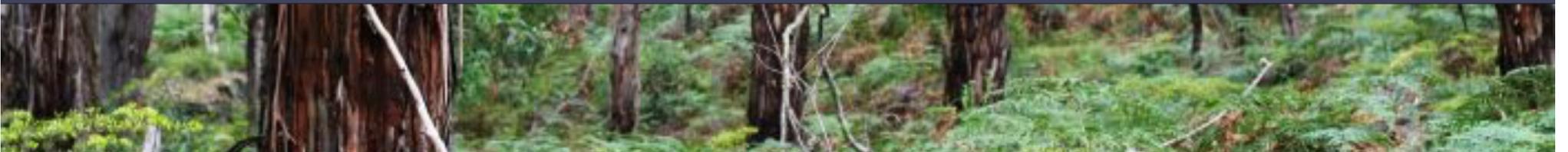


Resilience, Growth and Sustainability

Churches of Christ in SA & NT

Ministers Day November 2018



The Perfect Storm

When Systemic Toxicity Meets
A Leader's Dark Side



Where the exterior hazards of working in Christian organisations meet the interior dark sides of Christian leaders, significant risks are encountered.

Specific mentoring interventions can help to guard against these risks.



Part One

SYSTEMIC TOXICITY



The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Demanding

Disempowering

Conflicted

Isolating

Idolising

The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Demanding

Going beyond the call of Christ

Quantity over quality

Irreconcilable expectations

Diversity of roles / functions

Expectations of spouse / children

The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Lack of material resources

Disempowering

Lack of structural clarity

Diminishing respect for leaders

Unpredictability of volunteers

Ambiguity of servant leadership

The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Caught in cross-fire

Over-exposure to crises

Conflicted

Exaggeration of conflict

Vocational temptations

Enemy attack

The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Clergy / laity distinction

High mobility

Lack of time for friendship

Isolating

Strain on friendships

Sterile denominational networks

The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Inordinate
respect
(Fans)

Leader on pedestal

Need for hero / ideal exponent

Pretence that nothing is wrong

Inadequate
respect
(Critics)

Moral failure dealt with punitively

Under-performers squeezed out

Tendency to 'shoot our wounded'

Idolising

The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Dark Side

Risks

Intervention

Demanding

Disempowering

Conflicted

Isolating

Idolising

Part Two

DARK SIDE OF LEADERS AND RISKS



The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Dark Side

Risk

Demanding

Driven

Burnout

Disempowering

Insecure

Depression

Conflicted

Unaware

Disgust

Isolating

Aloof

Irrelevance

Idolising

Secretive

Moral Failure

Questions for discussion

- In your experience, to what degree do the 'dark sides' identified here exist in the people you've met in Christian leadership?
- Which of the risks considered present the greatest contemporary challenge for the wellbeing of leaders in your circles?
- Things are never as neat in real life as they are in a systematic presentation. What variations to this schema have you observed?

Part Three

MENTORING INTERVENTIONS



The Perfect Storm

Hazard

Dark Side

Risk

Intervention

Demanding

Driven

Burnout

Refocus

Disempowering

Insecure

Depression

Encourage

Conflicted

Unaware

Disgust

Facilitate
reflection

Isolating

Aloof

Irrelevance

Offer perspective

Idolising

Secretive

Moral Failure

Carefront

The Perfect Storm

Refocus

Mentoring assists leaders struggling with massive demands by shifting the focus of attention to God's agenda. This gives a frame of reference for resolving clashing expectations.



The Perfect Storm

Encourage

Mentoring connects leaders who are feeling powerless with all kinds of resources, especially spiritual resources. In this process, leaders recover hope and confidence that they can rise up to answer God's call on their life.



The Perfect Storm

Facilitate reflection

Mentoring establishes a 'demilitarised zone' – a safe space of acceptance and confidentiality. Leaders learn to let go of their anxiety and carefully examine the relational dynamics going on within and around them.



The Perfect Storm

Offer perspective

Mentoring provides healthy relational support and accountability. Leaders get the benefit of a broader perspective and learn the value of working through difficult issues in partnership rather than alone.



The Perfect Storm

Carefront

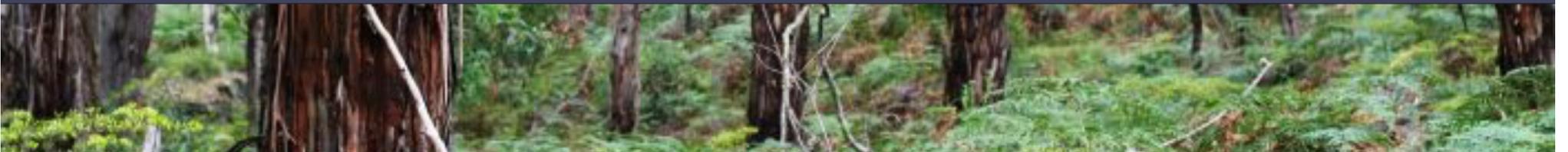
Mentoring is a relationship of grace and truth in balance where character is explored and strengthened. Character flaws are not excused, but neither are they a trigger for punishment and rejection.





