a potential protégé to fear he or she will be taken along. A person who has consistently high staff turnover in their department may need to answer questions about the level of staff morale in their department. This may raise questions about professional skill, ethics and practice – questions that will need to be addressed in order for the relationship to have the desired outcomes.

Compared with the well-documented positive outcomes of mentoring relationships, there are few reports in the literature of problems associated with, or resulting from, mentoring (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002). Protégés typically report concerns in relation to limits that are placed on their individual autonomy; a mentor who is untrained, competitive or over-protective; and a lack of mentor interest, support or availability. Problems reported by mentors include lack of time available to commit to the relationship; negative mentee attitude; lack of trust and cooperation; unrealistic mentee expectations; and pressure from conflicting demands and roles (ibid). These types of issues may be contributed to by

organisations, who may not be interested so much in the relationship side of mentoring, as the focus on the benefits mentoring can bring to the business. They may be 'motivated by ideas which may help them achieve competitive advantage, survival or progress in their activities' (Garvey and Alred, 2001).

No reasons for these are given, which may be because few problems occurred, or where problems did occur, individuals may not have wanted to report them. However, mentoring relationships *do* have dilemmas and concerns which may impede their success and result in premature ending of the relationship. These factors may include relationship incompatibility, which needs to be addressed early on. Participants need to be well matched in terms of professional expertise and personality, and should be subjected to continued appraisal and development in order to maximise the potential benefits. Mentors need time, training and support in order to successfully carry out their role (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002).

What this suggests is that good leadership is required to make the relationship work. Formalised mentoring relationships, in addition to the actions of mentors themselves, need leadership from the organisation – leadership that is more than just adequate, but which meets the needs of the mentoring relationship and the personalities involved, while aiming for a fit with organisational strategies where appropriate. This means that the organisation will look at how it manages internal and external relationships. It will value technical competency, but also relationships, and diagnose and facilitate development in weak areas (Steele, 2003).

Leadership may fail for a number of reasons. Leaders may make incorrect assumptions about the level of follower satisfaction. This may come across as arrogance, where they forget the importance of having followers who are active participants in the leadership process (Bennis, 2004). Unless the 'interests of all parties are genuinely engaged and outcomes of value are obtained in accordance with the differing interests, projects of change cannot live and the change agent's role will eventually become ineffective' (Rix and Gold, 2000: 52).

It may also fail when coercion and force are used to hold on to personal power, or a 'leader' may be guilty of weakness and timidity (Kellerman, 2004). Punishment does not motivate learning (Taylor, 2003).

Good relationship management is vital. Conflict also needs to be dealt with appropriately (Hagenow, 2001). There is often confusion over respective roles, misgivings of line managers, roles of mentors that interfere manager roles, matching (e.g. gender, ethnicity), lack of assertiveness, and mentors who require dependence from the learner while not encouraging participants to find own solutions (Holbeche, 1995). At the level of the organisation, political positioning is significant. Micro-management by those in senior positions can have a negative impact on personal performance and job satisfaction, as it is often seen to foster an increased suspicion of management, decreased commitment of staff, and a feeling that there is increased surveillance of a negative kind (Hornstein, 2003)

Bennis (2004) links mentoring with leadership. Mentors are frequently chosen for their leadership qualities and characteristics. Which models of leadership, therefore, are appropriate for mentors? A number of leadership models may apply to the mentoring relationship. These include situational, transformational, and servant leadership (Dennis, 1992; Ellsworth, 2002; Frydman, Wilson, and Wyer, 2000). My two main areas of interest are transformational and servant leadership, though I think it is important to acknowledge the importance of *situational leadership*.

The value of this type of leadership is seen in the variety of types of mentoring programmes, designed for differing needs – types such as assigned, group and peer mentoring. Assigned mentoring<sup>1</sup> occurs where relationships are often short-term in duration, with intermittent contact between parties and generally positive support. Often designed to meet legal or organisational requirements, they are the result of a

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<sup>1</sup> Typically part of a formal mentoring programme in a workplace

mandate from above, with specified requirements as to meeting frequency and goals. Protégés are often not totally satisfied with the experience,<sup>2</sup> which may offer no more than orientation to the organisation and no deeper work on professional development (Sullivan-Brown, 2002). Group mentoring, in contrast to formalised business models, may include one or more mentor, working with more than one mentee, and often occurs in tertiary settings. It may be used for convenience (or value for money) where large numbers of new staff are involved, but does have a lack of deep professional learning (ibid). Peer mentoring possesses a far greater level of reciprocity than other forms of mentoring, with participants often alternating roles. Because they meet as equals, and don't see themselves in a power-based relationship, this form of mentoring is a good way of avoiding potential abuses of power. Usually situational, it may be transient or on an as-needed basis (ibid).

***Transformational leadership*** is a model aimed at developing the individual within the organisation. It develops individual performance beyond what is normally expected, by developing an emotional attachment with followers and other leaders, which is tied to a common cause' (Avolio and Yammarino, 2002: xvii), most often the interests of an organisation or employer.

A necessary component of this type of leadership is the building of a shared vision between all members of the organisation (Lewis, 1997). This vision identifies where the organisation is heading, and what it needs to achieve in order to arrive at that end goal. Transformational leaders are central in helping achieve this goal, fostering in others the ability to 'see what is potential and what is necessary when confronted by opportunity (ibid, p 163).

Transformational leadership is a reaction to traditional beliefs that have seen leadership as the capacity to take charge and get things done, focusing instead on the importance of teamwork and collaboration between organisational members.

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<sup>2</sup> But can we even call them protégés, when they aren't fully involved in the process?

(Liontos, 1992). Organizations in which this type of leadership operate typically have a form of collaborative, consensual decision-making. Collective responsibility and a goal of continuous organisational improvement and professional development are the norm. Transformational leaders are central actors in this process, involving staff in collaborative goal setting and employing bureaucratic mechanisms to support changes in the organisation's culture. Power is frequently shared, through delegation of responsibility and active communication processes and problem-solving activities.

Transformation has been shown to have successful performance outcomes (Dum Dum, Lowe and Avolio, 2002), which may be in part due to the processes outlined in the previous paragraph. Certainly there is evidence of increased student performance in schools that have adopted this model (Liontos, 1992). The outcome would be that training objectives proposed that will meet the identified needs (Nowack, 1991). Enomoto, Gardiner and Grogan (2002), state the benefits and advantages to the traditional boss-subordinate relationship in promoting active learning. Both individuals are frequently in contact, often working together closely and sharing daily problems. Mentors are able to debrief protégés, explaining reasons for their actions and seeking feedback.

For transformational learning to occur in learning organisations, organisations must function effectively as liberating structures that educate members toward self-correcting awareness (Yorks and Marsick, 2000). The outcome of transformational learning is that it involves students actively and enthusiastically, in a learning environment that is, to some degree, learner-driven (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002; Rylatt, 2000). This requires leaders and mentors to understand the individual's need to make sense of their situation when undergoing job change or other change within an organisation (Hallier and James, 1999). This type of leadership reflects authority and quality (Yudelowitz, Koch and Field, 2002; Rapamund and Moore, 2002).

Mentoring is ‘used for a variety of purposes in organisations and often where transitions are necessary’ (Garvey and Alred, 2001: 321-322). It is a transformational model of leadership, working within the organisation to make changes on the level of the individual rather than trying to change bigger systems. It is a top-down model of leadership and is assisted by transformative learning. This learning occurs where the learner incorporates what is learned into their existing frame of reference – an active process involving thought, feelings and disposition (Mezirow). The aim is to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his/her own values/meanings/purposes – rather than to uncritically act on those of others. To facilitate transformational learning, the mentor’s role is to assist learners become critically aware of their own assumptions, and able to address these.

In a transformational role, mentoring ‘informs best practice when it provides opportunities to assist the novice to grow and change. Change is risk. Taking risks empowers one to see in new ways, to try new ideas, and to change one’s vision. Vision change transforms, and the transformative process achieved through mentoring is defined as transformational learning’ (Martin, 2002).

Mentoring may also be described as a model of *servant leadership* – a model that fosters self-direction and autonomy in the learner. The mentoring process requires a degree of trust and protection, but the benefits include provision of political information and the show-casing of the protégé’s achievements (Anderson and Shannon, 1995). A number of personal skills and attributes – such as leadership, empathy, good listening, and the ability to create networks – make up a total picture of a person. Many of these skills and attributes, it may be argued, cannot easily be taught, but must necessarily be acquired somehow by the mentor in order for the role to be successful. Like mentoring, servant leadership has a spiritual dimension. It focuses on the stewardship of the leader, and participation of all team members, and the development of interpersonal relationships (Iwata, 1995; Kiechel, 1995; Lee and Zemke, 1995),

Servant leadership seeks change, but must innovate and originate and envisions the longer-term future. What makes it *servant* leadership is the passion, spontaneity and teachability inherent in this model.(Bennis, 2004; Cammock, 2001). It is a facilitative, enabling role that creates conditions for goals and objectives of teams or individuals to occur. Allowing genius to develop, a servant leader is not afraid of it but creates the conditions for it to occur. A leader is still a leader, but possesses real humility and authority in their own field (Bennis, 2004; Schaeffer, 2002; Handy, 1995).

Servant leadership places high importance on values. Leadership is not skill alone, but requires an interaction of skill and soul, head and heart, and rationality and feeling (Cammock, 2001). Leaders need to ask some important questions about their practice: How do we inspire commitment to service? How do we make employees' work meaningful? How do we build intelligence and continuous learning in to the organisation? (Macher, 1991).

While the literature has not identified it as such, mentoring may also be seen as a form of *servant leadership*. Leadership is an important activity in mentoring relationships, though servant leaders believe it needs to be conducted in a manner that enhances the protégé's self-determination and professional growth. Servant leadership is based on the assumption that the leader is there to humbly serve, and often works outside formal organisational structures. It is about facilitating and enabling learning – creating the conditions for the goals and objectives of team or individual to occur. Many see themselves as facilitating greatness, using systems and structures to achieve great things, not just as a means to an end. It functions best in flat management structures. The leader is still an authority and influence in their own field, but fosters buy-in from their followers to facilitate change and allow the learner to do it for themselves.

Leaders need to value the experience, interests and choices of their individual clients (Epstein, 2002: 33-34). This will lead to independence in the learner, which will assist positive learning experiences (Smart, 2003). The Ministry, as an example of a traditional organisation (Anderson, 1998), has expectations in dealing with employment-related issues. It does, however, need to address leadership issues that do not totally disempower the protégé as happened with Freddie. A dictatorial approach will be far less successful in fostering positive learning outcomes (Bass and Steidlmeier, no date).

Whichever leadership style they espouse, mentors need to be 'aware of the potential power of critical events in the career development' of individuals such as college students. Assisting protégés to work through these critical events is one of the main challenges that confront mentors. Events may appear small and insignificant, but will often have larger effects in the careers and lives of people. What is significant, however, is the response of the individual to these critical events, and a mentor may have a pivotal role in facilitating this (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003). Learners who go through a personal crisis that changes their attitudes and resolve find that their learning is enhanced, and may identify at a later stage that the advice they received at a critical moment, had made a significant difference in their career (ibid).

### **Power**

Power is defined as the 'capacity to influence' (Sinha, 1995: 134), the targets of influence being objects, other people, the self. 'Power' is often used interchangeably with 'control' and 'influence'. Power involves not only the capacity but the right to act. Its presence is often more implicit than explicit Hindess (1996). Who has the right to determine another's behaviour? Why? Those who control decisions concerning learning have the final say in deciding what decisions are made, and in establishing the pace and mechanisms for decision-making (Cranton, 1996).

Definitions of power discuss the capacity of one person to influence another (Sinha, 1995), the 'capability of one social actor to overcome resistance in achieving a desired objective or result' (Pfeffer, 1981: 2). The language we use, and the version of reality we describe, derives from the 'institutional matrix that society constructs to enforce a particular version of what constitutes reality. They are cultural meanings that guide and control our individual acts' (Bruner, 1990: 38). The control of ideas is an important source of power and domination (Spring, 1994).

Power relationships exist between people in organisations, particularly those at different levels. The power that comes from position or expertise is legitimate, and is generally acknowledged by co-workers. Power is often associated with those in positions of leadership, and may be used in varying ways, whether authoritarian, participative or laissez-faire (Vine, 2004). Any individual, group or organisation has more or less power than others – power that is context- and relationship-specific. A person is not more or less powerful in general, but only in respect to others or situations. Power involves not only the capacity but the right to act, and may also include a degree of authority based on skills or position (Hindess, 1996; Pfeffer, 1981).

The leader 'often enjoys formal political and/or organisational authority – a position of command with tools of enforcement. The discussion of the ethics of leadership incorporates this 'command/enforcement' dimension and in so doing raises the question of the legitimacy of authority for from the 'command/enforcement' perspective, proposed ethical standards may be imposed on followers as well as feely embraced; intellectual questioning may be stifled or welcomed; motivation may be externally manipulated or grounded in internal assent; and individuals may be treated as instruments or as ends in themselves' (Bass and Steidlmeier).

What this means is that techniques of power are present at every level of human interaction, and may act as agents of segregation and hierarchy, thus ensuring that relationships of domination exist (Smart, 1986). It is therefore possible to misuse

power. However, successful leaders do not misuse their power. They see people as human beings with their own motives, interests and goals (Kellerman, 2004). Their practice is underwritten by either physical or resource power, and works through personality and persuasion of individuals (Handy, 1993).

Two theoretical models of power have important things to say for leaders. *Foucault's work* shows an opposition to global or totalising forms of discourse and their effects (Smart, 1986; Gore, 1998). He differentiates between power and domination. The issue is whether power is used illegitimately, or as a productive force (Hirschmann, 2003),

The use of power is not illegitimate in itself, but is most effective when employed as unobtrusively as possible. This is facilitated by a process that legitimates authentic power used for positive outcomes – a shepherd-flock metaphor of a relationship between ruler and ruled, which operates on a basis of consent (Hindess, 1996; Pfeffer, 1981). However, the primary focus of Foucault is on normalising judgment as a function of the disciplinary power of the state, where individual actions compared to the whole and conformity to a standard is required. Exclusion – the negative side of normalisation – defines the pathological and imposes homogeneity. Behaviour is monitored through the use of the Panopticon, singling out individuals and regulating their behaviour (Rouse, 1994).

The power of the state is acknowledged by Foucault, who talks specifically about surveillance and discipline as tools of the state, and of knowledge as a tool for disciplining the body. Coercion is a tool employed by many in power in order to retain their illegitimate power base (Clegg, 1989). The Panopticon applies to discipline and social control (Lyon, 2001). Foucault's Panopticon is an example of how power can be misused (Green, 1998; Apple, 1982). Surveillance is built into the physical structure of institutions, and manifest in the creation and extension of rituals. The result of surveillance is that one confesses, or is forced to confess. 'What is thereby seen and heard is then documented, as a resource for further

examination and constraint' (Rouse, 1994: 96). It functions largely in silence, enabling disciplinary power to always be present.

The result of 'deviance' is regulation and discipline, where the errant individual is subject to restrictions – sanctioned, rewarded and punished as authorities see fit in an effort to socialise the people into its vision (Green, 1998; Hirschmann, 2003). Support for this system of surveillance is achieved through what Foucault calls Governmentality – the consent of the governed – which is required for the system to be legitimated (Green, 1998)

According to Foucault (Sheridan, 1980), the body is invested with relations of power and domination. Power relations control it and force it to act in certain ways. It is subjected, in the workplace, to the will other others, which may often be subtle, but is always calculated and organised. Resistance occurs, however, and is a reaction by some individuals to their lack of individual sovereignty, and the disciplinary forms and technologies through which power operates (Popkewitz and Brennan, 1998).

