

## **A Restorative Model of Mentoring for Black Community Growth**

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### **Summary**

Dr. Jamil Bey discusses the communal benefits of mentoring illuminating the importance of preparing the mentee to become a mentor in the three-way mentoring process. His approach offers systematic guidance for young individuals transitioning into adulthood. The restorative mentor model encourages students to experience 3 ways of mentorship. Students should

- Have 3 mentors of their own;
- Co-mentor each other; and
- Have 3 mentees of their own.

Dr. Bey illustrates the importance of using restorative culturally responsive mentoring practices highlighting:

- The unique historical and cultural context of Black youth in America
- Cultural infusion
- Community and collective power
- Holistic processes

### **Guiding Questions**

After reading the selection, consider the following questions?

1. What resonated with you?
2. What did this reading spark in you or inspire you to think about?
3. What was an Aha moment for you while reading?
4. What is 1 thing you will do as a result of reading this piece? Explain.

**Don't have time to read the piece? Here is the cheat sheet with what we learned based on the reading.**

**To create restorative culturally responsive mentoring practices, mentors must do the following:**

*Know that there are no bad kids.*

*You are going to come across some kids that give you trouble, that give you mouth, and some kids that may not want to have anything to do with you today. But they aren't bad kids. Every one of these kids that you see acting up like this, has one of three things going on. She is either misled, misfed, or misunderstood. It's your job as the teacher to figure which one or which combination it is. As soon as you start to believe that that's not it, and that these are bad kids, it's time to reconsider your path.*

*~ Retired Pittsburgh Public School Teacher*

- Develop cultural sensitivity emphasizing the communal and higher purpose.
- Recognize the unique historical and cultural context of Black youth in America.
- Guide individuals through transitions.
- Groom the mentee to become a mentor, perpetuating a legacy of shared wisdom and empowerment.

Mentors should

- Support mentees during age transitions.
- Assist students in identifying personal goals and missions in life.
- Situate the mentee within a higher purpose emphasizing the collective potential when supporting the success of others.
- Give students the confidence to fail.
- Encourage a cyclical nature of learning and growth by
  - Maintaining at least three mentors:
    - one in their field or profession,
    - another sharing similar values and goals, and
    - a third to ground them in humanity;
  - Co-mentoring each other;
  - Mentoring three individuals emphasizing the importance of reaching back to move forward.
- Encourage a sense of community, belonging, and shared experiences to foster a stronger identity among mentees.
- Emphasize the collective potential to achieve greatness while also supporting others.

## Mentors themselves should

- Have the confidence to fail, and in turn give mentees this same confidence.
  - *Without the confidence to fail, you won't have the confidence to succeed. Avoiding failure is avoiding testing your limits. It's avoiding growth. It's avoiding challenges. We embrace the confidence to fail with the knowledge that failure begets success, by providing an opportunity to correct oneself. Failure presents the opportunity to analyze and understand our mistakes and shortcomings so that we may perform better.*  
~ Dr. Bey
- Reflect on their own practices and share insights
  - *You don't have to be a master to be a teacher. You only need a willingness to share experiences and to offer others an opportunity to align their growth and exploration with yours.* ~ Dr. Bey

## Effective mentorship should include:

- Cultural Infusion
  - Infuse positive aspects of rites of passage which provide moral instruction, clarify social responsibilities, and instill a profound understanding of one's life mission.
- Age transitions
  - Guide mentees through a structured progression towards adulthood.
- Involvement with experienced mentors
  - Emphasize the involvement of elders, senior professionals, and experienced mentors in guiding mentees.
- Holistic guidance
  - Offer guidance and support beyond academic milestones as individuals navigate the complexities of adulthood,
- Communal experience
  - Facilitate communal experiences creating opportunities for mentees to share common experiences, reinforcing a sense of community and mutual understanding.
  - The communal nature of rites of passages, for example, fosters a strong sense of identity and belonging.
- Reflective practices
  - Encourage reflective practices for mentees to explore their identities, values, and aspirations with the guidance of mentors.

## Tool for Culturally Responsive Spaces - A Restorative Mentoring Model

Let's get started. Use this tool to develop your own restorative mentoring model.

GUIDE	NOTES
<p><b>Cultural Knowledge</b> What positive local, state, regional, national, and international knowledge do you know about Africans and those in the diaspora?</p> <p>How can you center and incorporate African and diasporic knowledge and values during the mentoring process?</p>	
<p><b>Opportunities and Experiences</b> What opportunities can you give students to engage in communal age transitions similar to a <i>Rites of Passage</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide moral instruction,</li> <li>• Clarify social responsibilities, and</li> <li>• instill an understanding of one's life mission</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Holistic Guidance</b> What are areas that you might offer guidance beyond academic milestones?</p>	
<p><b>Involvement with experienced mentors</b> Who are elders, senior professionals, and experienced mentors that you might involve during the process</p>	
<p><b>Communal Moments</b> What are 2-3 meaningful and memorable communal moments that you can curate for students?</p>	
<p><b>Reflective practices</b> Where are moments that you can encourage reflective practices for mentees to explore their identities, values, and aspirations with the guidance of mentors?</p>	