THE LIVED EXPERIENCE OF NURSE MENTORS: MENTORING NURSES IN THE PROFESSION

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ABSTRACT

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 rich participants stories which suggested significant relationships occur in informally instead of formally matched mentoring relationships. Communicating, listening, and growth resulting in mutuality were identified as part of the professional relationships important for mentoring success.

Preparation for the role was identified as occurring from the positive and negative experiences of being mentored. Facilitative practices included characteristics of mentors, institutional, and professional factors. Obstacles mentioned included lack of organization support, time, and matching protégé to mentor. Benefits were described as stimulating mutual learning, giving back to the profession, and rekindling the passion for nursing.

Mentoring relationships are mutual experiences supporting the growth of the protégé, mentor, and the profession. Implications for education, practice, and research were included to enhance support for mentors in nursing practice.