*Libertarians*, in contrast, have little direct reference to 'power', though there is theoretical support for the ideas of Foucault – particularly the issues related to the power possessed by governments and other collectives. This power, where misdirected, will have serious consequences for the liberty of the individual and for education practice, compelling obedience to pre-ordained goals (Upton, 1987).

Libertarian thought is concerned with the defence of individual liberty against the encroachments of the state. This defence requires that restraints be built in, according to Hindess (1996), to a system of government that must remain strong enough to secure liberty for its subjects. The size and function of government is limited – its primary objective being the defence of individual liberty. Libertarians address issues of free informed consent the individual (ibid). Along with rights go

responsibility for one's actions. Individual rights can not be enforced at the expense of the rights of another person.

Classical liberal (libertarian) analyses of power addresses issues of agency, intentionality and liberty (Bastiat, 2003; Kelley, 1998; Peron, 2003a; Peron, 2003b; Peron 2003c; Spooner, 2003; Von Mises, 2003). Agency reflects that power is held in the individual, whose survival requires use of one's rational faculty. Self-ownership is the guiding principle of classical liberals – people are individually responsible for achieving the outcomes we wish from our life, and for our own actions. Intentionality is the means by which individuals retain power over their own lives. All associations and interactions with others are to be voluntary, by mutual consent (Bastiat, 2003; Kelley, 1998). Individuals are the source of government's legitimacy, and individuals naturally rebel against any injustice imposed upon them. Liberty assumes that a free society benefits all its members, and enables individual creativity. The primary role of government is to protect freedom it should not interfere with, or seek to regulate, individual lives, as the best decisions are made by self-governing individuals.

'One person's right always involves corresponding obligations on the part of others to respect that right. The moral claim inherent in a right would be meaningless if no one were obliged to respect it' (Kelley, 1998: 23). The abuse of power, in a classical liberal sense, arises where coercion occurs. Where it is caused by government it reflects a crisis of legitimacy, and leads to further abuses. Resolution of conflicts is only achieved by adhering to the individual's right to life, freedom and happiness.

Freedom and virtue are not mutually antagonistic, and society requires both to flourish (Bastiat, 2003; Kelley, 1998; Peron, 2003a; Peron, 2003b; Peron 2003c; Spooner, 2003; Von Mises, 2003). Socialism, by contrast, is tyrannical by nature. It aims for an egalitarian society but must rely on tyranny and coercion to achieve its goals. Its premises are that man is, by nature, unfit for freedom, and cannot be

trusted to independently achieve what is necessary for life or to own and freely exchange the products of their labour. They must allow a higher authority (society or government) to use that product as it sees fit (Branden, 2003; Peron, 2003d).

What about mentoring and power? Little has been addressed in the literature in relation to mentoring and power issues, or the means with which to deal with these when they occur. However, a number of issues are worth mentioning in relation to mentoring. Firstly, the ‘most important tool for maintaining any particular social form or relationship is the power to define reality’ (Reason, 1984: 186). Whoever has the power to define what is real also has the power to enforce that reality as normative. Any organisation where this occurs is likely to maintain unequal power relationships, and mentoring practice may suffer. Definitions of reality that come from outside the individual will necessarily involve some degree of coercion in order to be accepted, but are a necessary ingredient in enforcing hierarchical power relations. Where the goal of mentoring is the empowerment of the learner, however, the focus is likely to be on power sharing models, providing the conditions that enable the individual to learn and to develop professionally.

Secondly, formalised mentoring relationships typically have one of two goals – either socialisation into the status quo, or socialisation into personal and social change. Where the former occurs, power is an important issue, as it affects initial expectations of the relationship by both parties, the purpose of the relationship, and any resulting behaviour. A high power differential is likely, resulting in either high dependency or highly rebellious behaviour on the part of the learner. This may also negatively impact on the type and intensity of learning that occurs, and the way the relationship ends (Clutterbuck, 1998).

Thirdly, learners rarely have a safe place to explore the dilemmas of practice without fear of adverse evaluation by their more powerful mentor (Meyer, 2002). Evaluation may serve as a useful tool for providing feedback on a person’s work, but needs to be conducted in a respectful manner with the opportunity for the

learner to take something away. An alternative to this power imbalance is the concept of a learning community, where peers meet as equals to address issues commonly dealt with in mentoring schemes. Members collaborate – sharing norms, values and practices – and offer each other moral support, intellectual and academic help, and solid friendship. This type of community has collective authority, where individuals have a say in decisions that are made and in any evaluations that take place (Meyer, 2002). Partners need to be enabled to talk about relationship issues (Zachary, 2000).

Fourthly, it is important to consider the viewpoint of the mentee when looking at power issues. Mentees in one survey, who were asked about the roles and benefits of mentoring, indicated that they were generally optimistic about the relationship. However, it appears that mentees see themselves as the less powerful partner, and subject also to organisational hierarchies and expectations. Whereas the mentor was perceived as a leader and giver of knowledge, advice and guidance – possessing superior knowledge and experience – they felt they were required to be a humble learner and suppliant (Harris, 2002).

Of concern, also, are the assumptions over who owns and possesses knowledge, and how knowledge will be accessed. ‘The globalization of knowledge and Western culture constantly reaffirms the west’s view of itself as the centre of legitimate knowledge, the arbiter of what counts as knowledge and the source of ‘civilized’ knowledge’ (Smith, 1999). There is a real risk of negating the protégé’s knowledge – an event which may sabotage the relationship and the learning that may take place.

Next, Zachary (2000) talks about the requirements of a learner-centred mentoring programme. Where this type of programme occurs, the protégé is an active partner, assuming self-responsibility for learning, while the mentor’s role is that of learning facilitator. The learning process is largely self-directed, and the length of the relationship is determined by achievement of goals. However, while I would agree

that the focus of mentoring needs to be upon the learning and career needs of the protégé, this situation may be open to abuse. It is possible for the mentor to place too much power in the hands of the learner, giving them the power to make decisions for which they may be unprepared. I would suggest that mentoring is equally about learning from the experience of the senior colleague, who needs to take at least an equal share in decision-making. This may necessarily require that the mentor learn a few lessons about leadership style.

Lastly, formalised mentoring programmes – compulsory in some organisations – occur in a number of settings, such as business and education. The stated purpose of programmes such as these is to enhance the skills and abilities of staff who act as mentors, and to assist them to support new employees (Martin, 2002). These programmes are based on a number of assumptions, such as the employer's right to define an individual's learning needs, the methods for addressing those needs, and the consequences of non-compliance.

How might power issues be addressed in mentoring relationships? Clutterbuck (1998) offers some solutions. He suggests the need to answer the following questions: How do mentor and protégé acquire power to bring into relationship? How can/do they use power within relationship, and to what effect? How do mentoring dyads manage to park power issues to maintain a collegiate atmosphere within relationship? Is doing so a positive determinant of relationship success?

What does power mean for mentors and educators? Power imbalances exist between teachers and learner, mentors and protégés. A teacher's role is active and directive, whereas the student is typically more receptive (Green, 1998). There is an important causal connection between the teacher's voice and the power he or she possesses, between the speaking and authority that reflects their role and the socially-authorized relations of knowledge and power. Making governments, managers or leaders into moral enforcers encourages abuse (Bandow, 2003).

The teacher's power is role power, and therefore legitimate. Teachers are an acceptable expression and embodiment of cultural authority. The student is developed as a 'self-governing agent who recognises that authority as legitimate/necessary/self-sufficient/non-coercive (Green, 1998).

Power 'is a critical factor in the development and outcomes of mentoring relationships' (Ragins, 1999: 232). Mentors, as educators, have legitimate power and need to use it ethically, to foster professional and personal development in their protégés. They foster self-ownership in the protégé (Graham, 2002), and need to ask themselves whether they are consciously or subconsciously seeking to reproduce the status quo in their interactions with protégés (Sullivan-Brown, 2002).

'Institutions do the culture's serious business through an unpredictable mix of coercion and voluntarism' (Bruner, 1996: 30). The result may be the institutionalisation of social control. Norms and expectations develop that make the exercise of influence expected and accepted. Power, once legitimated as authority, is not resisted (Pfeffer, 1981).

In managing formal mentoring schemes, good practice includes an awareness of, and commitment to, ensuring that all stages of a formal mentoring programme are followed (Jowett, 1998; Meyer, 2002; Boags, 2001; Clutterbuck, 1985; Freedman, 1993). It begins with the decision to implement a programme, and marketing the programme to management and workers. This should be followed by more-than-adequate selection, training and pairing of participants, and continues with the relationship itself – goals are set, support and co-ordination is in place, and the scheme is continuously monitored and evaluated to ensure quality, ethical practice.

Success in these relationships is more likely if issues are dealt with as they arise and the winding up process managed with little difficulty. There needs to be recognition of potential tensions and conflicts within a relationship, and strategies put in place to minimise the damage. There needs to be clear communication channels, a

commitment from all levels of the organisation to making it work, and clarity of relationship goals. All parties require the freedom to opt out at any time. An awareness of the life-cycle of relationships would be particularly helpful. The existence of a mentor programme does not, on its own 'guarantee the frequency or quality of the mentor-novice interaction ... haphazard arrangements may or may not be effective' (Meyer, 2002: 2). Issues need to be planned for.

Co-mentoring relationships have worked well in some settings, particularly in tertiary education (McLean, 2004). The expressed agenda of these relationships is to 'connect people of varying levels of power and privilege who join together to pursue mutual interest and benefit' – relationships that are characterised by 'practice that is dynamic and has no agenda to preserve hierarchies, power imbalances, or institutions as we know them' (Templeton, 2003). Peer- or co-mentoring is more likely to be successful when learners are included in every aspect of teaching, have no secrets kept from them, and have unconditional support.

Power imbalances can be further mitigated in mentoring where mentees are able to use their mentors as they wish. They may drive the process, making certain that they gain the maximum support and achieve the goals they have identified for themselves (Cunningham, Dawes and Bennett: 2004). This approach guarantees that learners' input will be valued, but must be kept free from organisational politics and influence wherever possible.

Power issues may be further addressed by seeking mentors from outside the organisation. Providing mentors from within the same organisation may have some advantages in terms of knowledge of organisational processes and politics. However, this form of mentoring will provide the protégé with an increased sense of security, as the mentor will be seen as less likely to repeat information to management – a degree of openness and trust being necessary for success. Further, it is difficult for an individual to be fully open in a relationship where one person has authority over another, such as a line manager (Clutterbuck, 2001).

An external mentor will also, potentially, have specialised skills and community links unavailable within the employing business. However, if the objectives of the programme include the adjustment of new members into an organisation or institution, mentors will then need to have experienced the same institutional or organisational environment (McLean, 2004).

What the literature does not tell us is that the kind of learning that frequently happens within successful mentoring relationships can only be called emancipatory, because of the huge changes wrought in the life and career of the individual. The result is often an individual who becomes outstanding in their chosen field. Defying mediocrity is a central goal of all emancipatory learning – which must also be self-directed learning in order to achieve these outcomes.

Informal mentoring is an alternative to formalised mentoring. It has a long history, and is more likely than formalised programmes to be successful (Cunningham, Dawes and Bennett: 2004), as it helps redress power imbalances. Participants choose each other freely, based on mutual respect, without recourse to the requirements of an employer. The arrangement will more readily survive long term, as it provides an opportunity to develop trust and advance personal, rather than corporate, goals. Participation is less likely to be due to obligation, as individuals take on the relationship purely by choice, out of a recognised need (Clutterbuck, 2001; Wilson, 2002). To achieve success in informal mentoring, participants need to reinvent the role, to move away – if necessary – from traditional concepts and allow those involved to define the parameters of the relationship. Much of the focus in informal schemes reflects the need to consider mentoring in holistic terms – to focus on the wider developmental and social potential of mentoring (Bennetts, 2001). This may not be possible in an organisational mentoring scheme with parameters set by the employer, but is a necessary component of successful work.

However, informal mentoring may not always work successfully without some degree of structure, particularly if there is an absence of clear purpose, direction, boundaries, role clarity, and expectations. Personality characteristics may be such that one or more of the participants feels uncomfortable working in unstructured environments. In addition, *toxic mentors* are identified – those who are manipulative and may be more difficult to remove from the role. Further, leaving individuals to seek their own mentors has mixed success, according to Clutterbuck (2001). The protégé may make choices for the wrong reasons, such as choosing someone they have known for some time and get on well with. This may blur the relationship boundaries somewhat, and may be complicated by the fact that the chosen mentor may not be interested, or have the skill necessary to make the work successful. However, where the mentor is freely chosen, the relationship is likely to be more successful. Where mentioned in the literature at all, informal mentoring arrangements may also be more dependent on old-boy networks, with little responsibility required of either party

### **Ethics**

Ethics is about fairness and decency – about deciding what is right and wrong, and defining the procedures and rules which underpin responsible conduct between individuals and groups (Connick and Johns, 1995). The central issue in relation to ethics is whether or not you are doing harm to another person.

Professionals need to be satisfied that their practices are ethical (Massey University, 1999). An ethical sense is vital, as well as a sense of strategy and purpose (Kiechel, 1995; Lopez, 1995; Spears, 1995; Tarr, 1995). Holding oneself accountable as a practitioner helps ensure integrity and trust, and results in ethical behaviour (Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

Foucault's later writing revealed an ethical stance that, rather than surrender to the pursuit of a messianic future, would engage with the transgressions of those forces conflicting with our self-creation (Bernauer, 1994). Libertarians agree. Ethical

practice is based on the belief that the individuals are sovereign, that their life is their own, and that the rights of others must not work against that (Bandow, 2003; Branden, 2003; McElroy, 2004). Ways of 'exercising force can only coerce or destroy their target. Discipline and training can reconstruct it to produce new gestures, actions, habits and skills, and ultimately new kinds of people' (Rouse, 1994: 94-95).

Two types of ethical practice are identified – social and tactical (Connick and Johns, 1995). Social ethics is collectivist in its approach, based primarily on accepted standards within specific social classes and groupings. These types of ethical standards are relatively easy to define as they identify the interests of a particular group rather than deal with abstract ethical principles. My preference is for tactical ethics, which has an individualist focus and identify and discuss issues. Individuals observe ethical standards because those standards are of value, not out of love or loyalty to own society. While ethics may be observed in order to avoid the penalties of non-compliance, issues are more fully discussed in relation to universally applicable principles (Bernauer, 1994).

Ethical values do not provide comprehensive solutions, but rather provide guidelines for effective teaching practice and allow learners to more successfully achieve the learning outcomes identified (Connick and Johns, 1995). However, any attempt to enforce ethics or to modify others' behaviour, regardless of the intent, is a tool of totalitarianism (Upton, 1987) and must be avoided.

To be ethical, leadership involves clarity of vision, and long-term consistency in pursuing that vision (Connick and Johns, 1995). Ethical judgments require choices about resource allocation, benefits to customers and shareholders, and weighing up issues of self-interest vs the interests of others. They can be facilitated if ethical considerations have been embraced in development of vision and values). The effectiveness of ethical leadership depends on constructing implementation mechanisms that are vigorous, robust, relevant and practical (ibid).

