

Three Responsibilities of Resident Mentors

Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love.
–Mother Theresa

What is a Mentor? A mentor is someone willing to reach out and support others on a regular basis. Through sharing their own experience, mentors help those they visit help themselves. Mentors have three responsibilities:

1. To create emotional safety

- i. Remind those you visit that sharing is confidential.
- ii. Be non-judgemental, caring and attentive.

2. To 'walk alongside'

- i. Give them time to talk. Don't try to fix, just listen.
- ii. Show interest, lean in a little, nod at times, be present.

3. To help them understand where to bring their concerns

- i. Always validate concerns first. How? Thank them for bringing it up. This builds trust and safety. Even if the concern is brought up over and over.
- ii. If they bring up an issue that needs attention from a particular department and you don't know how to deal with it, it is OK to say: "I don't know but I'll find out". Then ask staff for help.

Not all problems are fixable. And—it is not your job to fix their problems. Just to be there.

Remember, a problem shared is a problem halved. Often being listened to and validated when sharing is what is needed most. Don't hesitate to ask staff for help.