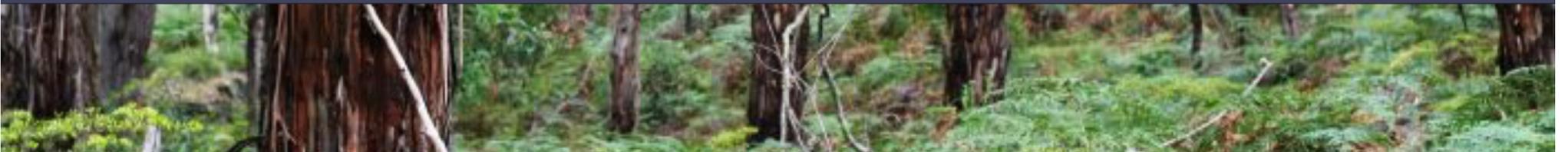
Building Resilience for Christian Leadership

Factors of Resilience in
Christian Leaders

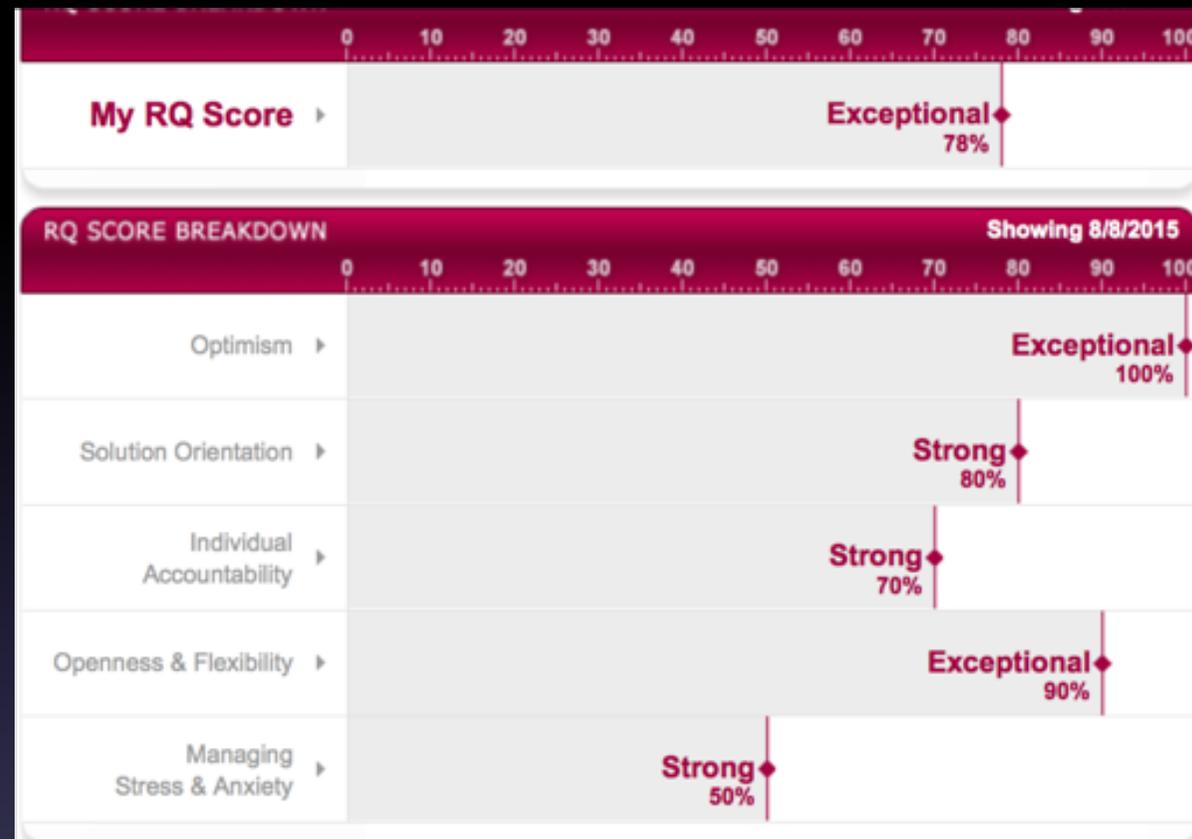


Alternatives to resilience

- Depletion and burnout
- Self-protection and wariness
- Super-toughness



What is your resilience quotient or RQ?