The 'exclusive pursuit of self-interest is found wanting by most ethicists' (Bass and Steidlmeier). The aim of a focus on the experience of learners, within adult learning, is 'to develop active, self-aware learners who have the capacity and freedom to frame their own purposes' (Tennant and Pogson, 1995: 150). Ethical practice involves an awareness, not only of the needs of the learner, but of the mentor themselves. This is complemented by a commitment to addressing issues include accountability, informed consent, and a respect for the individual person. Ethical practice necessarily, also, involves an awareness of the negative impact of unethical behaviour, and the use of coercion and force as a means of control (Burke, 1994; McElroy, 2002). All associations are to be voluntary (Bastiat, 2003).

Ethical dilemmas are unavoidable. What is important is the way in which these are dealt with. Unproductive confrontation needs to be avoided at all costs – rather it is more useful to address issues through open-minded consideration of differing viewpoints and a willingness to incorporate ideas of others as appropriate (Connick and Johns, 1995).

There are a number of reasons why ethical issues should be addressed by all involved in mentoring relationships. Firstly, when participants consider themselves accountable to each other and to other stakeholders, their actions will reflect this. They will do nothing to jeopardise our position, or the position of individuals they work with and for. Ethical practice considers that no harm must be done to anyone they are responsible for or to. Secondly, and resulting from this, is the benefits to the organisations we work for. Professional practice is ethical practice. When we take responsibility for our actions, our students and clients are more likely to benefit from this. The potential results – whether academic or business – are clear.

What *is* ethical teaching/mentoring practice? Freedom and the right to live one's own life entail responsibility for the actions and the choices – and the outcomes (Upton, 1987). This is where a code of ethics begins – in recognising the impact of

our choices on other people, and modifying our actions in accordance with the perceived outcomes.

‘In assessing the ethical dimensions of leadership we assert that there are two principal criteria: 1) the character and virtue of leaders and 2) the legitimacy of social processes, ‘rules of the game’ and interpersonal dynamics that govern social moral choices’ (Bass and Steidlmeier). ‘Expertise as a teacher and longevity in the field of education do not ensure success as a mentor’ (Martin, 2000). Professional educators need to answer these questions: What is ethical behaviour? Why? According to whom? What if there is conflict over ethical issues? Who wins? Why? Who am I doing this for? Why?

Accountability is directed towards three main persons – the mentor, the protégé, and the organisation. Accountability to the organisation can be addressed through the evaluation of mentoring schemes. This may involve appraisal – of the mentoring relationships themselves, and of the way the organisation’s systems and practices facilitate or prohibit achievement. It allows for an analysis of past successes and failures, and recommendations for the future, while highlighting specific problems and opportunities – the focus being on continuous improvement (Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002; Macher, 1991).

To enable accountability, however, the mentoring relationship must be taken seriously (Zachary, 2000). For this to be achieved, more critique of the mentoring process is required, but should not be seen as an end in itself. The literature I have reviewed to date typically portrays mentoring in a positive light, and does little to address issues that may require change – an approach that is somewhat unbalanced. A critical appraisal of mentoring practices will necessarily reveal issues that need addressing, but must be followed up by action to redress these issues, or the whole exercise is a waste of time.

Accountability requires that practitioners act ethically, are able to justify the actions they take, and accept responsibility for the outcomes of the mentoring relationship. Professional and personal development must be stringently sought, but not at the cost of one's own work and personal well-being. Likewise, employers seeking to foster excellence in practice will make a real commitment to developing their mentoring staff. Supervision of mentors, external to the organisation, is one way of ensuring ethical professional practice. Given the often sensitive nature of the work of mentoring, it may well be appropriate for mentors to have supervision away from their line management, in order to more objectively find solutions to problems.

Accountability is also expressed in the move to use mentoring as a means of career development for members of minorities, including women, non-whites, and people with disabilities. This is based on the belief that members of minority groups have additional career hurdles to overcome, and that employers have a responsibility to these groups. Mentoring is seen as a means of enabling such people to have access to resources, networks and training opportunities that they may not have had previously. The danger in this approach is that individuals may be given access to mentoring and career development opportunities on the basis of their membership of a 'disadvantaged group', and not necessarily on the basis of their promotion potential or ability to perform on the job. It may also mean that others, equally as talented, may miss out on the same opportunities because they lack the same membership.

Informed consent is a vital component in the mentoring process, as is learner motivation (McElroy, 2002; McLean, 2004). The ability to define our own learning goals makes learning outcomes more likely to be achieved. Mentors allow protégés to make their own choices and build the relationship to a point where the protégé is able to take responsibility for the outcomes (Smart, 2003).

In ethical practice, all associations are to be voluntary (Bastiat, 2003). Ethical practice grows out of power. For the protégé, learning must be self-directed. The

protégé needs to take some personal responsibility for the success of the relationship, fostering openness, trust and mutual respect (Rylatt, 2000). He or she needs to be flexible, conscientious, well-organised, non-defensive, able to laugh at their own mistakes, and a fast learner. They also require a degree of self-awareness and insight, ambition, and identified succession potential, in addition to strong interpersonal skills (Clutterbuck, 1985). When these are taken care of, learning will be facilitated and the relationship more likely to be successful. But what about the mentor? How autonomous are we, as professionals, in our choices? (Graham, 2002). Autonomy must be allowed in the mentor, otherwise our practice may be compromised (Cranton, 1996).

In addition, accountability requirements may be reflected in organisational policies, procedures and manuals, and as such may become ends in themselves rather than a focus on the training and development tool that mentoring was originally designed to provide. This is one of the risks inherent in formalised mentoring programmes, and organisations may need to set processes in place to deal with this. Likewise, in informal programmes, some procedural issues need to be in place, but the partners have more flexibility in relation to defining their own processes, meeting times and frequency.

Ethical practice may also be associated with a commitment to Equal Employment Opportunity practices, and the need to ensure that members of 'minority' groups have the same opportunities as anyone else in the workforce. Mentoring is designed, in many cases, to foster diversity, to enable members of marginalised groups to move up the career ladder, and as such may have desirable outcomes for the individuals concerned (Bennetts, 2001). It must be asked whether mentoring is the most appropriate vehicle for addressing this, however, as the 'successful protégé is actively and ultimately responsible for the direction and progression of his or her career' (Alleyne, 2003; Fuller et al, 2004). Diversity and EEO practices have been useful in breaking the glass ceiling, but should not become ends in themselves. Cross-cultural mentoring can be facilitated by the development of a number of key

skills. These include reflective listening, maintenance of cultural awareness, suspension of judgement, creation of culturally-appropriate networking opportunities, modification of one's communication style to accommodate cultural differences, and research into the partner's culture (Zachary, 2000). It can only occur, however, where both parties are willing to move beyond cultural differences and work together in synergy for the benefit of both.

Neutrality is seen by some as desirable. It will enable partners to move beyond politics and agendas, to focus on the reason for the mentoring relationship, and may be more likely to succeed where mentoring is done outside an employing organisation (Steele, 2003).

Ethical practice addresses boundary issues. Boundary violations occur when someone knowingly or unknowingly crosses the (professional, ethical) emotional, physical, spiritual or sexual limits of another (Steele, 2003).

A further factor in success is the training of mentors. Training and preparation of mentors is often neglected, or occurs informally on the job (Martin, 2002; Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004). Thought it might be useful to ask a few questions, such as: Can mentoring be taught? How? What is to be taught, and how will it be assessed? How will mentors know they *need* training?

### WHERE TO FROM HERE?

There are a number of limitations to the literature. Academic literature typically reflects on the experience of authors and of others in the field (Garvey and Alred, 2001). Authors take the opportunity to develop strategies to address specific mentoring issues, and to address the benefits of effective practice. This is typically supportive of the mentoring relationship, from an educational or human resource development perspective. There is a strong focus on the qualities required of both parties, and on the benefits of the mentoring relationship itself, but the potential

hazards and risks in the relationship are not dealt with adequately. However, while many have an active personal or professional involvement in mentoring research and practice, the outcomes of their research is coloured by their position as academics and professionals. What is lacking in the literature is the perspective and experience of community workers and volunteers, who may well have much to contribute to the body of knowledge (Zachary 2000). I am also concerned that the literature has too strong a focus on the benefits of mentoring, with little focus on the potential risks (Smith, 1999: 64; Freedman, 1993). Likewise, there has, to date, been little research or discussion on negative mentoring experiences (Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004) or on the potentially negative effects of poor leadership. Problems associated with, or resulting from, mentoring (Hansford, Tennent and Ehrich, 2002; Foyster, 1990) need to be more adequately assessed, particularly when compared with the well-documented positive outcomes of mentoring relationships.

Addressing the issues outlined above can make mentoring more responsive to the needs of participants. There is no evidence whether any of the varied, informal models of mentoring are any more or less successful than the organised business models. What it does suggest is that mentoring is a fluid relationship possessing the ability to adapt to diverse situations and people, where relationships and goals may be more important than form.

Given the concerns expressed above, however, it is possible to see that there are benefits to both formal and informal mentoring relationships. Both types have a place within the scheme of mentoring, though it may be different places. Where formalised mentoring schemes work best is in the educational and professional world, whereas informal mentoring may well work better in community settings. What is needed, in both cases, is a commitment to making the relationship work – whether formal or informal mentoring relationships are used – and to address the issues as they arise.

Mentoring is not about telling a protégé how to live their life. Successful mentoring is about sharing knowledge and experience, and allowing individuals to make their own decisions in the light of their own experience and needs. It is important to be clear about what the goals of mentoring programmes are, and who they are designed to benefit. Learning is an 'essential pre-condition for any change in performance at work' (Megginson, Banfield and Joy-Mathews, 1999: 53). The aim of mentoring is to help and support individuals to manage their own learning in order to maximise their own potential, develop skills, improve performance, and become the person they want to be (Clutterbuck, 2001). This, however, requires buy-in from the learner, who will make little progress without it. A programme that is protégé-driven, with an awareness that learning belongs to learners, is more likely to be successful (Bennetts, 2001).

For many working in the field, the outlook for mentoring is optimistic. A relationship that focuses primarily on the development of the individual, it functions at a level that is, in many cases, anti-bureaucratic and anti-institutional. It is anchored in the belief that we can reinvent ourselves and overcome seemingly high odds, no matter how daunting they may seem (Freedman, 1993). The role of the mentor in this process cannot be underestimated, with its focus on teaching, counselling and developing a younger colleague in an organisation or profession (Anderson and Shannon, 1995).

This thesis will, in subsequent chapters, analyse the issues identified above (in line with four case studies) and make recommendations for future practice. Before this is to happen, however, I need to look at my theoretical underpinnings and research methodology.

## CHAPTER FOUR CASE STUDIES AND ANALYSIS

The aim of this chapter is an analysis of the data obtained from a survey of the literature. This data is supported by four stories. These stories come from my professional experience, and include examples of time when I was both a mentor and a protégé. Historically, they come from a period from the mid-1980s to 2000, and are located in a number of New Zealand cities. Name and identities have been changed to protect confidentiality. The stories of Shirley and Terry are examples of informal, natural mentoring relationships that developed, to some degree, on their own, from pre-existing professional situations. Freddie's mentoring relationship was planned, by his employer, and had some structures in place to ensure progress. David is an example of group mentoring in an education setting.

Therefore, this chapter contains the four case studies referred to. It then analyses these case studies in terms of leadership, power and ethics.

### FOUR STORIES

#### Shirley

We were colleagues for over a year, at a time when I was moving into a new career field, while also being diagnosed with significant physical disability. Shirley had herself been through a process of recovery from cancer – the result being that she was in a position to assist others through personal mazes. As my employer, and a person with significant more life experience, she was in a position to share her wisdom with me and to offer guidance and direction when it seemed appropriate. During the time we worked together, Shirley provided professional guidance, leadership, and the opportunity for further job-related training and skill development. My goals for working with Shirley included the opportunity to learn from her, and develop some real work skills and a presence in an industry I wished

to develop in. Shirley was able to provide these. The outcome of working with Shirley was that I was enabled to continue looking critically at where I was, my philosophical and ethical standpoints, and professional development. Our professional association ended when I moved to a different city in pursuit of a career move.

Our relationship has never been *called* a mentoring relationship, but that is what it was – an example of informal, unspoken mentoring. It was a relationship between two people, one with considerably more life experience and knowledge, making that knowledge and experience available, informally, to someone who soaked it up like a sponge and went away a stronger person.

From this relationship I have discovered the value of informal mentoring programmes that grow organically from professional relationships. The value exists primarily in the element of choice involved for both parties, in the fact that we did not require a formal matching process to begin working together, formalised goals to be achieved by agreed-upon dates, or reporting to management. What *did* happen was an understanding of a number of key issues, including leadership styles, adult learning, and professional and personal development.

The influence of my work with Shirley is summed up in the statement ‘I trust you’. This is significant. On one occasion towards the end of our working relationship, I had asked questions about office practices and decision-making. Shirley had begun delegating much of the responsibility for management of the office to me. I continued for some time to check in with her, but she soon felt obliged to express her trust. The effects of this on professional development were enormous, and reflect the way Shirley is able to provide an environment in which learning takes place. Resulting from this is self-directed learning, in which personal empowerment comes from within the learner. Time spent under Shirley’s transformational leadership meant that my own employability was enhanced, and a career path identified, as new skills were developed and further training needs

established. A further benefit of Shirley's mentoring is that I was able to develop links of my own within community and industry, at local and national level – links that have proved invaluable.

An important role of mentoring is the facilitation of change, particularly when critical life events occur. Shirley plays an important role in facilitating change, which has significant flow-on effects into individual careers (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003; Smart, 2003).

Shirley's leadership style is one that has a positive impact on those she comes into contact with. Her personality and working style are able to engender trust and a willingness to be open to alternative worldviews, and to challenge existing behaviours and attitudes. She is a role model, who – whether consciously aware of it, or not – provides a working environment where one is able to critique issues and actively seek out development opportunities.

Many examples of formal, organised mentoring schemes exist, with regular meetings scheduled, and identified goals and assessment of progress. I must, however, question the appropriateness of formal schemes for all situations. Clearly the formal model would not apply in this situation, for a number of reasons. Having regular access to one's mentor is primarily dependent, in informal mentoring relationships, on the needs of the parties. In Shirley's case, she was often out of the office on work-related projects, and found it difficult to schedule time together. The goal of any learning that took place was not stated overtly, and, in addition to growth in personal and professional development, learning was aimed at social and political change – both on a personal and on a societal level.

In relation to leadership, Shirley exhibited servant leadership when dealing with her clients. Her goal was to provide the conditions – outside of formal organisational hierarchies where possible – to enable them to empower themselves and then go out into the world to do great things. Her work with me was located *within*

organisational structures, and involved a model of transformational leadership – transformation because she at no time took on the role of a servant with me. Both types of leadership were beneficial, resulting in the undoing of negative effects of silencing upon the individual, but show the need for leaders to avoid having their followers become dependent on them.

Shirley's leadership style was one that encouraged real learning to occur. Mentoring like this fosters a number of individual characteristics that are of value in the workplace and in life generally. She encourages individuals' ability to think critically, to reflect on progress made towards their goals and objectives. Initiative and motivation are further enhanced as one sees one's goals being met. New skills are developed, and existing ones enhanced, resulting in improved job performance and life satisfaction. Self-responsibility develops, as the individual takes actions towards those goals, resulting in a decreased dependence on the mentor as growth is enhanced. Active learning results as the individual – mentor and protégé – takes more responsibility for their own development. Leadership is developed, particularly that of the mentor.

