



New MENTEE Membership

Welcome & Orientation Packet

Congratulations on becoming a MENTEE LEVEL member of MentorCONNECT!

Your MentorCONNECT Leadership Team has compiled some helpful information to get you off to the right start and help you make the most of your mentoring experience.

This information packet is brief, but it is very important for you to review ALL of the information here before beginning to work with your mentor!

Included you will find:

1. Overview of your **MENTEE** level membership benefits.
2. The “Mentor Model” as Outlined in “Beating Ana”
3. About the MentorCONNECT Forums
4. How to Make a Mentoring Match
5. New Mentoring Team “Immediate Action Plan”
6. Mentoring Team “Assessment Plan”
7. MentorCONNECT’s Abuse Reporting Requirements (*legal stuff you need to know*)
8. Mentoring Team “Getting to Know You” Basics (Communications & Listening Skills 101)
9. Mentoring FAQ
10. MC’s Mentee Guidelines
11. Mentee Surveys
12. How to upgrade to MENTOR level membership.

Mentoring Match Questions: mentormatch@mentorconnect-ed.org

General Questions: Visit the Mentees Only Forum within the MentorCONNECT Forums
Log in to the Forums using your email address and password, then visit Forums – Restricted Forums –
Mentees Only, OR <http://www.mentorconnect-edforums.org/forum/mentees-only>

It is great to have you as a part of our growing community!

With all our best,

Your MentorCONNECT Leadership Team



Overview of Your MENTEE Level Membership Benefits

As a Mentee level member of MentorCONNECT, your membership benefits can be accessed within the member Forums at www.mentorconnect-edforums.org.

Your benefits are focused on offering extra one-to-one and peer group recovery support.

Your one-to-one recovery support benefits include the following:

- You have the option to request a mentoring match for extra individual recovery support.

Your group recovery support benefits include the following:

- Your Mentee badge gains you access to the Mentees-Only Forums.
- You can create and update your own personal recovery blog.
- You can participate in online group discussions as available.
- You can join in the Monday Night Chat Support Group discussions.
- You can meet and connect with new recovery friends.
- You can receive recovery support from peers and offer your support to others.
- You can learn about upcoming free events (like our monthly teleconferences).
- You can access past teleconference podcasts for additional recovery support.
- You can take part in periodic special events (instructions will be posted inside the Forums).



The “Mentor Model” as Outlined in “Beating Ana”

Beating Ana is our community's recommended mentoring “how-to” text.

To date, **Beating Ana** is the only book written specifically to outline how mentoring can work in an eating disorders recovery setting and its potential positive impact.

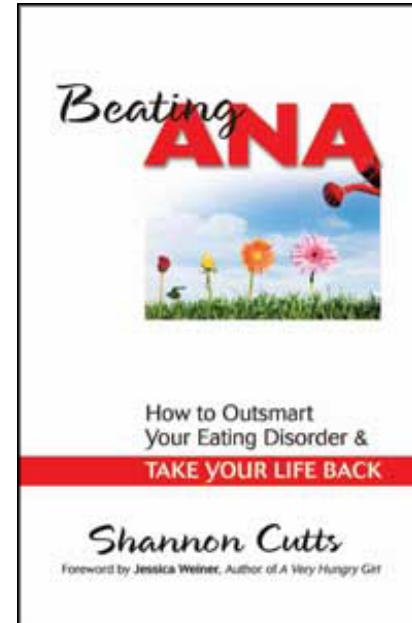
The book also offers a history of our founder's heart for mentoring and how MentorCONNECT itself began.

The book also contains an overview of the basic mentoring principles used on MentorCONNECT.

Finally, our founder shares 27 chapters of recovery toolkit tips – the same tips she used during her own recovery!