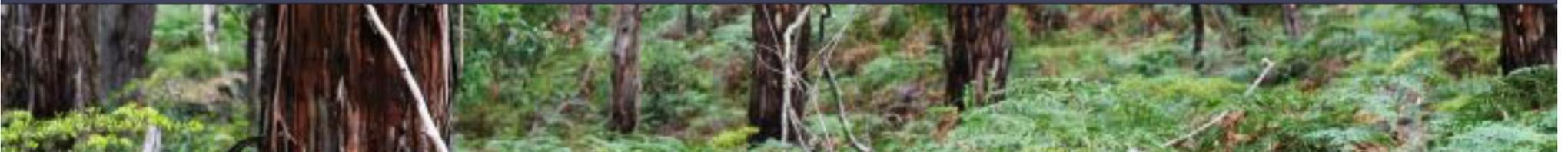


Try <https://testyourself.psychtests.com/testid/2121>



Using this material

- Discern your situation
- Allow for low times when resilience has yet to kick in
- Focus first on what is already working
- Tackle growth areas from a position of strength



1. Love: supportive relationships of grace, trust and encouragement

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labour: If either of them falls down, one can help the other up. But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up. Eccl 4:9-10

Resilient leaders typically are not loners. They put energy into developing friendships in the good times that become a lifeline when things get tough. Their families are able to be supportive and understanding when the leader is emotionally unavailable for brief periods because they have been well-loved.



2. Health: wise care of your body

In vain you rise early and stay up late, toiling for food to eat—for he grants sleep to those he loves.

Psalm 127:2

The state of our physical body has a powerful effect on our emotional and spiritual well-being. Even leaders who freely acknowledge this truth may still fail to eat properly, exercise regularly, get adequate sleep or take their annual leave when it is due. Looking after one's physical health is a vital early step to foster resilience.



3. Hope: a metanarrative that provides a basis for hope

Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.

Lamentations 3:21-23

With an immediate and vibrant sense of the big picture, the over-arching story, resilient leaders are able to put short-term 'hits' and even medium-term frustrations into perspective. This must be more than propositional theology; resilience requires an instinctive reassurance that God is good, ever-present, and that he is ultimately in control.



4. Heroes: positive role models

*Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you.
Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith.*

Hebrews 13:7

When it's hard to bounce back to an energised state positive role models can help leaders in two ways:

- Talking with or reflecting upon the life of someone who has gone before – how did they handle similar pressures?
- Reflecting on the positive outcomes experienced by others who have walked a difficult path – defeat is NOT inevitable!



5. Self-awareness: confidence in your true abilities and strengths

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. Romans 12:3

Attempts to encourage can leave leaders with an inflated idea of their capacities. A mistaken belief that one lacks the necessary capacity to address current challenges chokes off resilience. Self-awareness developed through honest feedback and critical reflection provides a better basis for resilience.



6. Teamwork: willingness to develop and draw on others' strengths

But how can I bear your problems and your burdens and your disputes all by myself? Choose some wise, understanding and respected men from each of your tribes, and I will set them over you.

Deuteronomy 1:12-13

Resilient leaders love to be part of a team and share responsibility with others.

Preparing others to share the load and allowing them to do so gives a wise leader the chance to recover their own energy.



7. Self-restraint: managing strong feelings and impulses positively

Do not fret when people succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes. Refrain from anger and turn from wrath; do not fret—it leads only to evil.

Psalm 37:7-8

Leaders who have lost their energy are not in the best frame of mind to make great decisions. Those leaders who school themselves in self-restraint can exercise the necessary patience to resist unwise 'knee-jerk' solutions.



8. Action: capacity to construct and implement realistic plans

The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favour in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my ancestors are buried so that I can rebuild it."

Nehemiah 2:4-5

Even when brought undone emotionally, resilient leaders are able to bounce back and find their feet in leadership partly by developing a detailed plan, moving the focus of attention from problem to practical solution.



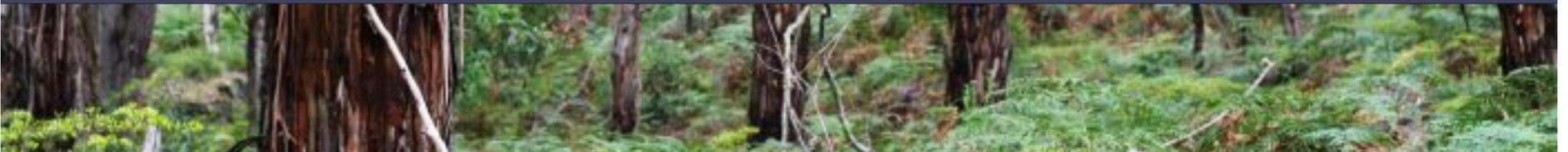
9. Reflection: engaging regularly in reflective practice

"Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things." Philippians 4:8

Reflective practices may be:

- Personal – e.g. meditation, retreating and journaling
- Relational – e.g. mentoring conversations or psychotherapy

Christian reflective practices stimulate hope; they affirm the presence and power of God in the midst of difficult circumstances and draw attention toward his goodness and grace.