### **Freddie**

For a year and a half I worked as a mentor for Freddie, a young man with an intellectual impairment who was employed in a New Zealand government ministry in downtown Wellington. The Ministry was undergoing a period of change, which would have a major impact on Freddie. Jobs were being reorganised or lost, and Freddie's job would probably disappear within two years.

Freddie's background and his disability meant that he had little skill in dealing with stress, and this was affecting his work performance. The Ministry wanted to be seen as a good employer. Its staff made an effort to find a mentor for Freddie, and sought out someone from the disability community who had the necessary skills to work with him. Workbridge<sup>3</sup> were approached to facilitate this. Freddie and I

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<sup>3</sup> The training and employment agency for people with disabilities

worked together, initially twice a week, then weekly. Our brief was to work on issues relating to his workplace – issues of job skills and the stress that impacted on his work performance. Confidentiality was assured, by me and by his immediate supervisor, on condition that information regarding Freddie would only be disclosed by me to the Ministry if there was danger involved or a risk of serious harm to someone.

Freddie was told that mentoring would be happening, but that he ‘had a say’ in who he worked with. As an employer, the Ministry had needs of its own. It wanted staff to be able to function in the workplace, and was willing to take steps towards this goal. The down side is that Freddie felt that his employer was as autocratic and authoritarian. He felt his employer standing over him with a whip, that participation was unnecessary. Feeling somewhat powerless to change it, he soon learned to take back a degree of control over his situation. He modified his behaviour accordingly, appearing on the surface to comply, but subverting the process by refusing to put his whole heart into the process.

Trust appears to have been a real issue for Freddie. Because he felt pressured, he seemed to be wondering how far he could trust the Ministry, and therefore me. Certainly, as someone on the payroll of the Ministry, my loyalties were divided, and Freddie was aware of this. The issue of trust is one that mentors continually battle with.

I am also aware that, while Freddie’s employability was enhanced by his participation in a mentoring relationship, we need to unpack the political and ethical issues at work within the Ministry. Trying to be a good employer, the Ministry came across as authoritarian in its dealings with Freddie, leaving him with the feeling that he had little choice in relation to participation in the programme.

Our working relationship was at times difficult, often challenging, sometimes rewarding. At times I learned from his supervisor, days or weeks after the event,

that there had been violent outbursts by Freddie, mainly targeted towards the equipment he worked with on a daily basis. This occurred after we had been addressing on workplace issues for a year or more, which led me to think that our sessions were not being as successful as the Ministry wished. It was dealt with at the time by his immediate supervisor, but appeared to set the progress of mentoring back by several months.

Freddie also, at one point, began making sexual advances to me. Initially, I chose to ignore them, but they persisted over two or three sessions, in which case I decided it was important to challenge this and remind him that this behaviour was not necessary. He stopped, in the short term, but the issue reappeared a few weeks later, at which time I approached his supervisor in the Ministry. A meeting was held, and Freddie was warned of the consequences of continuing. The behaviour ceased.

A number of positive outcomes developed from my work with Freddie. One of the clearest is the advantage of off-line mentoring<sup>4</sup>. Fresh insights are brought into the organisation and the relationship, resulting in broader organisational perspectives. It is possible to see the protégé's career in broader terms (Klasen and Clutterbuck, 2002) and to access a wider skill base than may be available within the employing organisation. An external mentor is also less likely to be directly influenced by management.

Clearly there were benefits to the Ministry, and for Freddie himself, of having increased job performance from Freddie. He became more *able* to articulate his own personal and professional needs, even though he often chose not to. The development of a training course for Freddie to move to after our work finished, resulted from both the Ministry's training needs analysis, and the links I had with the local community, and this had longer-term benefits for Freddie's work

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<sup>4</sup> Occurs where a mentor comes from outside the protégé's direct line management, or from totally outside the organization.

performance. One outcome of this – unforeseen by the Ministry – was that Freddie’s learning became much more self-directed, as he became more able to articulate his needs and make some choices.

Working with Freddie identified some professional development issues for me acting as his mentor. In addition to the need for increased knowledge of learning factors affecting people with intellectual impairments, I became aware of the importance of personal leadership style. Freddie’s learning needs and style were identified largely through trial and error – by both myself and Ministry staff – and would have been easier to identify with prior knowledge.

Feedback at the end of our relationship from both Freddie and his supervisor suggested that, in spite of Freddie’s subversive activity, the goals of the Ministry had been largely achieved. He was referred on to a private training establishment to further develop work, leisure and communication skills – a move he later appeared to be enjoying and benefiting from.

What *did* work well, however, were the regular meetings held with line management and human resource personnel. These occurred at 3-4 monthly intervals, or more often if required, to address progress and iron out any urgent workplace issues that may have occurred due to Freddie’s efforts at non-compliance. The learning and problem-solving that occurred for the group were able to, in some measure, deal with issues that arose. Also of value to Freddie was the fact that I came from outside, from one of his own communities. It gave him something to identify with on a personal level, and provided connections with organisations such as Workbridge when he felt overwhelmed by pressures placed on him within the Ministry. The role conflict I felt, however, was not completely dealt with during my time with the Ministry. While I was committed to working with Freddie to achieve some developmental goals, I was very much aware of my responsibility to his employer.

Lastly, I am aware of the need to manage carefully the end of mentoring relationships. When our working relationship ended, it did so because Freddie was leaving the Ministry to pursue full-time training options. This was not entirely to his liking, as he had wanted to continue working, and left him feeling even more frustrated than he had previously. There was little time for Freddie to adjust to the impending loss of his mentor, once he was informed that the relationship was to end. He was left feeling somewhat lost, until a substitute was found for him in the form of a new training course to attend weekly, though I am aware that there was no debriefing process in place for him. With hindsight, it is easy to say that he could have benefited from the opportunity to state, on record, how useful the work had been, though I am aware that this would have been difficult, given the power structures in place within the Ministry.

### **Terry**

Terry was enrolled in a four-year university course, and felt that dyslexia and a relatively low level of literacy were having an adverse effect on his learning. He approached me, asking that I provide him with private tutoring assistance to enable him to succeed in his study. We had previously worked together in a tutor/student relationship, and he felt that I had demonstrated the quality and quantity of skill he required in order to achieve his learning goals. We worked together up to three times per week for a period of two years. Learning goals and outcomes were decided by Terry in advance – typically the development of learning skills and subject knowledge that would enable him to pass his course with better results than he had achieved previously, and with less effort and stress.

Terry had difficulty with the teaching styles used in the university, feeling that he was not being as successful as he could. He said that I was, unlike many of the staff in the university, a competent and ethical practitioner who was committed to meeting the needs and goals of the students. When we started working, his confidence was at a low point. He suffered from stress, needed special assistance to

sit his exams, and felt powerless and unable to challenge the system in which he was studying. This impacted negatively on his academic performance.

Our work together was driven by Terry – his course requirements and learning style – and the time we both had available. He asked for tutoring on subject material, and study and exam skills. Because he felt largely disenfranchised by the mainstream education system, but was still required to function within it, I allowed him as much choice as possible in the times we met and the subject matter we dealt with each time. This resulted in huge growth in personal self-management and educational skills – the outcome being that his self-determination increased markedly. Much of this results from the style of work I used with Terry, and the fact that he felt I was more trustworthy than other staff he had had contact with.

Terry and I drew up a learning contract based on what his expressed needs were, meaning that there were no assumptions about what we were doing and we were both clear about goals and directions. He decided on the learning outcomes to be pursued, and the timing of the ending of the relationship. This decision worked well, as our relationship had been initiated by him and his specific learning needs.

What were the outcomes of this relationship? Working with Terry was hard work. His lack of self- and stress-management, plus his lack of study skills, proved a real challenge in the beginning. I was aware that he was prone to pushing the boundaries in his personal and professional relationships, and to bouts of difficult behaviour. As I came to know Terry, I understood more that what he needed was firm boundaries. He needed to be pushed to perform to the best of his ability – and he *did* have the ability, once challenged.

Terry also – eventually – felt strong enough within himself to be able to challenge things I said, and to admit when he felt uncomfortable. He became a lot more critical of what he was learning, and of his course lecturers. At the end of our work, he said I had bullied him, and that at times he had hated me. He acknowledged that

this was because I required him to take responsibility for his own learning – something that had not happened before – and refused to spoon-feed him because I knew he was more than capable of doing it for himself. As a libertarian practitioner, I believe it is vital for learners to take control of their own learning. He said that this was of huge value, because no one had pushed him before and it had given him the results he wanted.

He felt enormous pressure to reproduce the underlying philosophy of course lecturers in his academic work, in order to succeed. He made some compromises over this, and constantly argued with me about the ethics of this situation. My expressed concern was acknowledged and largely ignored by Terry in an attempt to satisfy the needs of academia – though in hindsight I can see that he had grown hugely to the point where he was finally able to make decisions for himself in relation to his own needs. Even though they were not what I would have chosen for him, and he knew it. What is significant is that he learned to make real choices from a position of choice.

The result of this is that his essay and exam results increased dramatically in a short space of time, as did his self-confidence. He began to achieve A passes, as opposed to Cs and the occasional B. He stopped applying for aegrotat passes, finding he was able to sit his finals and perform well enough on the day to pass his papers on the basis of his examination performance. He completed his degree with honours, on schedule, and was the first in his class to obtain work in his chosen area.

Terry's personal relationships developed consistently, and he was more clearly able to define how he worked within the system to get his professional and educational needs met. Conflict and stress were easier for him to deal with, though he still felt uneasy about what he saw as the mismatch between my practice and that of the lecturers at university. He was also able to improve his professional practice, and identify areas (professional and geographical) in which he wished to practice after

graduation. In addition, he learned to develop strategies for dealing with stress, and to self-manage in relation to his own learning.

### **David**

I first met David when he operated a Private Training Establishment in the 1990s. He worked as a Training Consultant and Property Developer, and was passionately interested in assisting other people to achieve the goals they set for themselves. Groups of unemployed people came to David for several months at a time, in order to gain skills and motivation needed to be successful in business and employment.

David's work was based on a philosophy of self-determination. He saw the value of each individual person, and the potential each one has to make a success of their life based on the goals they set for themselves. He focussed on marketable skills that would be required in business of the future, including entrepreneurship, and was not afraid to admonish people when he felt it was necessary.

As a trainer, much of his practice was based on building self-direction in his learners. Individuals needed to be motivated to succeed and to achieve their goals, and David possessed a strong ability to motivate people. He possessed a vision of a world in which people were able to articulate their goals, and to take responsibility for achieving those goals. Used group mentoring to promote and share that vision.

This was no soft option, however. David possessed a strong ethical position, which he communicated to his followers. While he expected us to participate in that ethic while we were working with him, he would never act unethically himself. He always lived what he asked, but managed to retain a sense of humour and compassionate interest in the well-being of all who followed him. This strong ethical stance led him, at times, to criticise behaviour on site that he saw as being undesirable or unprofessional, but elicited respect from those on the receiving end. However, he never bullied or coerced people into obedience or into doing what he

wanted, considering it an unnecessary intrusion that worked counter to the self-direction he promoted.

David has been called a mentor by many people over the course of his training work. The work is an example of group mentoring, due to the way in which he worked solely with groups of people rather than with individuals. The outcomes were still the same, as he led people to make real changes.

David's work had successful outcomes for many people. His training courses were in high demand, and participants generally achieved what they set for themselves. There were, however, some who lacked motivation, or were there simply to meet the requirements for retaining a benefit. These people were typically younger, and more interested in short-term benefits. Those of David's followers who were the most successful were generally older and had specific goals they wanted to achieve in their lives. Goals such as careers, assets, and personal relationships – which were more long-term and more likely to be achieved because the owners of the goals were more motivated.

David's work, where his protégés were highly motivated, was comparatively successful. The few who were unsuccessful in achieving goals, reflect instances when a mentor may be unproductive in their work (Johnson and Ridley, 2004). Personal power is also important in achieving one's goals, and his work enabled people to achieve this.

## ISSUES

This thesis, as stated above, is about leadership, power and ethics, and the way in which they contribute to self-directed learning in mentoring relationships. The data from Chapters Three and Four will now be analysed.

## **Leadership**

In my work with Terry, I actively valued the choices he made, treating them as the authentic choices they were. They were driven by his own perceived need for educational and professional development. This is in direct opposition to a generally accepted practice of not treating the learner's input as authentic. 'One explanation is that 'society' (often spoken of as some detached entity) distorts people's thinking so that the preferences underlying their behaviour are not 'authentic', no matter how deeply held. Instead those preferences spring from acculturation and upbringing, which themselves operate improperly' (Epstein, 2002: 33-34). This viewpoint cannot enable a practitioner to act ethically in valuing the input of the learner, and may lead them to function in authoritarian ways – which may, in turn, result in decreased learning outputs.

Shirley, David and Terry show that creating independents is better than creating dependents (Smart, 2003). David, through his vision, created motivated people who were empowered to move on to bigger things. The risk is, of course, that individuals will become so empowered that they are enabled to disagree with you. This is unavoidable, but not necessarily undesirable. What is less desirable is a protégé who is dependent and unable to make decisions for himself or herself, because no real change is able to be effected.

A formal mentoring programme needs certain processes in place – processes that need to be managed well in order for the mentoring to be successful. Firstly, there is a need to identify clearly the boundaries of the relationship, including its goals and objectives, the timeframes,<sup>5</sup> defined and measured outcomes of the mentoring process, and ground rules for behaviour. These were fuzzy, at best, in my work with Freddie. Goals were identified by the Ministry in terms of assisting Freddie with his personal and professional development, though not stated clearly or in writing, and the only agreed-upon timeframe was some future date up to two years in the future when the Ministry would be moving into its new offices. Because

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<sup>5</sup> Including time and frequency of meetings, and the expected end of the relationship.

there were no written goals, it was not possible, either, to achieve defined and measured outcomes that could be objectively ticked off. This led further, to Freddie attempting to subvert the process on a number of occasions, and attempting to develop an inappropriately friendly role.

Secondly, there are a number of disadvantages in mentoring outside the employing organisation that could have better been addressed. Coming into the Ministry from outside, I was not so closely involved in organisational culture and politics, and had less knowledge of day-to-day issues for protégé. This meant I was largely dependent on my relationships with Freddie and his line manager for information on what was happening on the job and on any issues that may have arisen since my last visit. This was offset by the difficulty experienced in making appointments with the supervisor, and by Freddie's efforts to play me off against management. It does raise the issue of how involved line management needs to be in this sort of relationship – an issue that needs to be continuously addressed.

In contemporary education and business settings, organisational strategy depends to a large degree on the value and skill of the organisation's members. Training and development is seen as a means to achieving development of skills and adding value, but requires effective management to be successful (Ellsworth, 2002). Mentors have an important role to play in this development, but themselves require a number of skills in order to perform effectively. Freddie's training needs were the reason why the Ministry sought help. This was balanced against the desire to work within the limits of his disability and is the reason why the Ministry looked to Workbridge to find support for Freddie.

Mentoring is not about telling a protégé how to live their life. It is about sharing knowledge and experience, and allowing individuals to make their own decisions in the light of their own experience and needs. Defining his own goals was a central requirement for Terry, and we worked towards these. The outcomes have already been shown. Shirley also operated along these lines. She never told me how to

work, or set herself up as an authority on any issue of mine. What she did do was make suggestions, based on her wide experience and knowledge, and allowed me to make my own choices based on what I felt my needs were.

