Public Abstract

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Mentoring relationships are mutual experiences supporting the growth of the protege, mentor, and profession. Minimal studies have explored the experience of mentoring from the mentor perspective within nursing. This qualitative study explored the lived experience of 13 nurse mentors in various practice settings, specialties, and roles. Additional findings included understanding facilitative practices, obstacles, and benefits of the mentoring relationship. Interviews were conducted to obtain participant stories which suggested that significant relationships occur in informal match instead of in formal matched dyad. Communicating, listening, and mutual growth were identified as characteristics of the professional relationships that were important for mentoring success.

Best preparation for the role was identified as occurring from experiences of being mentored. Facilitative practices included characteristics of mentors, institution, and professional factors. Obstacles mentioned included lack of organization support, time, and method of matching protege with mentor. Benefits were described as stimulating mutual learning, giving back to the profession, and rekindling the passion for nursing.

Findings from this study can assist nurses in the education and practice settings understand the mentoring experience. This information can assist nurses establish mentoring programs in various settings. Implications for education include instilling the value of mentoring to beginning students. Implications for practice include incorporating policies, education, and programs supporting mentoring in practice. Implications for research include issues on matching the pair, variances in generational mentoring, and how to instill the value of mentoring.