Thinking patterns that undermine resilience

Inaccurate sense-making

- Mind-reading
- Jumping to conclusions

Loss of perspective

- Tunnel vision
- Magnifying/catastrophizing
- Minimizing

Generalizing

- Personalization
- Externalization
- Imagined permanence
- Imagined pervasiveness



10. Humility: acceptance of both hardship and blessing from God's hand

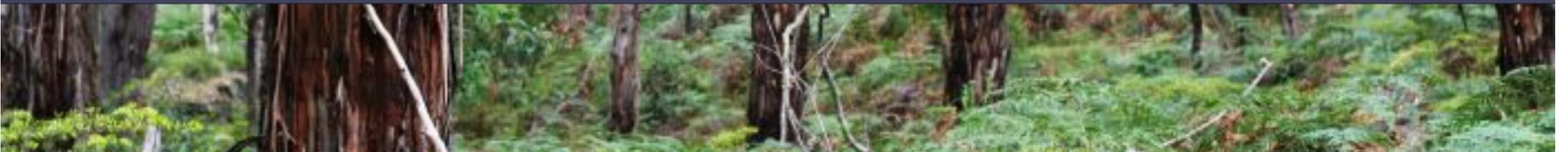
"God opposes the proud but shows favour to the humble." Humble yourselves, therefore, under God's mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

1 Peter 5:5-7

Resilience may be thwarted by an overblown sense of entitlement such as that handed to us by a consumerist culture. Some leaders get stuck in a low-energy state wondering how the adversity they suffer could have happened to them. Resilience rises up from humility that accepts that hardship and loss are part and parcel of leading in Christ's name.



What about renewal by the power of the Holy Spirit? Isn't that most important of all?



Outcomes of resilience

- 'Come back' rather than 'bounce back'? Not simply a matter of survival; look for thriving growth and positive adaptation to changing circumstances
- Resilience in response to adversity can produce clearer:
 - Sense of self
 - Grasp of calling
 - Appreciation of relationships
 - Clarification and articulation of priorities
- Sustainable leadership
- Credible witness to the abundant life offered by Christ



Small group discussion questions:

- What caught your attention in this presentation?
- How does this understanding of resilience connect with what you are experiencing in your context of Christian leadership?
- Agree together on one observation about resilience to bring back to the whole group – an insight to contribute to the conversation
- Agree together on one question about resilience to bring back to the whole group – something that you are all curious about





Mentoring for Ministry



What is mentoring?

- So many definitions!
- It's always about personhood – who you are
- In a Christian context, it always references God's role in personal and spiritual formation

Christian mentoring identifies and promotes the work of God's Spirit in the life of another person



What do mentors do?

Mentors help leaders to

- remember and learn from the moments they are at their best
- arrest the tendency to drift away from initial good motives, drawing them back to their most noble intentions
- remember their most perceptive insights
- persevere in their most gracious dealings with others
- remain true to a commitment to serving others as a leader



What do mentors do?

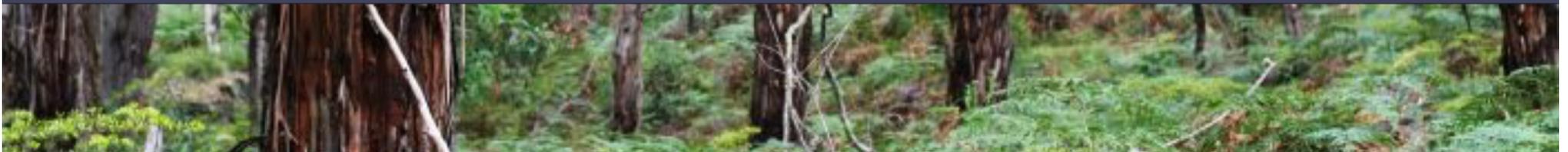
Methods

- ask good questions to stimulate thinking
- listen carefully
- point toward relevant resources and alternative approaches
- provide courageous feedback
- help leaders set their own goals and plan action steps
- challenge and encourage
- hold leaders accountable to their best intentions
- cheer on
- pray



Mentoring conversations

- Mentoring conversations are referenced directly to your unique, real life context.
- Both the content and process of sessions are designed around you as an individual, so there is no one-size-fits-all approach
- However, yet in a flexible way effective conversations will generally have the following shape:
 - Review
 - Discernment
 - Encouragement
 - Planning



Mentoring conversations

Review

Each mentoring session should pick up where the previous one left off. This maintains accountability, continuity and momentum for growth and development.



Mentoring conversations

Discernment

You will be encouraged to think carefully about relevant events and your own responses to those events to gain insights about how God is working.



Mentoring conversations

Encouragement

Inner resources of hope, courage, determination and confidence are nurtured to provide the emotional wherewithal to bring good ideas to action.