What this means is that education ‘is a key element in allowing human beings to realise the potentialities they all possess. The content of educational programmes is geared to promoting and encouraging the development of the extraordinarily diverse range of talents and skills and accomplishments of which humans are capable’ (Gregory, 2003: 17). David’s work enabled a large number of his clients to develop their potential and to move on to greater things, because he created an environment in which that learning and development could occur, and because he was an extremely good motivator of people. ‘Coaching unlocks people’s potential to improve their performance’ (Smart, 2003). Equality of opportunity rather than equality of results (Epstein, 2002). Each of these stories shows how the protégé was given the opportunity to achieve greater things. The outcomes were not equal in all cases, but the chances were there. David’s successful protégés achieved much, because they were motivated. He was in part responsible for achieving this, but the motivation was theirs in the end, as were the goals and the responsibility for the outcomes.

Mentoring shows a number of leadership elements. Its primary role is the development of people – helping them learn, acknowledging individuality. It is a facilitative role, assisting the individual to take charge while using a non-directive, non-judgmental process (Yudelowitz, Koch and Field, 2002). While not necessarily perfect individuals, leaders must be honest and willing to learn and acknowledge their own limitations. Able to get out from behind the desk when appropriate, they are able to create a learning environment and are not afraid of conflict (Robbins and Finley, 2004). Credibility of mentors as leaders is gained through their age and experience, knowledge, prior success and expertise. Street-wisdom is often necessary, as is a personal presence and charisma that attracts followers (Pegg,

1999). David focussed on the individual developmental goal-setting needs of his protégés, and these were more effectively able to be achieved.

Two main leadership models are significant in analysis of mentoring. These are Transformational and Servant leadership. Traditionally, I have worked from a servant leadership model (Iwata, 1995; Lee and Zemke, 1995), seeking to enable marginalised voices to be heard, identified, and given top priority. Transformation is a model of leadership that may be more appropriate in some work situations, as it focuses on transforming the individual's situation within hierarchical organisational structures.

The leadership model that may be most appropriate in describing what happens in the Ministry is Transformation. In this model, leaders work within the status quo, to transform individuals and structures, in order to achieve organisational goals and mission. While the aim is to empower the individual organisational member to perform to their maximum potential, leadership practice must be grounded in an ethical or moral framework (Bass and Steidlmeier). The Ministry is typical of a traditional organisation, as defined by Anderson (1998), in that it has expectations in dealing with employment-related issues. It is a bureaucracy with multiple levels in organisational structure. Conformity to organisational culture, and accountability to senior management, are the norm. Transformational leadership works within existing power structures such as these, to develop the individual, and is entirely appropriate in describing the way we worked with Freddie. The Ministry's organisational goals require training and development of individual staff members, and this is the point at which I was contracted.

Facilitated mentoring programmes, such as we used in the Ministry, have considerable value in the workplace. They provide feedback to employing organisations, identifying workplace issues such as stress, training needs, and career goals. The aim is to seek solutions to issues, and establish professional support

networks, while focussing on the individual protégé's situation, personality and skills.

The Ministry sought to foster good leadership, in managing a mentoring programme for Freddie – an active persistence that saw things through to the end (Egan, 1988). Freddie's outcomes were largely positive, in terms of achieving what the Ministry wished for him. The main issue for Transformational leaders is that they need to foster follower buy-in. Transformational leadership tends to be authoritarian in its approach, which is apparent in the story of Freddie. Followers are more passive than in other leadership models, and there is a risk that they will not be entirely satisfied with the actions of leaders or the reasons for those actions. A dictatorial approach will be far less successful in fostering positive learning outcomes (Bass and Steidlmeier, no date).

My work with Terry and David reflects that mentors are not always passive reflectors. 'There are times when they take action to help a student resolve critical issues by pulling in resources from many areas' (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003). The process with Terry was an active one, locating significant resources and making choices as to which was appropriate. Terry was also active in this process, as I allowed him to make decisions based on the information he was given. Likewise, David was an active leader, not passive. He led by motivating people, by encouraging their own motivation and goals.

Pegg (1999) identifies structural differences between mentoring and transformational leaders, suggesting that mentors operate on an individual level, whereas transformational leaders function at the level of the group or organisation. Pegg does, however, suggest similarity of outcomes for both processes, where change is fostered as a goal. He sees mentoring as one possible means of fostering the transformational change required within organisations. Development of the individual is necessary for, and leads to, developments in the organisation.

There is a real concern, however, that transformational leadership, in its focus on equality and consensus decision-making ‘encourages followers to go beyond their own self-interests for the good of the organisation and even emotionally engages followers irrationally in pursuit of evil ends contrary to the followers’ best interests’ (Bass and Steidlmeier). This approach contradicts the libertarian model of education, which fosters individual freedom. While it can be argued that Freddie may have been manipulated to give up his own choices in this way, I would argue, that he was not required to be an independent thinker, or to learn freedom from our sessions. The goal was transformation of his behaviour, and, as such, transformational leadership ‘can only be viewed with suspicion as a covert exercise at control and domination’ (ibid). David, however, fostered freedom for individuals through his vision – a vision which led people to make changes in their thinking.

The concept of servant leadership is becoming more common as a tool of leadership analysis. ‘Robert Greenleaf’s writing on Servant Leadership offers an insight into the qualities that can bridge the gap between leadership and mentoring’ (Pegg, 1999). Shirley’s story is an example of servant leadership, where a leader works in an enabling manner to foster the development and empowerment of co-workers. A servant leader takes people and their work seriously, seeing himself or herself as a steward and builder of communities. Power is used ethically in a commitment to the growth of followers. Communication is essential, as are liberating vision and persuasive power. An ethical sense is vital, as well as a sense of strategy and purpose (Kiechel, 1995; Lopez, 1995; Spears, 1995; Tarr, 1995).

Shirley’s integrity, sense of humour and courage enabled her to lead as a servant (Lee and Zemke, 1995), reflecting the importance of this type of leadership for the mentoring process. Servant leaders are not messianic managers out to save corporate souls. Her strong emphasis on philosophy and values was based on her commitment to promoting growth in those she worked with (Iwata, 1995) and fostered, at the same time, participative and joint leadership. Participative leadership – typically difficult for those who have worked in autocratic systems

such as the Ministry – requires the leader to let go of a degree of personal power in favour of followers. This type of leadership needs to trust people who work with them to make wise decisions – and to be insightful enough to correct mistakes on their own (Schaeffer, 2002). Joint leadership fosters individual learning contracts – such as that formally agreed with between myself and Terry – with clear definition of goals and measures of success (Handy, 1995).

The primary difficulty inherent in servant leadership is its focus on empathy and the sharing of self. It is seen as a collaborative process, useful in enabling personal transformation (Tarr, 1995), and offers individuals a means to personal growth – intellectually, spiritually, professionally, and emotionally (Spears, 1995). My chief concern is that time spent on group processes, team building and sharing may limit the amount of time available to actually work on organisational work goals. Servant leadership is not ‘soft’ leadership, however. The servant leader’s job is to work with followers to create a vision, set and maintain goals in partnership with employees – goals that are often difficult to achieve – and to assist people become winners (Lee and Zemke, 1995). It is a holistic model of management, enabling harmony in workforce relations, and fostering strong corporate ethics and interpersonal trust (Iwata, 1995).

Servant leadership is not about creating dependence on the leader – this does people a disservice and may lead to autocratic behaviour or decision-making (Lee and Zemke, 1995). Educational leaders *are* change facilitators, providing the conditions for change to happen. The rest is up to the learner to do it for himself, and no other change is successful or long-lasting. This is the essence of servant leadership, and is illustrated by Shirley’s work.

While most discussion of leadership centres around the benefits good leaders bring to an organisation or relationship, it is also possible for leadership to go wrong. Bad leadership is defined in terms of the actions taken by bad leaders. Coercion and force are used to hold on to personal power, or a ‘leader’ may be guilty of weakness

and timidity (Kellerman, 2004). Freddie constantly sought to undermine our work and the requirements placed on him by the Ministry, because he felt coerced into obedience. This meant that our work was more difficult than it would have been, as raises ethical concerns about the work we were there to do.

Leadership can be undermined in a number of ways. On a personal level, unresolved personal issues and fear of greatness are important influences. Shirley was able to address these in the work we did together, though this did not always occur overtly. David, however, always challenged us to move beyond our fear of greatness, to set goals for ourselves and move towards these.

At the level of the organisation, political positioning is significant. Micro-management by those in senior positions can have a negative impact on personal performance and job satisfaction, as it is often seen to foster an increased suspicion of management, decreased commitment of staff, and a feeling that there is increased surveillance of a negative kind (Hornstein, 2003). Freddie often felt he was being monitored, and tended to rebel against this, by indulging in negative behaviours and by seeking to play management off against me. This had an impact on his learning outcomes and placed considerable delays on the learning process.

Conflict needs to be dealt with appropriately (Hagenow, 2001). This requires sensitive leadership. The Ministry didn't deal with conflict effectively. Solutions were imposed top-down, requiring the support of workers such as Freddie. Solutions were offered that were not completely appreciated by Freddie, and had some negative outcomes. Terry, in contrast, learned to deal with conflict as it appeared in his life and in his relationships with me and with his course lecturers. We specifically dealt with conflict issues as they arose, and sought win-win solutions. Mentoring relationships in general need to be carefully managed in order for relationship issues and conflicts to be dealt with successfully (Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995; Zachary, 2000).

What does this mean for our four stories? The Ministry failed to deal adequately with conflict within the organisation, leaving Freddie feeling disillusioned and me to rectify any issues that arose during the course of his work. This is an example of an 'argument culture', in which individuals desire to win arguments, and lose the willingness to collaborate on issues of significance as an adversarial culture develops (Mezirow, 2000). Terry, too, was aware of the adversarial element, as he worked to complete a degree in an environment that was at odds with his – and my – philosophical stance.

As Foucault (Lyon, 2001) states, authoritarian behaviour in leaders leads to resistance, as is shown by Freddie. This resistance is a response to the growth of surveillance and the fact that it may often be spontaneous and ad hoc does little to undermine its significance as an effort to regain control of a situation seen as undesirable. There are risks that people will slip back into previous behaviour modes (Smart, 2003), as Freddie did. David, however, while he had a degree of knowledge and authority arising from his position, did not abuse this. He acted more in the role of a big brother, sharing of information and creating opportunities for us to develop.

The Ministry is an example of how leader autonomy can be compromised. Educator leadership requires a degree of autonomy in order to be able to function and achieve learning outcomes. The choices I needed to make while trying to be accountable to both the employer and Freddie were difficult ones. Freddie recognised this, and sought to play us off against each other.

Shirley and David are examples of mentors whose leadership was immensely productive, particularly in terms of the outcomes achieved. Shirley succeeded in maintaining her professional energy and enthusiasm through difficult circumstances. David's work, where his protégés were highly motivated, was comparatively successful. The few who were unsuccessful in achieving goals, reflect instances when a mentor may be unproductive in their work (Johnson and

Ridley, 2004). This lack of success may, in many cases, be due to professional disengagement, where a mentor becomes bitter or disenchanted with their profession, or a lack of motivation, resulting from a situation where the mentor sees little value in continuing to contribute to the workplace. Poor professional self-esteem may lead them to feel insecure, untrustworthy, or incompetent. In the case of David, however, resistance from younger followers was the cause of failure.

Competence in mentoring relationships requires mentors to develop an approachable yet competent personality, showing a 'good measure of interpersonal savvy' (Johnson and Ridley, 2004: 95). Technically competent mentors, otherwise skilled in business, may be inept at managing interpersonal relationships. The outcome of this is that the mentoring relationship will be sabotaged from the beginning.

There are a number of ways in which good leadership may be facilitated. For example, everything successful mentors do stems from the basic assumption that learning is focussed on the learner's needs. Successful learning is driven primarily by the learner (Fuller et al, 2004). Freddie would have achieved the goals set for him if this had been achieved.

Research by Allen and Poteet (1999) shows a number of leadership qualities identified by protégés. These are qualities that foster self-determination – communication skills, people-orientation, knowledge sharing – but are not necessarily identified as 'leadership'. In fact, 'leadership' itself is low on the list of factors identified. This will focus on the needs of the learner. To assume that learning is merely for the public good, rather than something that solely benefits the individual, is to downplay the quality of outcomes while seeking the most outcomes for the most people.

Freedom of choice will facilitate learning, as students are more likely to act in their own best interests in a system that is free from regulation. This was the key to

Freddie's lack of real success in our mentoring work. He lacked real choice in participation – in spite of rhetoric to the contrary – and the outcomes were flawed.

The outcome of transformational learning is that it sees 'students as involved, enthusiastic and keen on participating in learning. They were described as 'much more engaged...and much less compliant – they're much less prepared to accept stuff because it's being said by a prof'' (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002). Freddie's motivation was low, and the result was that he achieved little. The learning outcomes were diminished.

There is a requirement to understand the individual's need to make sense of their situation when undergoing job change or other change within an organisation (Hallier and James, 1999). As part of this adjustment process, expectations and behaviour are affected by the person's motivational state and features of the new role and setting. Freddie's behaviour reflects this.

The best mentoring programmes are well-managed with the needs of the learner in mind. A formal training needs analysis would have been useful for Freddie, identifying specific tasks and behaviours needed to perform his job, and the current level of performance in relation to these. The outcome would be that training objectives proposed that will meet the identified needs (Nowack, 1991)

Good management requires a number of factors. The literature addresses the need for adequate institutional support, resources and planning, to ensure success. Leadership from the organisation is vital, meeting the needs of the participants and addressing accountability issues. Mentor training is also part of this management. Training for mentors is particularly useful in helping to develop the skills and knowledge base required for effective practice. The aim is for acquisition/improvement of performance-related working knowledge and skills. Seeking out help from Workbridge was valuable from the Ministry's point of view, as Workbridge are an acknowledged leader in training and development of people

with disabilities. They have specific skills and knowledge, and community links that are able to be accessed as appropriate – unlike other, more general agencies.

However, training is of little value unless training needs/goals have been assessed and specified in advance (Egan, 1988). Critical reflection on one's experience is important for the mentor. This places personal experience in wider context, and sees the Influence of social and political forces impacting on our sense of self. Knowledge is a product of interaction between the subject and the external, objective world – we are not the sole authors of the meaning of our experience. Critical reflection, particularly on our professional practice, can assist with our development and provision of services to the client (Tennant and Pogson, 1995).

The authority possessed by leadership comes from its quality (Yudelowitz, Koch and Field, 2002). Terry recognised this, and sought out the help he needed. According to Ayn Rand, leaders must be individuals, and should not conform to society's expectations of what leaders are and do. Stylized, homogeneous ideas of leadership provide a canned role that dominates individual identity and squashes creativity. Personal differences should be encouraged, not limited, with a focus on real world issues and a requirement for self-ownership. However, leadership is also a collective behaviour, by virtue of the fact that groups of people are involved. Good leaders encourage and multiply leadership in others (ibid). It is too easy to dismiss everything collective on the basis that collectives stifle individuality.

It is important to deal with relationship and leadership issues as they arise. Organisations need to have formalised processes in place for dealing with bad leadership, and encourage participation. An awareness of the multiple forces affecting leadership, including organisational culture, and the need to satisfy multiple stakeholders (Hennessey, Killian and Robins, 1995) will have an impact on this. In working with Freddie, the issue of cross-gender mentoring arose, and processes were put in place for dealing with the conflicts that existed.