Important definitions from “Beating Ana”:

- **Mentor:** *a trusted guide who has knowledge and experience in a certain area, and is willing and able to share it.*
- **Mentee:** *a person in need of guidance and instruction, and is willing to receive it.*
- **The Mentor Model:** *the voluntary, ongoing, interactive relationship between mentor and mentee (giver and receiver), for the sole purpose of facilitating progress in recovery.*



About the MentorCONNECT Forums

The MentorCONNECT Forums is the place where your fellow members will gather regularly for additional peer support. You can find the Forums at www.mentorconnect-edforums.org

Please consult the packet that came with your welcome materials for a thorough overview of your forums membership benefits and how to access them.

Questions:

If you did not receive your **invitation to join** the Forums, or you are having **trouble logging in for the first time**, please send an email to shan@mentorconnect-ed.org

****NOTE:** *It may take up to 2 business days to gain access to the restricted forums.*

If you have any questions about the **Forums once you have successfully logged in for the first time**, please send an email to: abbey@mentorconnect-ed.org



How to Make a Mentoring Match

Making a mentoring match is not an exact science. Shannon, MentorCONNECT's founder, waited 8 years before she met her first mentor!

Obviously, MentorCONNECT was created in hopes no one seeking a mentor would have to wait so long!

But mentoring is still a relationship just like any other, and as such it may take a few tries to find the right fit. As such, we ask you to be **proactive, patient, and persistent** as you seek a match.

Follow these simple steps to request a mentor to match with:

1. Navigate to the Find A Mentor page (Navigate to Forums – Restricted Forums – Find a Mentor)
2. Review the list of available volunteer mentors
3. When you find the mentor you would like to request a match with, click the link beneath their profile (it will say "TO REQUEST A MATCH WITH THIS MENTOR CLICK HERE")
4. Complete your request (you may share anything you like about your recovery goals, journey to date, reasons for requesting to match with that particular mentor, etc.)
5. When you click "submit," this will automatically transmit your match request to the Coordinator
6. You will receive a response in 3-5 business days
7. If your match request cannot be approved for any reason, you will then be invited to request a second choice mentor to match with

Before you upgrade, please be aware of the following:

- MentorCONNECT does not "match" mentors and mentees – we simply provide a way for available mentors and interested mentees to connect and match.
- As such, MentorCONNECT makes no guarantees of a mentoring match. Sometimes we have many available mentors, and sometimes demand is such that there may be a wait list.
- You may not at any time request a mentoring match with a mentor of the opposite gender (if you have a special circumstance, please send an email to mentormatch@mentorconnect-ed.org).
- Mentees who do not follow this system will have their matching privileges revoked.
- Mentees MUST be proactive in reaching out to their chosen mentor – if you are not prepared to do this, please reconsider requesting a match until you feel ready to do so.

How to Make a Successful Mentoring Match

Mentee members who tend to be successful at making a mentoring match share the following qualities.

- Their recovery is always the #1 priority
- They are willing to adapt to their mentor's schedule and availability
- Their criteria for selecting a mentor does not require synchronicity (re: age, diagnosis, etc)
- They thoroughly read and follow the Immediate Action Plan (in this packet) to make sure their selected mentor is a good match before they begin working together
- They take the initiative in the mentoring match to seek support, share openly, and initiate dialogs



New Mentoring Team “Immediate Action Plan”

Dear MentorCONNECT Mentor-Mentee Team,

You have embarked upon a very exciting adventure in your new mentoring matchup!

To ensure that your partnership gets off to a great start, please take the following steps right away.

1. Decide when, where, how, and how often you will talk. In particular, discuss these questions:
 - *What days/times are you available for mentoring work?*
 - *How often can I contact you?*
 - *How often can I expect to hear back from you?*
 - *Do you prefer to work by email, phone, text, or other communication method?*
2. Thoroughly review this **Mentee Orientation Packet** together to ensure you have a good working knowledge of each partner’s role and responsibilities in a mentoring context
3. Ensure you both have an active **Community Forums** profiles set up so that you can both use the private, secure, confidential email system and participate in group mentoring activities as a team
4. Discuss the procedure you will both for communicating with each other use should either of you decide to pause or end the partnership



Mentoring Team Assessment Plan

Dear MentorCONNECT Mentor-Mentee Team,

As you progress in your partnership, we suggest that you schedule periodic times to reconvene as a team and assess the efficacy of the matchup.

