

Nurse Becoming Ep.086 - The Easiest Way to Get Mentorship as...

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SPEAKERS

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Hello, hello, welcome back to The Nurse Becoming Podcast. It's Amanda, so happy to have you here today. And I'm curious, do you have a squad of colleagues or classmates that are your go to people when it comes to school or work? Hopefully you do. And if you do today, I'm going to give you some ideas on how to utilize that relationship, those relationships to the best of your ability. We're talking all about peer mentoring today. And before we dive into that, though, let's first give some background about why this is even important. So the truth is that when we are in new situations, whether we are in school learning or entering our first job or a new role, imposter syndrome tends to rear its ugly head. And if that term is new to you, or you're not sure what imposter syndrome is, definitely go back and listen to episode number 10, where I talk all about imposter syndrome. But briefly, imposter syndrome is very common among high achieving individuals, and tends to occur as a result of frequent feelings of self doubt and fear. Frequent feelings of self doubt and fear, maybe you can relate to this... These feelings and these sentiments tend to lead to an overall feeling of basically thinking that you're a fraud or feeling like you're a fraud, as the name implies, or an imposter. And imposter syndrome can lead to anxiety and depression, and decreased confidence overall and in the workplace. Decreased job satisfaction, decreased job performance. So this is a real thing that affects pretty much everybody across the gender spectrum. And it's something that I think has come to light a little bit more in the past few years. And I try to shine a light on this as much as possible, because I see it overwhelmingly in new nurses and new nurse practitioners. And research has shown that there are several effective strategies to combat imposter syndrome, particularly among nurse practitioners. And you can hear about all those strategies back in episode number 10. But one of the strategies that I'm going to shine a light on today is peer mentorship. Now, if you have a group of friends or colleagues who you are close with, it's entirely possible that you are already engaging in peer mentorship. But let's define it a little bit more so that you can have some context about what I'm talking about. Peer mentorship allows you to both share your experiences, which may reveal shared feelings of inadequacy, or self doubt, which, like we said, are common in imposter syndrome, in the sharing of these experiences, is an excellent first step to moving through those feelings and kind of coming out on the other side of this imposter syndrome. And oftentimes your peers can help validate your feelings, validate your

experience, which is another way of moving through these feelings. So basically, you know, one of the big ways to move through imposter syndrome and to gain more competence, particularly in the workplace, is to share your experiences and to have your experiences validated. Okay, so it's not always that you have this one skill that needs fixing, right, like so much of this is just being able to be seen and heard and understood that what you are going through is normal and valid. And that you haven't, you're not the only one who's ever gone through it. And so, being in a group of peers, meaning people who are going through it around the same time as you or who are just, you know, one little step ahead can be really, really helpful. Because it kind of creates this buffer of people who you can go to and say, "Hey, this is my experience", and they can say it's normal, or they can reflect back to you, you know, your experience and help you process through it. Now being in a mentorship relationship, can often involve giving advice. So you might when you think of the word mentorship, you might assume that it's, you know, someone who's 10 years ahead mentoring someone who's new, but that's not always the case. You don't always have to be able to give concrete advice of this is how I did it or this is how you do it in order to mentor someone. Mentorship can also look like active listening, showing empathy, asking reflective questions that can help someone process through their experience and come to their own conclusions. Okay. And in addition to the benefits that we just mentioned, peer mentorship relationships can often last a long time, they've actually been shown to often last longer than more formal relationships that are separated by a lot of years. And this is because you are moving through similar phases together, which tends to really strengthen the bond of the relationship. So to put some things into action for you to make this a, you know, an actionable episode, I have five steps or five plans you can make with your peer mentorship group today, to make the most of it. And remember, you can start from anywhere with this, right. So this can be just a group of friends that you have of colleagues. Or maybe you have some people in mind who could serve this purpose in your life. And so here are some five steps, or five plans I'm going to walk you through. So the first thing is to name it, okay? So I want you to talk to your group of friends, or classmates or colleagues, about making the group a bit more formal, kind of putting a name on it, by defining the benefit that you are hoping this relationship can provide. So, you know, you've listened to this episode, and you're like, hey, I do have this group of friends, we really do support each other. And maybe you want to evolve this relationship into something more formal and kind of put a sticker on it, so to speak. So you might say to them, "Hey, I was listening to a podcast that talked about friend groups, at work, or at school being really great opportunities for peer mentorship, how do you feel about making this friend group a bit more official?" Okay, so just kind of opening the door to that conversation, to be able to put a stamp, put a sticker on it, and have this not just be a social group, but something where you know, you serve a little bit of a bigger purpose. So that's step one, name it. Number two is to define it. So depending on how everyone in the group feels about this, decide together what the group will do to provide the space for mentorship. So basically, how are you going to communicate? How are you going to connect? Where are you going to create this space? So for example, will you have a group text thread and you know, set a little bit of a parameter that everyone should check in, you know, once a week or whatever, will you have meetups in person, maybe you'll have virtual meetups, will you meet asynchronously on an app like Voxer, which is a walkie talkie app, or Marco Polo, which is a, like a video message app. Decide what you need to have in place to get out of it what you want. And this should really be decided, you know, with the group together, if all are on board with the plan. So that's the second one define it. The third is schedule it. So I want you to make sure that you get your meetings on the calendar, and that you show up for your meetups, right. So you know you this is where you actually have to make sure that you're scheduling the time to do the work that you are committing to what this group will do for you. And, you know, if you're someone who maybe struggles with the follow through, or you know, you like things, in ideas, but have trouble turning into reality, hopefully there is at least someone in your group, who can