### **Power and ethics**

Two central issues arising out of leadership are power and ethics. Leaders possess a degree of power, by virtue of their role as leaders. Power does not, however, operate in a single direction. In addition, the way power is used or misused is a question of ethics. I will now look at these issues, particularly in relation to the stories of Freddie, Terry and Shirley.

Freddie's story raises questions about the use of power. Who has the right to determine another's behaviour? Why? Learner control is a political issue. Those who control decisions concerning learning have the final say in deciding what decisions are made, and in establishing the pace and mechanisms for decision-making. They have the final say in any decisions made (Cranton, 1996). While it may have been necessary for the Ministry to exercise some authority, the potentially negative effects were enormous. Power involves not only the capacity but the right to act. Its presence is often more implicit than explicit. Hindess (1996) further argues the necessity of consent for power to occur. The Ministry's power was explicit, and did not require consent from Freddie. Shirley and Terry did give consent.

To maintain ethical standards in mentoring programmes, a degree of monitoring is required. Monitoring ensures that concerns, issues and problems are dealt with as they arise. This can happen formally or informally, but requires the involvement of a neutral person outside the mentoring dyad. In informal cases like Shirley's, monitoring would ensure the opportunity to have issues dealt with as they arose and conflicts resolved. For Freddie, we had regular reporting to Freddie's supervisor, and meetings with the Human Resources team to check on progress and air any issues. Freddie was encouraged to be part of these sessions, and to talk to his supervisor directly whenever he felt he needed to. My primary concern with this situation is that monitoring was not performed by a neutral party. This would have enabled more satisfactory resolution of issues, with Freddie feeling he was more likely to be listened to. When monitoring programmes, it is necessary to ask:

‘Whose goals? How successful is it likely to be, and for whom? Is there a choice of whether or not to participate?’ Placing the power back into the hands of the learner, wherever possible, will enable them to see the value of the learning taking place, and to move towards self-empowerment. It is also important to build reflection time into regular mentoring sessions, to enable partners to talk about relationship issues (Zachary, 2000). Freddie’s learning would, in all likelihood, have been enhanced by this approach – though he may also have decided not to participate at all.

Personal power is important in achieving one’s goals – particularly the goals identified in mentoring relationships – fostered by critical life events. David’s experience shows that mentoring is significant in enabling change. One-to-one relationships between individuals provide fertile ground for meeting learning outcomes – results that are potentially enormous. Critical life events experienced by many of his protégés were important catalysts for facilitating personal change, and having a mentor can assist in identifying strategies for achieving this. Those few who were unsuccessful used their own personal power in negative ways, to subvert the work David was doing.

The necessary requirement in this process is the desire and willingness of the individual learner to achieve their goals. Moving in a new career path, and subsequently having a diagnosis of major disability, were significant events for me. Shirley was able to assist with the transition in both events, providing the conditions in which I was able to reintegrate my conception of self and my position in the world. I doubt whether the process of integrating these two critical events would have been as successful without Shirley’s sensitive leadership and use of power, but what was most important was attitude. Reassessment of oneself in the light of new physical challenges is difficult at best, but was made easier by a personal determination to not be totally overcome by it. She acted ethically in achieving her goals. Terry achieved his goals, mainly because he was motivated to do so. This motivation led him to seek out help, and to identify his learning goals and the steps

necessary to achieve them. He possessed a great deal of personal power, which he used ethically in the pursuit of his goals.

Successful mentoring programmes place a large amount of power in the hands of the learner. Without a degree of self-direction, learners such as Terry would not achieve as much as they do. Freddie, in contrast, had little opportunity for self-direction, and his subsequent behaviour reflected this. The situation with the Ministry reflects the importance of power sharing in successful adult learning. Shirley and I, as mentors, both work to create conditions, wherever possible, to enable the learner to be self-directing. Terry's choice to seek out help was an assertion of his own power and self-direction, which developed further as we worked. He shows that education without state intervention is more likely to succeed, particularly when the individual learner is placed at the centre of the process and their expressed needs met.

Mentors are the leaders that created the conditions for achieving these outcomes. Successful leaders, conversely, are not those who actively wield their power. They see people as human beings with their own motives, interests and goals (Kellerman, 2004). Terry's work was more successful when I worked in this way. This is a reflection of the importance of position power. While it is true that few sources of power 'are universally valid over all constituencies' (Handy, 1993: 126), position power is a legitimate form of power when used appropriately. It results from a role or position, and allows a leader or manager to order people to do things. To be successful, it needs to be underwritten by either physical or resource power, and works through personality and persuasion of individuals (Handy, 1993). Positions may be used by individuals to gain unwilling obedience – as happened to Freddie – and this is unethical.

Power may be misused. Freddie's story shows how important it is to address power relations. Power was largely held in the hands of the Ministry. This was not openly described as 'power', though senior staff was in a position to direct

Freddie's participation. The irony is that Freddie had a great deal of power. He was able to subvert his situation to a degree, which reflects that many influence situations 'are balanced on a power equation. Power is seldom one-sided. Even the prisoner can hit back. The power to disrupt, for instance, or "negative power" ... is always available in some form to everyone' (Handy, 1993: 125).

Foucault's Panopticon is an example of how power can be misused (Green, 1998). Apple (1982) takes this further, seeing education as the reproduction of economic and cultural inequalities. While Apple does not take into account individual factors such as self-direction, I believe he makes an important contribution to our understanding of the situation that both Freddie and Terry found themselves in.

The most important tool for maintaining any particular social form or relationship is the power to define reality (Reason, 1984). Power includes the capacity to impose definitions of reality on others, to prescribe what is and what is not, what may (or may not) be discussed, appropriate standards of behaviour (Reason, 1984). The Ministry defined reality for Freddie. Terry defined his own reality, based on his own needs, and Shirley defined what she saw.

What, then, does it mean to be ethical? In ethical practice, all associations are to be voluntary (Bastiat, 2003). Ethical practice grows out of power. The most ethical type of power is one that allows individuals to control their own life, and to make rational, informed decisions about how they spend their time, effort and resources. Consent is a basic requirement of this – free informed consent of participants. So how do power and ethics interact, and what makes ethical mentoring practice?

Arising from, and working closely with position power, is expertise – an important factor in ensuring the success of a mentoring relationship. This sees the mentor as a person with resources, rather than as an instructor with all the answers. It enhances individual learning and the shared responsibility for setting direction and methods of learning – equal with learner and teacher (Brookfield, 1986). In the case of both

Terry and Freddie, an experienced, knowledgeable practitioner was sought out – a person who would have the right combination skills and knowledge to assure success (Egan, 1988).

There are a number of ethical concerns that need to be addressed before mentoring can be successful. For example, there are assumptions that can get in the way of good practice, and need to be addressed (Crosby, 1999). Terry and I drew up a learning contract based on what his expressed needs were, meaning that there were no assumptions about what we were doing and we were both clear about goals and directions.

A second assumption is that mentoring is automatically, by nature, good practice – beneficial to all involved. Mentoring, like any relationship, needs to be worked at seriously. It requires ongoing commitment from all parties, a commitment to seek out best practice, and to resolve issues that will arise. Terry succeeded because we continued to work through issues as they arose. Thirdly, there is the assumption that the ideal mentoring relationship goes through a predictable series of stages from beginning to end. However, given the unpredictability of human nature, this assumption has little foundation, as I saw when working with Shirley. We did not have any defined plan, but outcomes were achieved anyway. The last assumption identified by Crosby is that ‘everyone knows what mentoring is’. This clearly is not true, particularly with the wide variety of mentoring relationships that currently occur. The result may be confusion over respective roles, misgivings of line managers, roles of mentors that interfere manager roles, matching (e.g. gender, ethnicity), lack of assertiveness, and mentors who require dependence from the learner while not encouraging participants to find own solutions (Holbeche, 1995), again, what is needed is communication and resolution of goals and interests, particularly when clear outcomes are required. As in Freddie’s case.

Freddie’s story raises issues relating to self-directed learning. An important element of self-direction is autonomy, where the learner has a degree of freedom to choose

and direct his or her own learning path. Freddie lacked this autonomy – the stated goal of his learning being the attainment of certain skills and behaviours outlined in his training needs analysis – and acted the only way he knows how. There is irony ‘in providing participants with mentors, almost whether they wanted one or not, as part of a move towards helping them become self-sufficient in development terms’ (Holbeche, 1995: 87)

Discipline and the Panopticon have ethical implications for mentoring programmes. Mentors need to ask about the motivation for programmes and practices. While it may be perceived by some as paranoia, there is a concern that organisations are using mentoring to control the outcomes of their staff in formalised mentoring agreements. This compares, sometimes unfavourably, with informal mentoring relationships (such as those involving Terry and Shirley), which are designed to meet real needs and are mutually agreed-on. There was no need for surveillance for either Terry or Shirley. Mentors, as do other educators, need to be aware that punishment does not motivate learning (Taylor, 2003). Freddie felt he was being punished. Punishment encourages learners to behave in ways to avoid that punishment.

Participation by all stakeholders (Taylor, 2003) is an ethical imperative in mentoring relationships. It creates working partnerships between trainers and stakeholders, and increases ownership of the complete training process. The result is improved potential for successful learning outcomes. Participation involves some degree of joint leadership, but with someone making the final decisions while respecting differences in world views and beliefs. All stakeholders are acknowledged as having something to contribute. Each of our case studies has benefited from participation. Shirley, and I in my work with Terry, worked in a way that enabled full participation of the learner in the decision-making process. Freddie was much less involved in making decisions, due to his position. There were efforts made to involve him in decisions, though final choices were ultimately made by the Ministry.

Freedom of agency is important in mentoring relationships. To be successful, it requires acknowledgement of the capacities, competencies and intentions that lie within the individual, and a recognition by others of who one is, morally speaking (Nelson, 2001). It allows individuals to make their own informed choices as to what our direction will be, and has a central role to play in student-centred learning. The degree to which our agency is actually free, however, depends on how well two conditions are met. Firstly, the Control Condition, which is the ability to act wilfully and to regulate one's will reflectively. Secondly, Normative Competence – the ability of the individual to understand and act on moral norms, and the ability of others to recognise you as a morally responsible person from your actions (ibid).

How free was Freddie to determine his own path? Tennant and Pogson identify the aim of a focus on the experience of learners, within adult learning, is 'to develop active, self-aware learners who have the capacity and freedom to frame their own purposes' (Tennant and Pogson, 1995: 150). This approach is not appropriate in Freddie's case. What Freddie's story tells us is that the way in which others identify us has a direct bearing on the amount of freedom we have to exercise our own agency (Nelson, 2001). Further constrictions on agency may occur through deception and manipulation (ibid). Certainly Freddie felt manipulated. This may be an important reason why he chose to not participate fully in the programme, and shows how important it is to encourage buy-in when looking to foster organisational and individual change. Even more important, it is necessary to take account of individuals who choose to change their own situation (and succeed where there is energy, drive and desire).

Another ethical concern is the issue of professional autonomy, and how far this is affected by being on the payroll. Looking back, I wonder whether, In working for the Ministry, I could have been objectively on Freddie's side. The tension between my professional autonomy and the need to be accountable to both Freddie and the

Ministry made for a degree of personal conflict. The issue was not successfully dealt with, at the time, and I am still not sure whether it could have been.

David never bullied anyone. He merely presented his case, and showed what might be achieved by his protégés if they were to work hard. Freddie, by contrast, felt bullied into participation. Terry felt coerced into merely repeating what he had been taught in class, with little opportunity to be critical or to think for himself. He often expressed how much he appreciated our sessions, where he was at least able to say what he thought – even if I disagreed passionately. This reflects Bandow's comment that making governments, managers or leaders into moral enforcers encourages abuse (Bandow, 2003). Few organisations have the right to detain an individual by force, so they operate through what is seen as bullying – a manifestation of the power of superior source. The 'physical presence of a dictatorial boss can often seem like coercion' to subordinates (Handy, 1993: 126).

Cross-gender mentoring has potential hazards, as there is the potential for sexual involvement that may develop between mentor and protégé (Blake, 1998). This, as in the case of Freddie, may make successful mentoring outcomes difficult and lead to interpersonal conflict. It needs to be handled carefully, and may mean that protégés will be reassigned to another mentor.

As previously stated, mentoring 'informs best practice when it provides opportunities to assist the novice to grow and change. Change is risk. Taking risks empowers one to see in new ways, to try new ideas, and to change one's vision. Vision change transforms, and the transformative process achieved through mentoring is defined as transformational learning' (Martin, 2002: 123).

### WHAT CAN WE TAKE FROM THIS ANALYSIS?

What is the role of mentoring? If it is socialisation into the status quo, we need to ask why. It may be appropriate in the case of an organisation like the Ministry,

where the needs of the organisation come first. Where the primary focus is on the needs of the learner, however, it may be inappropriate.

Differences exist between formal and informal programmes (Allen and Poteet, 1999). This may have some link to leadership styles.

Ethics and power are closely interlinked with leadership roles in mentoring. Good leadership must take ethics into account, and constantly revisit the way it addresses its power base. Only then can real change and growth occur. Bullying and coercion do little or nothing to achieve the desired goals.

Issues for mentors and mentoring programmes include the lack of trained, experienced mentors available, a need for process- *and* academic skills, good matching, commitment of time and effort, and good supervision, monitoring, and evaluation (Read, 2002: 154). This will enable the best possible outcomes for all concerned.

Freddie and the Ministry are not, however, necessarily typical of mentoring stories. Terry experienced success. Shirley continues to work in an empowering manner, reflecting the reality that many mentoring relationships are based on an ethical commitment to self-determination. Whatever the goal of mentoring programmes, however, it is important to have ethical procedures in place, including a process for setting disputes.

There are big differences in the four stories here – differences in goals, working style, and outcomes. There are also similarities, in terms of leadership styles, focus on the needs of the learner, and concerns over ethical practice. And ultimately, an awareness that mentoring provides an excellent opportunity to develop personal and professional change. For this to happen, it requires an active commitment to personal and professional development – a willingness to make it happen and to take responsibility for the results – but also a commitment to ethical practice.

The best results come from relationships where there is an element of choice on the part of protégés. Both relationships where participants were able to choose to participate, and to have some role in deciding and directing outcomes, achieved much more success – initially and long term.

## CHAPTER FIVE MAKING MEANINGS

At this point it is useful to restate the research questions I began with in Chapter One: What is mentoring? What constitutes a successful mentoring relationship? What role do leadership, power and ethical practice play in successful mentoring relationships? Why is self-directed learning important, and how is it influenced by leadership, power and ethics?

In this chapter, I want to address these questions, by looking at the following issues: mentors are leaders who focus on the learning needs of the protégé; self-direction and responsibility are essential for good learning outcomes; the leadership style of mentors needs to be appropriate; and successful leadership uses power in ethical ways to foster successful outcomes for mentoring.

### **Mentors are leaders who focus on the learning needs of the protégé**

Mentors lead. This is part of the role. They are recognised as a leader in their field, promoting learning and professional development in the protégé, motivating them to move in new directions. The mentor is an interpreter of events, change agent, and intervener (Saur and Rasmussen, 2003) and is actively engaged in the learning process. This includes relationship development, training skills, influence, and knowledge

One of the primary outcomes of the mentoring relationship is the learning that is achieved by the mentee. It is 'used for a variety of purposes in organisations and often where transitions are necessary' (Garvey and Alred, 2001: 321-322). This leads to further professional development, and as the 'mentee develops confidence and independence, the role of the mentor changes from one of authority to one of a guide, and eventually colleague and friend; (McLean, 2004).