You may create your own assessment plan or use MentorCONNECT's suggested plan:

1. Pick a regular recurring assessment time. This could be every quarter, every half year, three times per year, once per year, or another schedule as you best see fit
2. Mark your recurring assessment time on your mutual calendars, and agree to convene regularly on that date to discuss openly, honestly, and without judgment your mutual degree of satisfaction with the partnership
3. You may also wish to use the Assessment Questionnaire below to assist you with the conversation

Mentoring Team Assessment Questionnaire

Directions: For each team member, mark your individual satisfaction level from 1 to 10, with 1=very dissatisfied and 10=very satisfied. Then discuss your answers with your teammate.

- *How satisfied are you with the frequency of your communications?*
- *How satisfied are you with the method (phone, email, in person, text, etc.) of your communications?*
- *How satisfied are you with the content of your communications?*
- *How beneficial mentorship is to helping you achieve your recovery/service goals?*
- *What (if anything) could help to improve your satisfaction with the partnership?*



MentorCONNECT's Abuse Reporting Requirements (*legal stuff you need to know*)

From time to time, you may decide you wish to report past or ongoing abuse to a peer, mentor, or senior member of the MentorCONNECT team.

Abuse can be neglect, physical, sexual, or emotional.

In all things here on MentorCONNECT we strive to maintain the strictest of confidentiality.

However, please be aware that if you are a minor* now, or you were a minor at the time the abuse occurred, should you choose to disclose abuse to a peer, your mentor or any other person on MentorCONNECT's Leadership Team, we may be legally required to report it to the appropriate authorities in your place of residence.**

We strongly urge you to think carefully about the best person to disclose abuse to. For general purposes, reporting abuse to someone closer to home, and preferably a member of your professional treatment team, is the best and fastest route to obtain help and protection.

MentorCONNECT is not designed to handle matters of abuse, nor is the organization set up to provide referrals or act as a crisis care service. Please be aware we will report cases of abuse of a minor if they are disclosed and we are legally required to do so**, but we are not chartered nor equipped to provide additional support beyond our legal reporting obligations.

* For general purposes, a "minor" is an individual who has not yet turned 18.

** Abuse reporting requirements can vary by country.



Mentoring Team “Getting to Know You” Basics (Communication & Listening 101)

Communications Basics

The rules of good communications are simple. Learning and practicing these communications basics will support all of your experiences here within MentorCONNECT.

NOTE: Since *MentorCONNECT* mentoring is primarily conducted online, these basics are even more important to ensure the effectiveness of your partnership!

1. Listening skills: Listen to what the other person is saying. It is often helpful to repeat back what you have heard from the other person before responding to make sure you have understood correctly
2. Speaking skills: Email and phone communications cut out 90% of how we “hear” each other – nonverbally through visual and body language cues. So spend time considering what you say, or type, to ensure clarity and minimize miscommunication
3. Conflict resolution skills: From time to time, miscommunication may occur. Stay calm. Backtrack to discover where the misunderstanding first began. Using your listening and speaking skills, work from that point forward to clear up any confusion

Getting To Know You

It is important to spend time getting to know your mentor. You may wish to share some time just chatting about favorite books, movies, or personal recovery milestones as a precursor to deeper conversations.

You can use the questions below as ice-breakers:

- *What are your favorite recovery books or movies and why?*
- *Can you share a bit more about your personal recovery story?*
- *Who are your personal recovery heroes or role models and why?*
- *What are your favorite recovery websites and why?*
- *What is your current support system?*
- *Why did you want to serve as a mentor?*



Mentoring FAQ

Below are some frequently asked questions from other mentees that can help you make the most of your mentoring match.

MentorCONNECT has both male and female mentor and mentee members. Can I seek or accept a mentor who is not my same gender?

We only offer same-gender mentor-mentee matching opportunities. You may not at any time match with a mentor who is not your same gender unless you receive prior written approval from the Mentoring Match Coordinator to do so.