be in charge of the scheduling to make sure that you are putting a date on the calendar, if you are going to meet you know, synchronously. So don't just create the group, take it all the way through and make sure that you are, you know, putting those times in your calendar to actually meet as well. So that's the third one, schedule it. The fourth is talk about it. Now, when you meet, try to ensure dedicated time for each group member to share what's going on in their professional life or their student life. However, you've decided to, you know, whatever the goal is of this little container that you've created. So, you know, especially if it's on the bigger side, or if there's someone who tends to be more introverted, you know, going out of the way to make sure that everyone has time to share what they're going through is really great. And you can do that formally by saying, okay, you know, this month, or you can like divide the meeting into 15 minute chunks and kind of give each person the spotlight for each chunk of time. Or you can just be really intentional about making sure that you're asking everybody, "Hey, what are you going through? How can we help you? How can we support okay?" And if you're not the one getting getting the help in this situation, you want to be an engaged listener, you want to provide both support and solutions to whatever your friend is going through. So that's number four, talk about it. And number five is celebrate it. So I want you to remember to acknowledge and celebrate milestones as you move through your time. I want you to incorporate gratitude and positivity as much as possible in your group, you know, if it turns into a gripe group, you know, a group that's just spent for complaining, it may not be as productive as you'd hope. And that's not to say that you can't gripe, right, there is there's definitely some healing and some bonding in debriefing and decompressing after certain situations. But if you can commit as a group to always take situations the next step by by ending with some sort of support or solution for each challenge or problem, that will be really helpful and make sure that it doesn't turn into this kind of negative toxic "Let's just, you know, complain about everything that's wrong and not do anything about it." So number five is, celebrate it. So let's go through these five steps. Again, the first one is name it, make sure that you're talking to your group, and saying, "Hey, do you want to do you want to make this official". Number to define it. So talk to your group and decide together, how you will create the space whether it's a text group or virtual meetings or asynchronous on an app, decide what you're going to have in place to meet. Number three is schedule it. So make sure that you get your meetings on the calendar and show up for your meetups and check in regularly. Four: you're going to talk about it, you're going to give everybody the space and the time to share. And you're going to not just always jump to giving advice, but be engaged and active listeners and provide both support and solutions depending on what that person is looking for. And the fifth and last one is celebrate it, you're going to acknowledge and celebrate milestones that you go through together, you're going to take the time to practice some gratitude. And try to avoid turning it into a complaining group, because that's going to be a bit counterproductive to your purpose. And if all this sounds good to you, and you're kind of looking for this opportunity, maybe you don't have a group in place already and you want to explore what I have put together for you. I want to let you know that the NP Society Mentorship Program is now open for enrollment. If you are listening in real time when this episode comes out, I want to tell you more about this. So we are in the middle of a promotion for the NP Society, which is the monthly membership for nurse practitioners and students. But what we've done is we've added on an additional layer, a little bit more involved layer & program called the NP Society Group Mentorship Program. And in this program, this is a 12 week program that includes virtual calls, a dedicated chat container, and a curriculum to help new nurse practitioners transition to their new role. So there are three of us mentors in this in this first group, we are only accepting 20 at maximum for this first round this first cohort, because it's the first time we're doing it. So I really hope that you'll consider joining us you can get all the details at the NPsociety.com. And again, the NP Society, it's a group mentorship program, it's not clinical focused mentorship, it's more focused on role transition, building confidence, moving past imposter syndrome, efficiency kind of things that are applicable to

every specialty, I specifically didn't want to make this a niche, specialty specific type of program. And we'll be accepting up to 20 mentees in this first group, so you can go to theNPsociety.com to get more information and I hope you'll consider joining us if you are either in your first nurse practitioner job or it's starting within the next few weeks that is the kind of one prerequisite is that you are already practicing as a nurse practitioner or you will be kind of by the beginning of March 2022. And if you're listening to this after after this has been live do still go to The NP Society calm because my hope is that after this first group, this will turn into a rolling admission mentorship program. So there may be an opportunity available to you even if we've closed the enrollment for this particular session. So I hope this has been helpful. Go out find your your peer mentors, find your squad and just remember how important it is to have connection and community in your life. Not just for your professional happiness, but for your overall happiness. So catch you next week! Be good to each other!