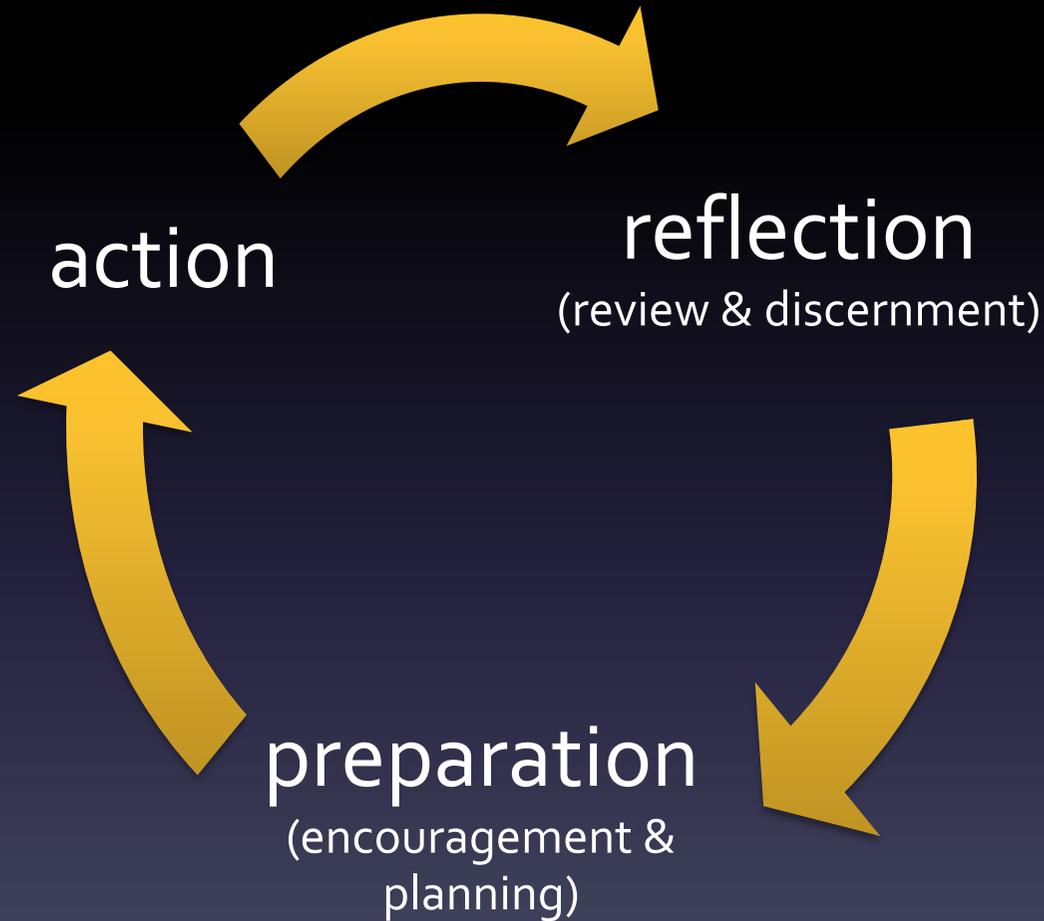
Mentoring conversations

Planning

Working with insights gained through review and discernment, and sifting through options generated in the conversation, you choose a specific plan of action that will be reviewed in the next session.



The Mentoring Cycle



The Mentoring Cycle



The Mentoring Cycle

action

reflection
(review & discernment)

preparation
(encouragement & planning)

Getting to grips with
what's happening
(identify...)

Getting ready for a
faithful response
(promote...)