How often do mentors and mentees communicate each week?

It really depends on the team. You will set up those expectations in your initial Communications Parameters & Boundaries discussion. If your needs change, be sure to tell your mentor!

What types of communications do mentoring teams use?

It depends on the team. You and your mentor will decide whether email, phone or some other means is preferable.

How do I express to my mentor that I need to talk more often?

Direct communication is always the best bet. Just tell your mentor what you need, and if s/he is not able to meet your need for increased support, you may need to consider other sources of support (logging in to the Community Forums offers a wealth of additional support opportunities!) You may request a rematch with a new mentor if nothing else you have tried is satisfactory.

I really need help but I don't want to bother my mentor. What should I do?

Your mentoring partnership only holds value if you use it. If you do not tell your mentor what you need, s/he has no way of knowing you need help and support. Keep in mind that each MentorCONNECT mentor has CHOSEN to volunteer their time to be matched with a mentee. They want to help – and they get just as much out of it as you do!

My mentor hasn't contacted me. Should I keep waiting?

Absolutely not. If you need help, ask for it – this is your responsibility. Your mentor can help you but YOU are the one who will drive the partnership's effectiveness by clearly communicating what you are struggling with and asking for help when you need it. Our mentors have been trained to be re-active to their mentee(s) efforts to communicate. The more proactive you are, the more help you will receive.



Mentoring FAQ, continued

How can my mentor help me?

We have heard all kinds of wonderful stories from our mentee members, who mention how helpful it is to have accountability, to have someone to talk to, to receive positive encouragement and inspiration, to have additional support in between therapy and treatment sessions, to have someone who knows what it is like to be in recovery and understands....and the list just goes on and on.

My mentor has asked me for money or other personal assistance beyond the scope of our mentoring partnership – what should I do?

MentorCONNECT does not support or condone these types of requests. Members who solicit money from other members in any context will have their membership benefits revoked. Please be advised that you offer assistance at your own risk and MentorCONNECT cannot be held liable for any transactions you voluntarily enter into.

I know what I need but I do not know how to ask for help.

This is what a mentoring partnership is all about – to give you a safe, trusted relationship within which to learn these skills, which are vital to achieving your recovery goals. The one person you are certain not to receive rejection from is your mentor. So if you are having trouble, ask your mentor what s/he did when s/he needed to ask for help and didn't know how. Then try that.

I feel like my mentor and I are not a good match and I want to switch mentors. How can I do that?

Mentoring is not an exact science – it is a relationship like any other, and there needs to be a certain “chemistry” in order for it to grow and thrive. If you feel like you would benefit from switching mentors, the first thing you need to do is inform the MC Leadership Team of your decision by contacting the Mentoring Match Coordinator (mentormatch@mentorconnect-ed.org). Then, wait for approval to proceed. Next, you should inform your current mentor. Only after you have informed your current mentor may you seek a new match. And as always you must inform the Mentoring Match Coordinator as soon as you have re-matched.

I have experienced a change in situation and need to take a break from being mentored.

We understand that sometimes life happens. For the sake of closure, we ask that our mentoring teams to speak directly when one or both parties wish to end the partnership. If you need any assistance in ending your mentoring match, please send an email to the Mentoring Match Coordinator to let us know.



MENTEE GUIDELINES

It is important for you to be aware of what mentoring is, and what it isn't. We have included the Mentee Guidelines from the book **Beating Ana** here as well for your review.