Mentoring facilitates learning in the protégé. Brookfield (1986) identifies the aim of facilitation as fostering a spirit of critical reflection – an appreciation that values, beliefs and behaviours are culturally transmitted. It is a role that may be influenced by socialisation tactics employed by the organisation. The learning that occurs, therefore, must not only meet the requirements of any organisation, but focus on the expressed and implied needs of the mentee. What is needed, therefore, to make the relationship successful?

Leadership style of mentors has a significant impact on learning. It must therefore be flexible, and relevant to the situation in which the relationship is operating. We all teach in context. ‘The decisions that we make about our teaching need to be conscious and consciously related to the context within which we work’ (Cranton, 1998; quoted in Cranton and Carusetta, 2002). Leadership style will be non-authoritarian, participative and inclusive, and foster self-directed autonomous learners. Bullying and coercion work counter to the needs of learners.

Participation in any form of learning, but particularly in mentoring, needs to be active, free and voluntary. The example of Freddie shows how learning may be subverted if this voluntary aspect is not absolutely encouraged. Self-directed learning is an important driver of successful learning outcomes (Cranton, 1996), and will be discussed in more detail below. Freedom of choice in all learning endeavours leads to self-direction and more successful learning outcomes.

Issues of power and ethics will be addressed by mentors. Any professional working in an education and training role – and this includes mentors – need to be satisfied that their practices are ethical (Massey University, 1999). This will be discussed in more detail below. Within the Ministry Freddie’s relationship with his superiors was central to our professional association, and raises the question: Who *has* the right to determine another’s behaviour, and on what grounds? It is important to ask whose outcomes are being promoted. In a formal mentoring setting, it may be that the organisation can rightly expect to have its need for staff development addressed.

This must be openly and clearly acknowledged from the beginning, however, so that there is no doubt as to what is required. There is a need to address issues of power – the types of power that exist, and how they are manifested within organisational politics. Leaders must also have systems in place to deal with problems and issues as they arise.

Successful mentors place much power in the hands of the protégé – power that enables successful outcomes. Mentors will not act unethically themselves. Their leadership is based in learning needs of their protégés (as in the case of Shirley). The role is one of change facilitator.

Mentoring, when it works successfully, facilitates equality of opportunity, providing the protégé with the chance to achieve to the extent of their ability to do so. It will take account of the needs of students with disabilities (Fuller et al, 2004). Mentoring may be a useful means of working around an individual's impairment, particularly in situations where more formal training programmes may be inappropriate. Empowerment may then be a goal and an outcome of the learning process. Mentors act collaboratively in fostering learning environments, in a less authoritarian model (Smith, 1999). It is power sharing, not dependence.

A number of personal qualities of mentors will enable learning. Mentors can only lead their protégés where they have travelled themselves, recently. They must also be actively involved in the professional landscape, be leaders in the field, and productive. They are enthusiastic, committed, engaged. As such, they are more effectively able to create excitement and possibility within the mentee, and develop innovative ideas, new projects, and career opportunities (Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

A degree of self-sufficiency and personal autonomy in the mentor is required. Organisational members who lack a strong sense of self can be a detriment to morale and performance. They see themselves as a tool to be manipulated by others' (Ellsworth 2002). He or she may need to share some of the common

characteristics of alchemists – dedication, persistence, an ability to look at things from a different angle, and exposure to a wide range of experiences (Handy, 1999). An alchemist, because he or she has a role in facilitating critical events, needs to be open to criticism and to fresh ideas, to look for opportunities as they arise, and ask difficult questions (ibid).

Mentors may also need to ask some important questions about their leadership practice: How do I inspire commitment to service? How do I make employees' work meaningful? How do I build intelligence and continuous learning in to the organisation? (Macher, 1991). And how can the organisation I work for assist in this process?

Mentors work from a non-oppressive, empowering model, in which the learner is enabled to take control of their learning. Mentoring 'informs best practice when it provides opportunities to assist the novice to grow and change. The transformative process achieved through mentoring is defined as transformational learning' (Martin, 2002). He or she therefore needs to be able to create an environment for change. This necessarily means creating the conditions in which learning can occur, and requires skills in relationship-building and development.

### **Self-direction and responsibility are essential for good learning outcomes**

Choosing 'our own forms of behaviour is ... something which gives us our dignity' (Graham, 2002: 16). This is the libertarian principle of self-ownership, where each person enjoys full and exclusive rights to control their own life and learning, and owes no service to anyone, except where he or she has agreed freely and fully (Cohen, 1995: 12). Self-directed learning is essentially that which is driven by the learner. It involves self-ownership of the outcomes (Kelley, 1998), and the free use of agency and intentionality (Bastiat, 2003). Free informed consent must be obtained (Hindess, 1998).

While it is true that no learning activity is entirely self-directed, due to factors – such as institutional requirements – external to the student, successful learning outcomes require that the student is actively involved in directing as much of the learning process as is possible. Self-direction in learning requires individuals who are able to control their own learning autonomously, making conscious, informed choices of learning formats and activities. These are further assisted by knowledge and understanding of the learning process, and an ability to question the validity and worth of one's intellectual pursuit (Brookfield, 1986).

Informed consent is a vital component in the mentoring process, as is learner motivation (McElroy, 2002; McLean, 2004). Consent is considered to be *informed* if participants have been provided with a comprehensive and comprehensible explanation of: the nature, purpose and possible hazards of the activities being pursued. Participants must also be informed of their right to refuse to participate; to withdraw at any time; to have privacy and confidentiality protected; to ask questions; and to receive information about the outcome of the activities being undertaken (Massey University, 1999). The example of Freddie shows what might happen if learning is not self-driven. Voluntary participation is an important link in successful learning outcomes. Learning will only be successful if motivation is high (Brookfield, 1986). Terry achieved his goals – outcomes he had set for himself. Freddie only partially succeeded in achieving what was set for him.

Self-direction is an active process, however. The learner needs to make choices about what, when, where, how and with whom to learn. Adults will develop and learn only if they want to raise their standards – not if they are happy as they are (Smart, 2003). This therefore means they must take a degree of responsibility for the outcomes, rather than simply accepting what is given them.

What does this mean for mentors and other adult education professionals? Successful learning in students will be developed by a teacher or mentor who is committed to their own – and their learner's – development. This will be facilitated

through relationship building. Skilled mentors are able to provide valuable advice on how to work through issues, and knowledge of the resources available to achieve this (Egan, 1988; McLean, 2004).

The ability to define our own learning goals makes learning outcomes more likely to be achieved. Mentors facilitate this. They present learners with options, allowing them to make their own choices and building the relationship to a point where the protégé is able to take responsibility for the outcomes (Smart, 2003).

Mentors, as do other teachers of adults, can foster learning by creating a supportive environment and making learning more interesting and relevant to the needs of the protégé. They will model risk-taking, and foster an attitude of self-confidence and personal responsibility, assuming students are capable of achieving these goals. They will also be open to accurate, detailed and constructive feedback, from peers and students (Ridley and Walther, 1995). It is difficult, sometimes, for educators to accept that learners' choices are not always the choices we want them to make – whether in terms of subject matter, the way they learn, or any acknowledgement of their own cultural baggage. This does not always coincide with what we want or expect of them.

Practitioners need to make it easy for learners to take responsibility for their own learning, so that they may facilitate change (Smart, 2003). A self-directed learner chooses to learn, making choices as to how and what to learn. This learner is free to speak, listen, interact, and to challenge, and as a result they will consciously change behaviour, values and knowledge (Cranton, 1996).

As stated above (in Chapter One) libertarian practitioners have a fundamental respect for, and belief in, autonomy of the learner's ability to control and direct his or her own learning (Shotton, 1992). However, unbridled self-direction, at the cost of other stakeholders, is not desirable either. There are limits to freedom (Upton, 1987). An awareness of one's own rights entails a commitment to ensuring that the

rights of others are also protected. While the individual's freedom to live their life as they choose is of paramount importance, he or she must allow other individuals the opportunity to do the same, and recognise the impact of his or her actions on other people (Ashford, 1985). This is where a code of ethics begins.

### **The leadership style of mentors needs to be appropriate**

There is no one best way to lead in all situations (Bass and Steidlmeier). Choice of leadership style is situation-bound – an inappropriate choice having negative repercussions for learning and protégé development (Robbins and Finlay, 2004; Schaeffer, 2002). Leadership style needs to be appropriate and non-authoritarian to foster self-directed learning. I am focussing on two main types of leadership – transformational and servant – because I believe these are the most appropriate models for those engaged in mentoring work.

Transformational leadership fosters learning that is transformational. This type of learning is involved at all levels of the mentoring relationship, and results from a reinventing of oneself (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002). It typically occurs within organisations, often where those organisations are undergoing a period of change. These leaders exhibit a strong sense of identity, clarity of beliefs, vision, and purpose – often in the face of chaotic change. They inspire and intellectually stimulate employees, and manage change for future success (Lipley, 2004; Anderson, 1998). Learning programmes based on the need for change 'seemed to help the students who attended, as well as the facilitators, to recreate themselves in new ways' (Rapamund and Moore, 2002: 31). This type of behaviour was fostered in the Ministry, with some success. What would have made it more successful in terms of the outcomes achieved for Freddie?

Self-direction needs to be a central component of any transformative developmental activities (Cranton, 1996). The outcome of transformational learning is that it sees 'students as involved, enthusiastic and keen on participating in learning. They were described as 'much more engaged...and much less compliant – they're much less

prepared to accept stuff because it's being said by a prof'' (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002). If this does not occur, we will continue to see stories like Freddie's, rather than the success enjoyed by Terry.

Self-direction will be further enhanced, however, by transformational leaders who use elements of transactional theory in their mentoring. 'In individualist philosophies, where leaders and followers each rationally pursue their own self-interests, it is generally thought that leaders should be transactional. A free contract is often assumed as a model of transacting between leaders and followers' (Bass and Steidlmeier). Freddie may well have felt more comfortable if elements of transactional leadership had been used by the Ministry.

For transformational learning to occur in learning organisations, organisations must function effectively as liberating structures that educate members toward self-correcting awareness (Yorks and Marsick, 2000). It must also have an ethical foundation (Bass and Steidlmeier). For this to happen, there are a number of characteristics of transformational mentors that could be further developed. These leaders are shapers of organisational values, communicating these effectively to others in the organisation and motivating them to follow on. Interpreting institutional culture and purpose, they share a compelling vision which empowers others. They have a clear vision which achieves positive results, while refusing to abuse the legitimate power they possess (Egan, quoted in Anderson, 1998).

In order to be effective in their practice, transformative mentors need to continually question their own beliefs about their work. This may be achieved by asking questions like: In which type of mentoring relationship does the mentor feel most competent? How might these types of mentoring approaches be combined and adopted to meet the needs of both parties? How does the mentor conceptualise their own role as a change agent? Are mentors consciously or subconsciously seeking to reproduce the status quo in their interactions with mentees? (Sullivan-Brown, 2002). In addition, the mentoring relationship needs to be managed as an activity

that can transform and develop learning in the mentee. This can be achieved by moving beyond racial and gender stereotypes, and fostering relationships that value interdependence. It will be reinforced by developing participatory and care-giving leadership values into the process, aiming at developing the relationship (Enomoto, Gardiner and Grogan 2002). Mentoring from outside the organisation may be an appropriate strategy to use, as it develops trust in the relationship and frees both parties from the difficulties associated with organisational politics.

The motivation for transformational leadership in mentoring needs to be asked. There is the risk that the work may become superficial, in an effort to meet with the strategic goals of an organisation – instead of seeking to move people forward and to foster independence. Questions might include: What are the goals and purposes of the organisation’s mentoring programme? How do these fit with the needs of individuals? What strengths do mentors already bring to the work? How can these be enhanced and developed? How does the matching process work? Is there an element of choice? What supports are provided? (Sullivan-Brown, 2002).

This, of course, requires a mindset that is fundamental to the process of workplace learning transformation – a mindset that encourages learning in all its settings to be systematic and interactive, and geared to personal, as well as organisational, outcomes. It must, to some degree, be learner-driven, in order to achieve outcomes, and be focussed on achieving agreed competencies (Rylatt, 2000). However, the liberty of individuals should be maximised ‘subject to the condition that there be similar liberty for all others (Bass and Steidlmeier). This may be easily achieved through negotiating mentoring outcomes in a contract between the parties involved, thus giving all interested stakeholders an input into formalised processes<sup>6</sup>. It will enable areas of common ground to be stated and clarified, in advance, so that parties are clear about goals and objectives (ibid).

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<sup>6</sup> It may also work successfully for informal mentoring programmes, where processes and outcomes are also to be agreed upon in advance.

'Transformative mentorship' will lead to positive changes for individuals, organisations and professions, as well as under-represented groups in the workplace (Sullivan-Brown, 2002: 141). The future of mentoring may well extend into a variety of types of programmes, including peer mentoring (Holbeche, 1995) and co-mentoring. Whichever type of programme is used, it needs to have a more central focus in the development processes in organisations, with an emphasis on major life transitions for participants (ibid).

Transformational leadership, however, tends to be collectivist and authoritarian in its approach, and needs to be used with care (Bass and Steidlmeier, no date). Servant leadership, in contrast, replaces hierarchical leadership models, advocating a group-oriented approach to analysis and decision-making and aiming to strengthen individuals and organisations. It emphasises an individual's powers of persuasion and consensus, and aims to create a positive impact on employees and community, rather than what it sees as hard-nosed, profit-driven business (Spears, 1995).

If transformational mentoring is potentially so successful, why might it be important for a mentor to be a servant leader? The answer is simple. Servant leadership has also been seen to work, reinforcing a commitment to the celebration of people and their potential, and is very much action-oriented. It works in settings that are vastly different to those experienced by transformational mentors. The role of the mentor is that of a servant. In serving the needs of an organisational training programme, there are risks that the goals of an individual learner may be lost sight of. Informal mentoring situations may benefit most from a servant leadership style, where the needs of the learner are paramount.

This type of mentor sees himself or herself a servant first, only later making a conscious choice to lead, while ensuring that other people's highest-priority needs are being served. This model fits well within formal and informal mentoring relationships. However, it is not a quick fix, and cannot quickly be instilled in an

organisation (Spears, 1995; Bethel, 1995). Time and effort are required – a long term, transformational approach to life and work

Learning is further developed and strengthened by actively valuing the choices made by protégés as authentic. While it is ‘commonly believed that people act on the strength of various stereotypes and subconscious preconceptions, some of which are said to be so ingrained that they continue to operate even after they are called to the attention of those who labour under them’ (Epstein, 2002: 35), learning will be enabled by the mentor who authenticates the learner’s experience and input at each stage.

While servant leadership is seen by many as soft, weak and ineffective (Tatum, 1995), mentors who follow this model are aware of their own limitations and use their self-awareness to ‘successfully navigate powerful yet delicate relationships with protégés’ (Johnson and Ridley, 2004: 87). In the settings in which servant mentorship is used, it is often very effective, as in the case of Shirley. The danger is that these professional may become so other-focussed that they forget to practise self-care and are otherwise unable to care for protégés the talk (Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

### **Successful leadership uses power in ethical ways to foster successful outcomes for mentoring**

Why is it important for mentors, as educational leaders, to use their position and their power ethically? A number of issues in relation to power and ethics need addressing – self-direction, mentor autonomy, quality systems, professional development, the misuse of power, relationship management, trust, and discipline. If these issues are addressed, mentoring practice will be more likely to foster and encourage the development needs of the protégé, in a way that causes no harm to either party. This will result in, and may be caused by, an increased respect for the individual person and an awareness of the negative impact of unethical behaviour

and the use of coercion and force as a means of control (Burke, 1994). What does this mean for mentors in general?