Modes of Mentoring



Modes of Mentoring

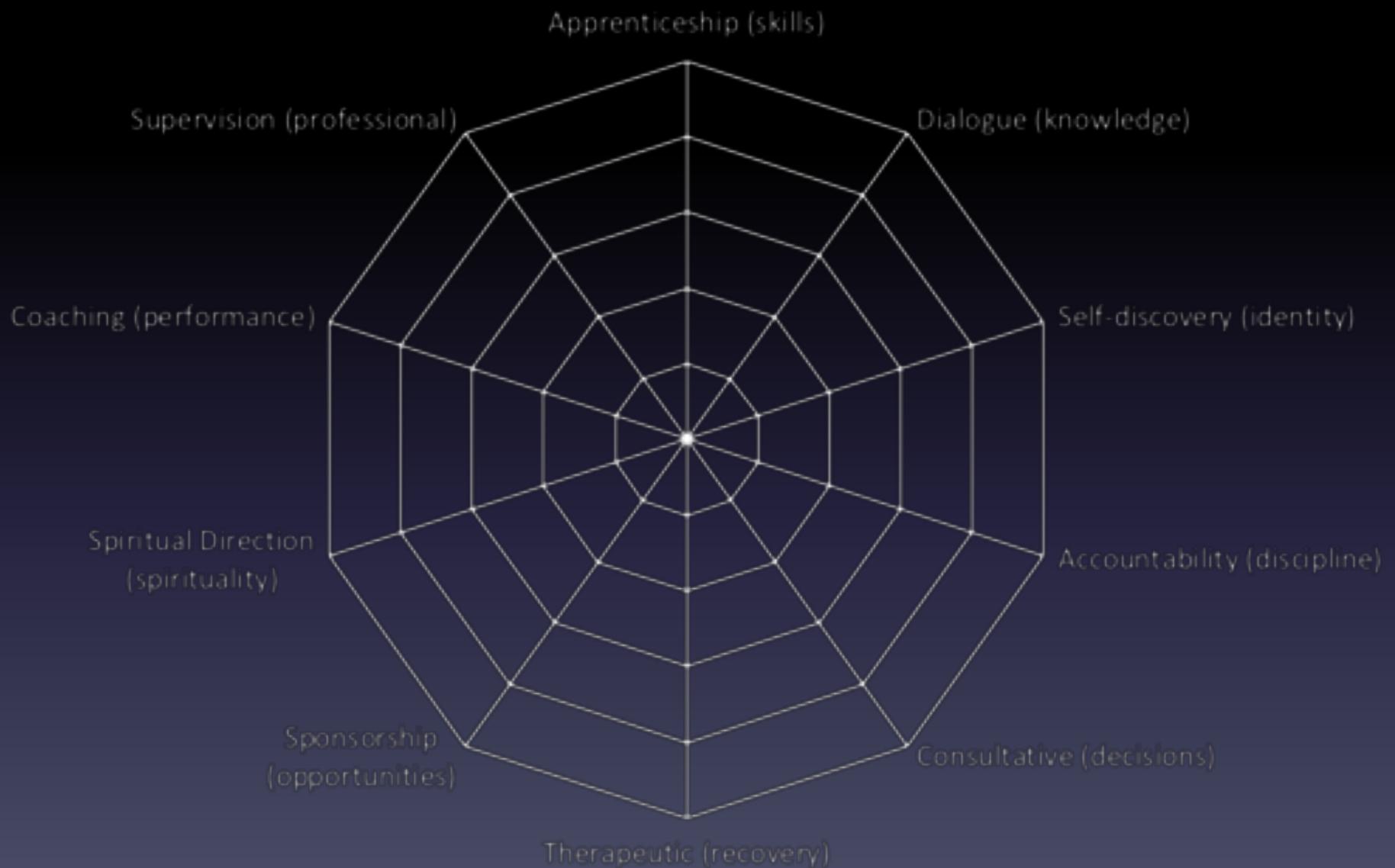
Desired outcome

- Develop skills
- Acquire knowledge
- Clarify identity
- Strengthen discipline
- Make decisions
- Consolidate recovery
- Pursue opportunities
- Deepen spirituality
- Enhance performance
- Professional integrity