- **Screen your mentor carefully.** Accept only a mentor who has demonstrated sustained remission from disordered eating thoughts and coping behaviors for at least twelve consecutive months
- **Seek complimentary recovery experiences.** While it is not necessarily essential that your mentor have achieved recovery from the exact same issue you are struggling with, s/he should have firsthand experience of going through the recovery process itself
- **Be clear about your readiness and motivations for seeking mentoring.** If you can state verbally and in writing with 100% certainty that you are ready, willing and able to work towards your own recovery, then you know that you are ready to seek a mentor
- **Trust your gut** - mentoring is a unique relationship, and it may take a couple of tries to find the right 'fit' for your needs
- **If you are a minor**, obtain parent or guardian permission before seeking a mentor
- **Do not attempt** to use the advice or insight of your mentor to replace the advice and care of a qualified medical professional – instead, integrate your mentor into any existing support network you already have
- **Be open and honest** with any existing treatment team about the inclusion of your mentor, and vice versa with your mentor about your treatment team
- **Communicate clearly** with your mentor about what you are hoping to obtain out of a mentoring relationship
- **Follow the guidelines** your mentor provides for how and when to contact them
- **Be proactive** - use the support and experience of your mentor whenever you feel the need
- **Practice the HOW of recovery** - be honest, open and willing to explore new ways of responding to life's challenges, try on new ideas for size, and put into practice suggestions before accepting or rejecting their validity
- **Under no circumstances** should you adopt any suggestion or idea that has a negative impact on your recovery goals, EVEN IF it has worked well for someone else in their recovery!
- **Focus on daily troubleshooting** to build skills to use in place of your eating disorder in stressful situations
- **Do not be too concerned** if your mentor's personal story varies from your own - focus more on the underlying coping skills that aided your mentor in their recovery process and how you might apply them in your own life as well
- **Do not place the responsibility for your recovery** on your mentor or any other treatment team member - it is YOU who will benefit most from your own recovery
- **Seek progress over perfection.** Even if your mentor can NOW clearly and quickly articulate potential solutions to longstanding issues you are facing, remember that s/he was once standing in your shoes. It takes time for EVERYONE to achieve lasting recovery! You are no exception – and anything worth having is worth waiting and working for
- **Set your own pace** for your recovery - do not allow anyone to push you into situations or experiences that you feel inadequately prepared for
- **Let love be your guide.** If you feel consistent, foundational love and support from your mentor, regardless of any temporary differences of opinion, fears or resistances that may arise, then that is a good indication that the relationship is still productive and worth continuing



Required Mentee Surveys

Periodically you may receive a short survey* to assess your experience of your mentoring match.

This survey gives the Leadership Team valuable information about how your mentoring partnership is proceeding, what is working well, where your team may need extra support, and how we might be able to improve our programs and services.

The survey will ask basic questions and should not take more than 3-5 minutes to complete.

Your survey will come via email. It will be sent to the email address you submitted when you applied to join MentorCONNECT. If your email address has changed it is your responsibility to let us know.

Completing the survey in a timely manner (within 1 week of receipt) is a requirement for all MentorCONNECT mentee members, so please express any concerns you may have about your ability to comply by sending an email to: mentormatch@mentorconnect-ed.org

Survey questions may include but are not limited to the following:

- *Requests to update contact information*
- *The name of your mentor*
- *How often you contact your mentor*
- *What is going well*
- *What is not going well*
- *Any concerns or questions that you have*
- *How can we help and support you more effectively*
- *Are you interested in volunteer opportunities on MentorCONNECT*

***NOTE:** This short survey is your opportunity to tell us what your experience of being mentored has been like, what is working well, what is not working well and how we can help!



How to Upgrade to MENTOR Level Membership

Mentoring forms the foundation for everything we do here at MentorCONNECT – as such, the mentor-mentee match bond is the most valuable benefit our community can offer!

At some point, you may decide you wish to upgrade to MENTOR level membership and offer your service as one of MentorCONNECT's caring volunteer mentors.

At this level, you may continue enjoying all of your current membership benefits, while also accepting match requests from mentee(s) in your new role as a mentor.

To upgrade to Mentor level membership, you may follow these simple steps:

1. Complete the Mentor Upgrade Application:
<https://mentorconnect.wufoo.com/forms/mentorconnect-upgrade-application/>
2. You will be contacted within 3-5 business days with instructions for completing your pre-approval interview
3. You will also have a chance during the interview to ask any questions you have
4. Once you have completed the pre-approval interview you will receive a second email indicating whether you are approved to serve as a volunteer mentor