

QUALITIES OF A GOOD MENTOR

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The Ignatian Way to Discover God's Will, p. 74

- A mentor should be wiser (but not necessarily older) than I.
- She should be a very good listener and should neither interrupt nor fade out on me when I am speaking.
- She doesn't necessarily need to be an expert on the particular topic I am discerning, provided she is a good listener and doesn't pretend to be an expert.
- She should have strong self-esteem, such that she doesn't need to be my mentor. (If she needs to be my mentor, then she will advise me in such a way as to make me dependent on her).
- She should be an affirming presence in my life – she should really believe in me and my ideas.
- However, she should also not be afraid to confront me when she thinks I'm wrong.
- She should never attempt to make a decision for me, even if I am consciously or unconsciously pushing her to do so.
- She should be objective in regard to the decision I am considering. Ideally, then, she should be out of the circle of people who are affected by the decision.
- In other words, she should not be a close member of the family, an immediate superior at work, or a best friend.

Where would I find such a mentor? Chances are, there is already someone in my life who has the qualities of a good mentor and with whom I have enjoyed visiting in the past. Perhaps this person is right under my nose: a neighbor, an aunt, a priest, a coworker.