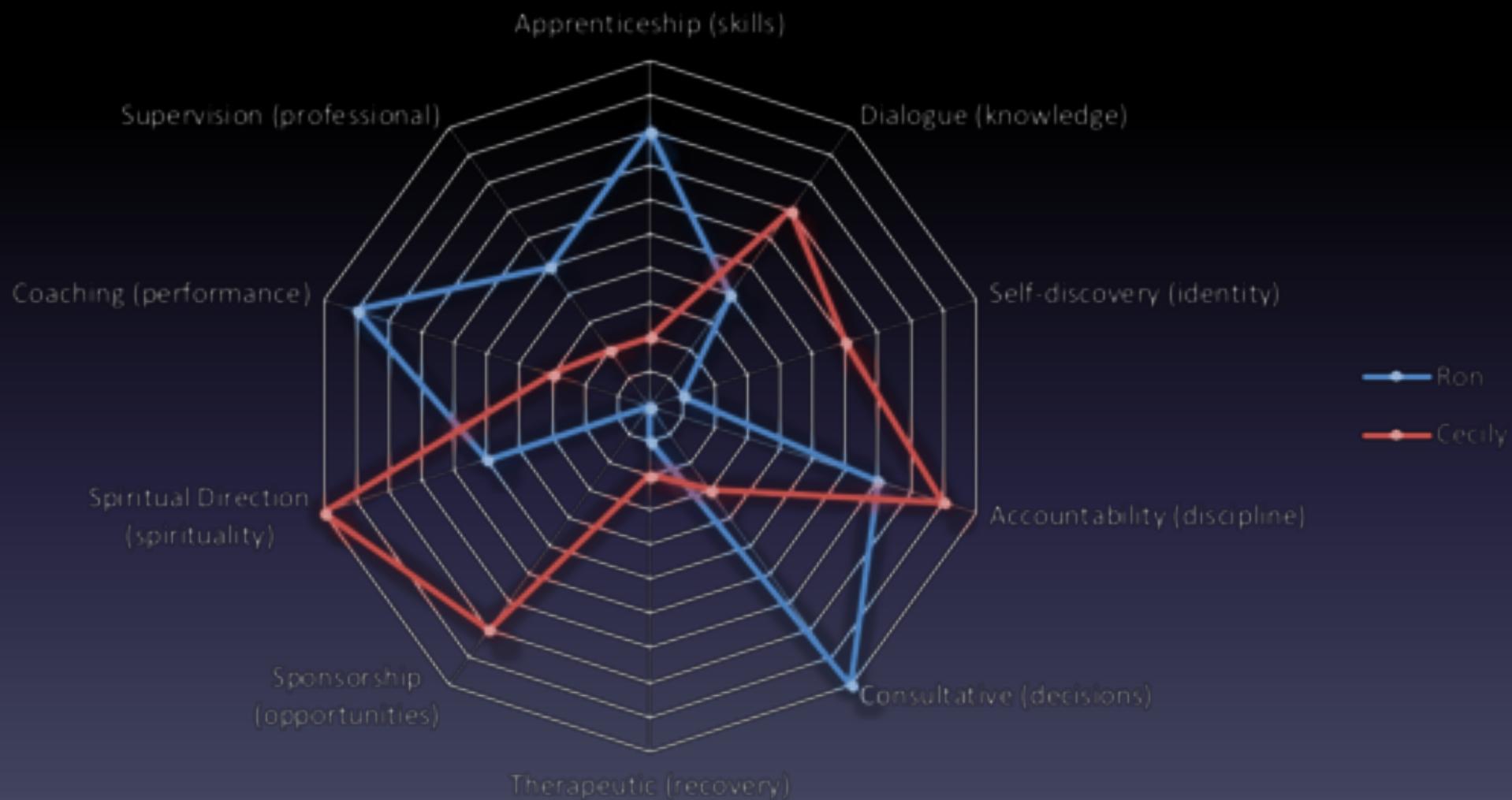
Mentoring mode

- Apprenticeship
- Dialogue
- Self-discovery
- Accountability
- Consultative
- Therapeutic
- Sponsorship
- Spiritual direction
- Coaching
- Supervision

Modes of Mentoring



Modes of Mentoring



Effective Mentoring Environment

1. Intentionality – does not happen by accident
2. Empowerment – leaves the mentoree stronger
3. Uniqueness – God's unique agenda for each person
4. Relationship – mentoring gets personal

These factors powerfully shape mentoring processes and outcomes



Effective Mentoring Environment

1. Intentional

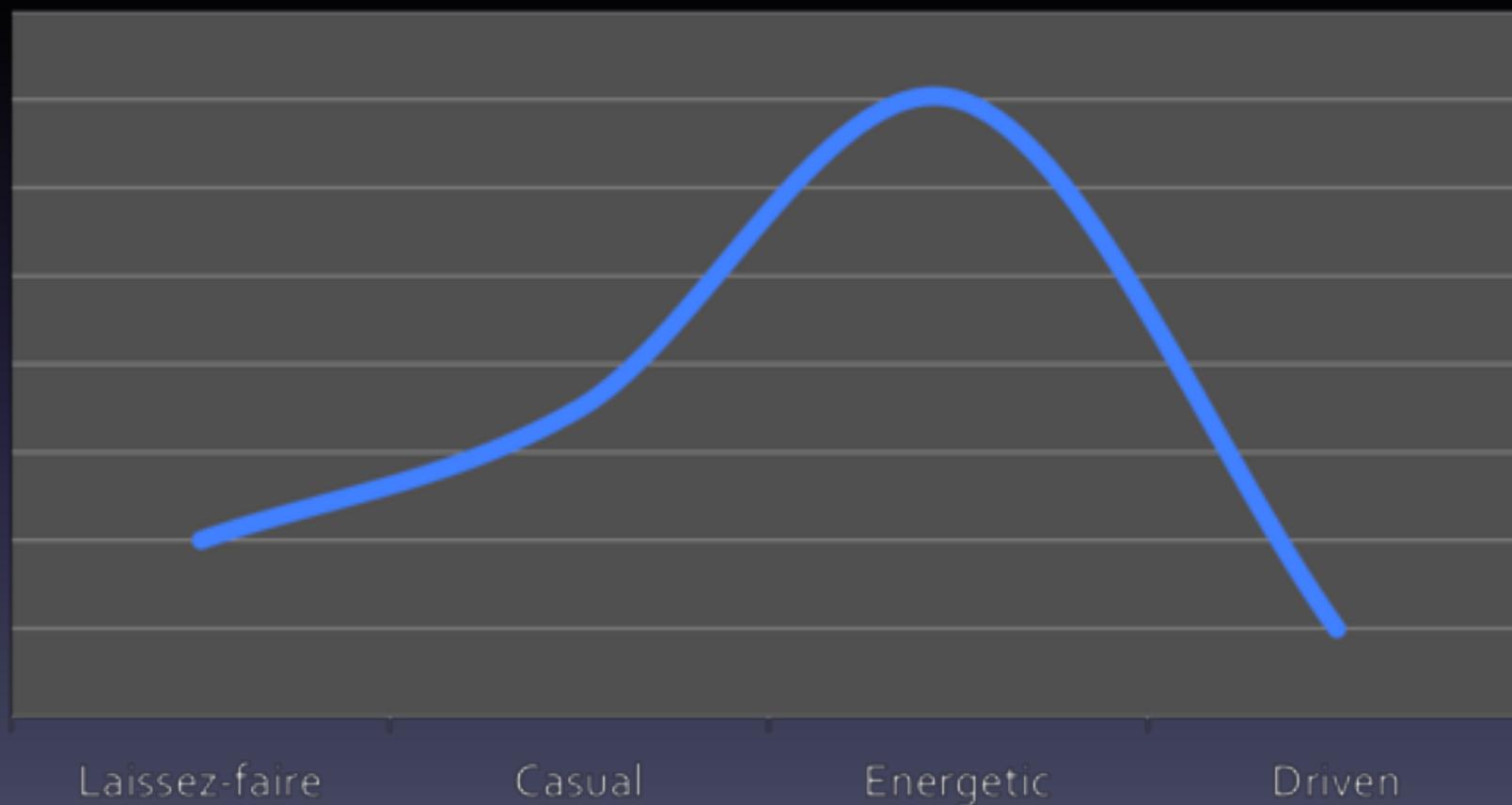
- Clarity – both know what we're doing and how we go about it
- Structure – plan appointments in advance, agree on expectations, responsibilities
- Intensity – prepare and engage in sessions with intellectual and emotional energy
- Continuity – mentors keep track, mentorees embrace accountability



