

Connecting Young People with Spiritual Mentors, An Introduction to Spiritual Mentoring

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“All that we humans do, we do in conversation... as we live in conversation new kinds of objects continue to appear.” – Humberto Maturana and Pille Bunnell

I want you to expand your notion of education beyond skills and information, beyond encouragement and the setting of examples, all the way to the joining of spirits. Leave behind the notion of knowledge as facts. Recognize that we evolve as a species through the change of individuals.

Encouragement

My first memory of being deeply moved to learn was when I watched a documentary movie about stars and galaxies in preschool. No teacher or person in K through 12 engaged me to the same degree. I was so disappointed because



Eugene Wigner

of this that when I was 16 I went looking for someone to talk to. I looked through college brochures and found Professor Wigner in the physics department at a good university. I phoned him out of the blue and asked if he would talk to me about my interest and what path I should take. Although a bit taken aback by his enthusiasm and anticipation to meet me I scheduled a meeting at his office, several hours drive from where I lived.

I drove through the rain, navigated the town and campus, and arrived wet and late. I didn't prepare

myself aside from reflecting on my own curiosity, and I didn't know anything about him or his field. I didn't even have a high school diploma. We spent the entire afternoon talking about the universe. He affirmed my interests, endorsed my questions, and charged my sense of self and purpose.

I went on to study physics and often encountered the work of my friend Eugene Wigner, celebrated contributor to the invention of quantum mechanics and Nobel laureate. Throughout my education I searched for deeply curious people who were aware of their own limitations and respectful of mine. The inspiration I gained from the few I found taught me that sincere encouragement from a knowledgeable elder is inspirational.

Transformation

The field that develops between people determines the value of the information exchanged within it. As Neil DeGrasse Tyson says, "I would rather have someone who is inspired by their work stand in front of me and be my teacher, even if they don't know how to teach. Because — you know something — that doesn't matter. In the end what matters is the osmotic link that is made between your and their enthusiasm. Just by being in the same room at the same time..."

We are becoming aware that a person does not grow by gaining information, but by developing a larger state of mind. Facts don't enlarge a person, relationships do, and relationships that expand one's boundaries stimulate the most growth. A relationship's texture will have a greater effect than what is said. An inappropriate or disrespectful encounter can have as negative and long-lasting an effect as meeting an open-hearted spirit can have an effect that is unforgettably positive.

"You want to entertain in your imagination, as well as in the substance of your beliefs, the ability to create and sustain states that are more powerful than in your limited, conscious awareness. Even if you only believe you are making it up, do it really well ..." – Richard Bartlett

Personal Space



Mary Ann MaNais

“When I sit down with my friends and socialize ... we don’t go into depth about what society has given us, what we need, versus what we want... because we don’t care right now. But as far as me, speaking for myself, I care.” – Mary Ann MaNais, 19 years old

Teenagers rarely engage each other, or anyone else, on deep and personal issues. That kind of engagement is not cultivated in children nor in the adults who surround them. Young and old alike, we are hiding in our own shadows, not looking seriously into ourselves and not sharing what’s there. It’s time to recognize that we will only grow ourselves by exposing our doubts and sharing our strengths.

“The circle of learning between student and teacher is a flow that has no clearly defined beginning. My students’ desire to understand and my capacity to articulate are two sides of a synaptic bridge in a larger mind, and only when we came together and combined our resources did we fulfill our respective roles in this larger dance... as when a vibrating tuning fork is brought near a quiescent tuning fork until something of the energy of the one is transferred to the other.” – Christopher M. Bache

Spiritual Mentoring

In the heart space there is a little distance between those with and those without experience, who share a common interest, but age and rank fosters an illusion of separateness. I would like to take a “subtle knife” and create a door through which the two can meet each other.

I’ve created a web page to connect interested young people with experienced elders. An inexperienced person can submit their interest, background, and contact information through a web form, and an experienced person can do the same. I will scrutinize each and, if they share a sincere, common interest, I will share this information without identifying either of them. If they are both interested and both approve, then I will introduce them. I don’t expect the perfect mentor and mentee will approach me simultaneously, but I also don’t expect them to be far apart: given one, I’ll look for the other.

“Human beings dance in life, and as we dance different patterns emerge around us. Sometimes a spark jumps between two poles. Lightning strikes and suddenly a possibility seems closer for someone in the room. There is a heartfelt exchange, a truth transmitted. Unpremeditated and uncontrolled, it is guided by its own radar, advances its own agenda... These sparks express the learning of our collective intelligence.” – Christopher M. Bache

If you’re a young person with a passion to learn, or an elder with a passion to share, then visit the Spiritual Mentoring page, fill out the mentee or mentor form, and I will contact you.

The Spiritual Mentoring Project

To participate in the project as either a mentor or a mentee, visit the Spiritual Mentoring page and fill out the mentee or mentor form.

Lincoln Stoller helps people to learn by using neurofeedback to empower their brains, and past life regression therapy to expand their spirits. He has two sons and lives in Shokan.

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