Ethical mentors and leaders will allow self-direction in the learner, and avoid any compulsion to participate. Libertarians argue for a voluntary society in which individuals are free to enter into agreements – some of which may be foolish and self-destructive but which must never occur at the expense of other people. This right to choose must be extended to everyone, as all people have an equal claim to self-ownership (McElroy, 2002). The central issue is consent. ‘Ethical norms and behavioural ideals should not be imposed but freely embraced; motivation should not be reduced to coercion but grow out of authentic inner commitment’ (Bass and Steidlmeier).

To remain self-directed the protégé, like other self-directed learners, needs to have a degree of autonomy in the learning process. This autonomy has a number of characteristics. He or she develops their goals and plans independently of pressure from others, and seeks out the most appropriate means of resolving those goals and plans. His or her capacity for rational reflection is used to make judgments on the basis of the relevant evidence. Possessing the determination and the ability to carry through plans of action, he or she is persistent in the face of reversals, challenges and setbacks. The foundation of this is, of course, an understanding of the self as a rational, autonomous being (Cranton, 1996).

In many learning environments, learner control is a political issue. Those who control learning decisions – often those with high levels of position power – typically have the final say in the range and type of decisions made, and in establishing the pace and mechanisms for learning and decision-making – a mechanistic process that does little for emancipatory learning (Cranton, 1996) and self-direction. The Ministry is a reflection of this process, having most of the control of Freddie’s learning process. Contrasted with this is mentoring literature, and the experience of Terry, which suggest that learner control of the learning

process needs to be integrated into the mentoring relationship much more than it was in the Ministry. Success depends on it.

In relation to autonomy, how autonomous are we, as professionals, in our choices? (Graham, 2002). Tensions often exist, for mentors, between personal and collective demands. An employing organisation may make demands that conflict with what we perceive our professional needs to be. In dealing with the Ministry, I was often required to make judgment calls, particularly in relation to information sharing. Discussion with supervisors in relation to Freddie's work, needed to be weighed up against his wish for confidentiality. The outcome of this was often that I needed to implement organisational policies, in conflict with Freddie's expressed interests.

Autonomy must be enabled wherever possible in the mentor, otherwise professional ethics may be compromised. Autonomy begins where practitioners see themselves as self-responsible professionals (Cranton, 1996). This does not mean, however, that the needs of clients and employers should be ignored. While there are factors – largely external – that may impact on their decision-making ability, mentors will have the knowledge and skills to develop their own practice independently of any pressure. To achieve this, they possess the ability to choose objectively from among alternative actions, based on their own knowledge and experience. Challenges will be met through development of strategies and action plans.

What is important, therefore, is that mentors are permitted a degree of autonomy in their work. Ellsworth argues that contrary to 'what some pundits will argue, increased individual expression in an organisation need not threaten cohesiveness or result in conflicting decisions that sap effectiveness' (Ellsworth 2002: 236). This is the ideal, of course, and results from an organisational culture that values creativity and autonomy, and allows decision-making to occur at all levels. It does not work well in the Ministry, where decisions are made through line managers in the first instance.

This relates closely to the issue of quality systems. Where autonomy is protected, quality is ensured, and the learning outcomes for protégés will be further enhanced. When addressing quality issues, a programme will look at areas such as ethical practice (including a Code of Ethics), management systems and processes, training and supervision, contracts, and safety procedures (Steele, 2003).

Practitioners need to challenge the naïve belief that simply because adults are under the direction of a teacher that learning is being facilitated (Brookfield, 1986). Formalised mentoring programmes, to ensure quality outcomes, need to ensure that a number of issues and processes are dealt with. These programmes require good management to be successful (Allen and Poteet, 1999). This will have an impact on the motivation of both parties.

Leadership by mentors will be based on the identified learning needs of the protégé – as identified by the protégé – and appropriate to them. Learning will be assisted where practitioners are able to make use of the learner's own communities. Freddie was more successful in relating to me as a mentor than he may have been with someone from outside his own communities. Feedback provided needs to be constructive, without judgment (Smart, 2003). Because of the nature of mentoring, feedback need not be formal, but will seek reactions to practice and outcomes. It was a successful approach in my work with Terry.

Quality teaching and mentoring programmes will consider flexibility in teaching methodologies, address real life and work issues, and have a task-orientation Forster (1998). Professional memberships will be maintained where possible. In addition, Allen and Poteet (1999) find it is important for the success of mentoring programmes to have a standardised approach to recruitment of mentors. This is a useful strategy in assuring quality control, but may not work so well in informal settings where individuals choose their own mentors on the basis of other, more personal qualities. However, the role of experience in teaching and mentoring is primarily to 'build bridges from the known to the unknown' (Tennant and Pogson,

1995: 150). It will link learning to current activities, and enable the practitioner to work more successfully with the protégé. Competent people with the right mix of skills and knowledge will be more effectively able to develop their mentees.

It may occasionally be a necessity (Burke, 1994) to address misconduct by either party, formalised discipline procedures must be followed. Where a mentoring programme is part of an organisation – an employer or educational, for example – these may be written in to policy. Informal mentoring, such as that which occurred with Shirley and Terry, may seek to resolve misconduct issues through assistance from neutral, external parties.

In spite of the rhetoric in relation to self-direction, however, the needs of an organisation should not be ignored. The Ministry initiated mentoring in recognition of needs it had. However, to make formal mentoring successful, there is a need to put systems in place. These include the identification of relationship goals, objectives and boundaries. Consultation and communication need to occur as widely as possible, with voluntary participation by as many people as wish to be involved. These schemes will also be monitored, in order to ensure that ethical practice standards are being met.

Quality systems will address issues in relation to the misuse of power. The most important tool for maintaining any particular social form or relationship is the power to define reality (Reason, 1984). In this sort of environment, power may be misused, as there is a hierarchy of power in which some people are powerful and others relatively powerless (as in the story of Freddie). The power to define reality lies in the hands of a few people, and the ability of other organisational members to raise and define issues is drastically curtailed (Reason, 1984). The result of this, for mentoring, is that it is vital to consider the impact of power on professional relationships, development and learning. Collaboration and consensus are more likely to be achieved when everyone is in a position to benefit from the work and reality-defining processes are more ethically managed (ibid).

Power in relationships is unavoidable. The central issue is informed consent. The misuse of power results from the lack of a personal ethical stance. 'We must make decisions about what constitute good reasons for acting. One possible response to this fact is to make a virtue of necessity to argue that the need to create one's own values is not a predicament to be endured but a state which is of enormous value' (Graham, 2002: 16). There is a clear need to address the power differential in any professional relationship, but it is more important within mentoring. Mentors must first acknowledge that the power differential exists, and the potential for its misuse. This includes an acknowledgment of their own power – including legitimate power such as position and expert power, which form the basis for the mentoring relationship – and the influence that this has for the protégé. Any attempt to downplay or refuse one's own legitimate power will confuse the protégé and may cause harm to the relationship.

The mentor must at all times act solely for the benefit of the protégé (Johnson and Ridley, 2004). When considering the ethics of an authoritarian approach, for example, mentors need to analyse their own assumptions (Cranton, 1996). This necessarily means allowing the learner to make sense of their own situation, and to create solutions that are most relevant to their own needs (Hallier and James, 1999). There is also a clear need to acknowledge where attraction exists in one or both parties. It must be dealt with and managed by the mentor in a responsible manner, and the conflict of interest addressed. This can be achieved through developing awareness of the mentor's own attitudes and behaviours, and of the effects of power relationships on the mentee. Help should be sought when appropriate from a colleague, superior or other appropriate person, and the relationship terminated when necessary (Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

Ethical practice means that harm must always be minimized. Coercive behaviour should always be kept to a minimum (Burke, 1994) as it has a negative impact on the protégé and may have undesirable outcomes. Freddie felt coerced, and rebelled

against this. Where issues of harm are addressed, that harm must be demonstrable, proven beyond all reasonable doubt – causing suffering and harm (Burke, 1994: 48). This also means that mentors need to consider whether the ends justify the means, and ask whether it is important that the outcome is desirable at the expense of ethical practice (Smart, 2003).

Exploitation is defined as the ‘selfish use of someone else for one’s own ends or profit’ (Johnson and Ridley, 2004: 106-107). Individuals are treated as objects – a behaviour which leads to behaviour such as sexual harassment. Mentors need to recognise the vulnerability and relative powerlessness of the protégé in relation to themselves. Cross-gender mentoring, too, – where there is a potential sexual involvement that may develop between mentor and protégé – needs to be justified. Where it does happen, processes must be in place in order to address any issues and conflicts that may arise (Blake, 1998).

When organisational politics are operating in a dysfunctional manner, they impact in a negative manner on individual learning success – particularly when discipline is used as a political tool (Rouse: 1994). Discipline is a technique of power that regards individuals as objects and instruments of its exercise. This power is modest, suspicious, calculating. It operates through hierarchical observation and normalising judgment (Sheridan, 1980).

It is inappropriate to use mentoring as discipline. The role of mentoring is one of teaching and facilitation. Other avenues should be used for discipline (Taylor, 2003). Freddie’s story reflects the notion that punishment is not just a part of legal machinery, but a political tactic, and a technique for the exercise of power. Truth and power of discourse reside not in what is said, but in who said it, and what is said (Sheridan, 1980).

Ethical practice also means that relationship issues will be addressed as they arise. These include dealing with conflict, minimising an adversarial culture, and dealing

with resistance appropriately (Zachary, 2000; Megginson and Clutterbuck, 1995). Success in any venture is dependent on the combined efforts and skills 'of leaders, managers, and employees who practice what they preach and recognise their role in instilling the right values and behaviours' (Asacker, 2004). 'Great mentors help people to take more control of their lives and find their own way to fulfilment' (Pegg, 1999).

Relationship-building, particularly in formal mentoring programmes, will be assisted through a number of measures. Management must be seen to visibly support mentoring policy, and make themselves available to be mentors. A programme should be totally supportive of the developmental needs of staff, and, instead of being managed as a top-down relationship, mentoring partners need to be valued more equally. Wider community input may be beneficial as appropriate. Recognition of good quality mentors would provide motivation for existing mentors to continue, and may encourage new people to begin. The mentoring relationship needs to be continuously evaluated in order to ensure quality (Rylatt, 2000).

Mentoring relationships must be based on trust. This is the 'glue' that supports the parties in a safe, productive and committed working relationship that has successful outcomes. Consistency, honesty and integrity are balanced against confidence and comfort in each other's presence (Johnson and Ridley, 2004).

Holding oneself accountable as a practitioner helps ensure integrity and trust, and results in ethical behaviour. The practitioner actively seeks to do no harm, or at least minimize the harm caused. The needs of the protégé are put first, unless there is a clear risk of harm. Commitments are honoured, communication channels kept open, and confidentiality maintained (Johnson and Ridley, 2004). The difficulty in this, however, is the existence of ethical dilemmas. These are likely to occur in any professional situation in which relationships with multiple stakeholders have an interest, and must be addressed in a manner which minimises the harm caused.

Negative aspects of mentoring relationships may result in poor quality of outcomes for protégés. These aspects need to be addressed, and may be achieved in a number of ways. Training for mentors in relation to their role responsibilities will ensure they have access to the appropriate skills required to make the relationship a success. Communication issues will be dealt with, and mediation provided as necessary. Where protégés identify a wish, or a need, for other types of training and development, they may be provided with alternative types of training programmes (Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004). Changes in the belief structures that create the problem must also be addressed, as it is not possible to solve problems with the same beliefs that created them (Smart, 2003). Further, to address the darker aspects of leadership, there is a need to acknowledge one's own shadow deficiencies, and channel one's energies into more beneficial working methods (Cammock, 2001).

Mentoring should never be a forced relationship. While the results that Freddie experienced may not be typical, the fact that it exists at all is cause for concern. Mentors, or potential mentors, should never feel pressured to participate at any stage, and should ask to be released if they cannot further contribute to the development of a protégé. It should never be assumed that a mentor has the requisite training needed to perform the work to a sufficient standard (Rylatt, 2000).

### LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

There are a number of limitations in this study. The first lies in the nature of narrative research. While the research was designed merely as a snapshot, aiming to identify *some* issues for further discussion, results should therefore be considered as preliminary in order to avoid the danger of arbitrary generalisations (Brookfield, 1986; Busher, 2002). In addition, a more comprehensive study is needed in an effort to validate or repudiate these findings (Allen and Poteet, 1999). Further testing, using quantitative methods and empirical research, obtaining data from a

wider range of sources, may support or reject the findings outlined here (Allen and Poteet, 1999; Kennedy, 2003; Ragins, 1999).).

Narrative method has its own limitations and risks. Because it is inherently individual, differences in perspective arise, leading to different narratives about the same event. These may be used in defence of different arguments (Phelan, 2004), which, while not problematic if addressed in a scientific manner, may end up distorting the past in order to feel better about the present. Memories themselves may be distorted, describing the self in unrealistically positive terms, or may result in the past being painted in worse terms than they actually were (Lewis, 2004). In addition, the cross-sectional nature of the study does not allow for an appreciation of the sequence of events associated with negative mentoring relationships. It precludes cause-and-effect inferences about the effect of negative experiences on protégé outcomes (Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004).

Feminist theory asks that research be expanded to include women's experience and point of view. It will acknowledge that life exists in shades of grey, not black and white Miller and Treitel (1991). Participatory research will be used to provide a more inclusive analysis of data. Inclusive, not only of women, but of other 'marginalised' groups. Research questions will be developed emerging from the concerns of women, will be less one-sided, and validate the experience, ideas, and needs of more women. This provides insights into improved learning and teaching. My practice, for example, is enhanced by knowing how my learners learn best, what their strategies are likely to be, the type of language they might use, and what issues they might be facing in their professional and study lives. I am more aware of the types of people I work best with, and strategise accordingly.

Further research into mentoring may focus on similarities and differences between mentoring in educational and business settings. There is also a need for research on the negative aspects of mentoring – issues that need to be reliably measured, as there is little available evidence on the impact of these issues on protégés (Allen and

Poteet, 1999; Eby, Butts, Lockwood and Simon: 2004). Classical liberal philosophy of teaching and learning also needs to be further developed, as it has much to contribute to educational philosophy.

### IN SUMMARY.....

Teaching and learning are challenging, passionate, creative activities that result in the creation or alteration of beliefs, values, actions, relationships, and social forms. The free exchange of ideas, beliefs and practices is the gauge of an open and democratic society (Brookfield, 1986). The important issue for mentoring practice is how it can, like any system of teaching and learning, 'be constructed to ensure that it is not used to control the political decisions of citizens and, at the same time, ensure that it does provide citizens with the knowledge and skills they need in order to make good decisions' (Spring, 1994: 31).

Bertrand Russell (1949:11) asks the pertinent question: how 'can we combine that degree of individual initiative which is necessary for progress with the degree of social cohesion that is necessary for survival?' This thesis has asked these questions, and provided some answers – answers which may lead to a professional mentoring practice that enables individual protégés to make real changes in their life and work.

As Yeats (quoted in Asacker, 2004) says, 'Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire'.

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