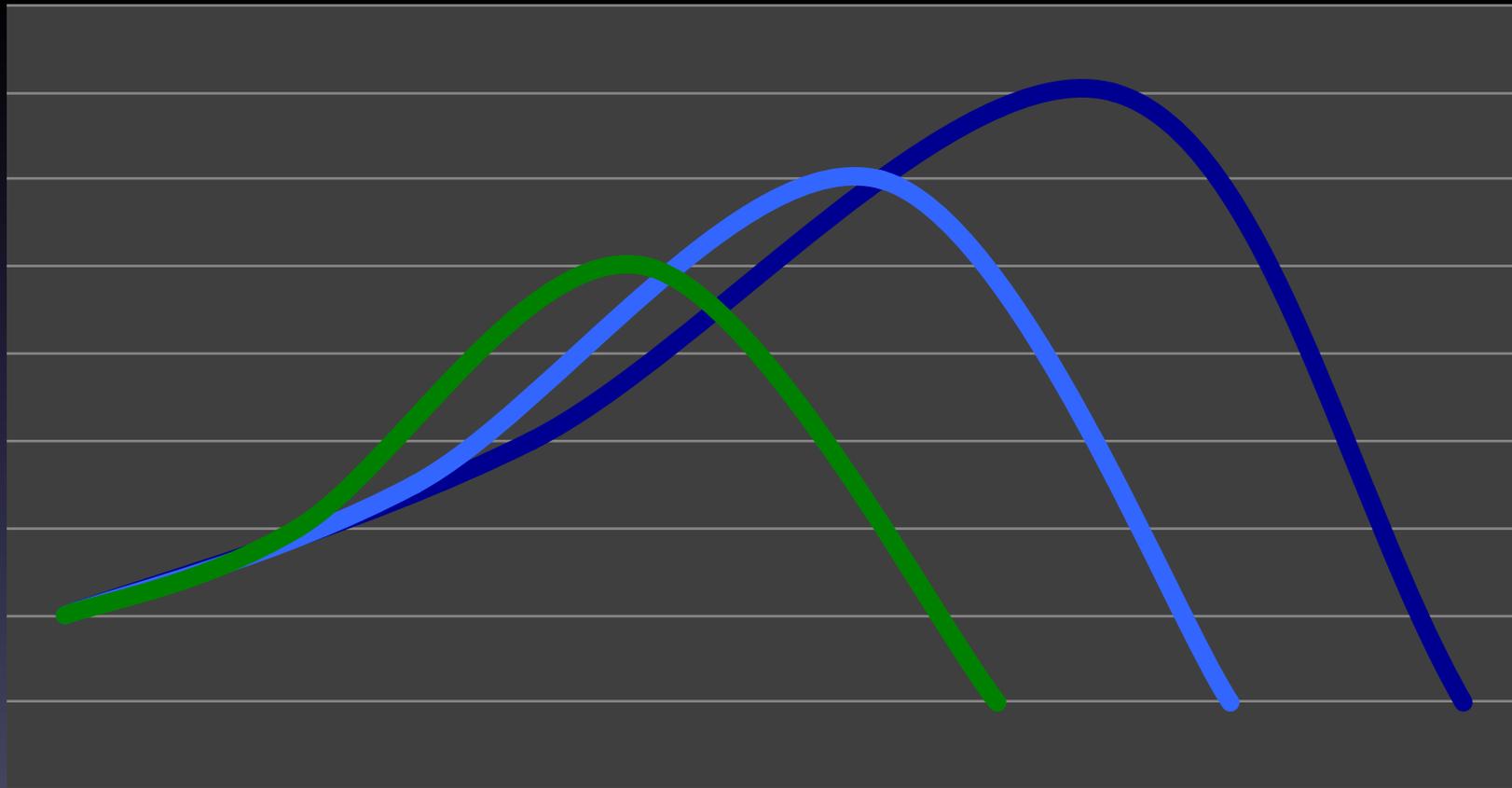
How do you think intentionality would affect the effectiveness of a mentoring relationship?



Mentoring effectiveness against levels of intentionality



Mentoring effectiveness
against levels of intentionality
accounting for strength of relationship



Effective Mentoring Environment

1. Intentional...to the appropriate degree

- Clarity – but don't get tunnel vision; be ready to refocus
- Structure – but don't become rigid; remain flexible
- Intensity – but don't overcook it; be sensitive to what a person can bear
- Continuity – but don't become a judge; simply keep the thread of the story



What could you offer?

Considerations

- Motivation
- Suitability
- Availability
- Skills
- Accountability

