

Reflecting on your mentoring relationship

There are times when looking back (and forward) in a relationship is a healthy and wonderful thing to do. This is often best done at landmark times, like an anniversary, but feel free to use this process when it makes sense for you and your mentee.

Goals of the reflection:

1. Celebrate the friendship you have.
2. Appreciate and acknowledge what each person brings to the relationship.
3. Work together to decide what could make your relationship even better (if you are both wanting and able to keep the mentoring relationship active)

This process does not need to be very formal, but the steps have been written up formally to offer advice to those mentors that would like specific guidelines:

Steps to reflection:

1. Decide with your mentee when you can meet to celebrate your anniversary date. Make it special by making a dessert, or going to a favorite spot.
2. Have some paper, markers, art paper etc (or just plain paper and pen if you prefer) ready to use.
3. Make a list or draw pictures of all the things you did together in the past year. Be surprised by what you both remember, and write it all down.
4. Then ask, "What do we appreciate about each other." You may need to model this but write down something like "I really appreciate it when you laugh at my jokes, or tell me stories about school, or are honest with me about my cooking..." Ask them to think of something they appreciate about you. You can make this light by drawing stick figures with your names on them, and writing words and statements around the people.
5. Acknowledge what a good friendship you have built, but wonder aloud if there is something that could make your relationship even better. Use sentence starters like this:
 - This year I hope we can...
 - I think our relationship could be even better if...