

Mentoring is a very powerful tool where the mentor and mentee exchange experiences and things in life, and where the process of change, empowerment and knowledge happen in both directions.

For sure, many of us remember an aunt, teacher or a friend of our parents whom we used to explain our sorrows, our passions, our goals in life or what we wanted to do...someone who looked up to and listened to...Let's say a mentor who was with us a part of our lives (or all our life).

Mentoring means trust. Mentoring means sharing moments, lessons, passions and sorrow. Mentoring is about knowing each other. Mentoring is to walk together, not one in front and one behind, but side by side. Mentoring also is about letting the other person trip while they take hold of their decisions and we accompany them in this process.

Mentoring is a tool for social intervention that nurtures a relationship between two people who, on a voluntary basis, make themselves available to individually support another person who is at risk of being socially excluded or who is going through a difficult moment in life.

Luckily, mentoring is in full swing!

But as all things that become a fashion, it has its dangers: someone who used to do X, now does mentoring, or does it without knowing what it is exactly. We mostly work with vulnerable groups and it's good to recall that if you don't do thing right, it may be better not to do them at all.

Mentoring is a very powerful tool where the mentor and mentee exchange experiences and things in life, and where the process of change, empowerment and knowledge happen in both directions. But the mentee is the one who should steer their own process and where the professional offers support, supervises their relationship and the process.

Many scientific studies confirm the quality standards for a mentoring project. Just to get an idea: at an international level, the [University of Massachusetts](#) has a research lab on mentoring, while in Europe there is the [European Center for Evidence-Based Mentoring](#) and in Catalonia, the [Coordinadora de Mentoria Social](#), a group of organizations which are developing mentoring projects targeted on groups at social risk.

Mentoring is experiencing a nice moment with consolidated projects and many new projects that are emerging and drawing on the experience of previous projects, and we must grasp this experience! But we also face many future challenges such as promoting mentoring projects and certify them with minimum quality standards, as has been done in countries like Scotland and the USA. We need to become aware of the importance of training and monitoring volunteers, and provide them with the tools to carry out their tasks, while providing the specific training for technicians working with mentoring projects and encourage local impact assessments. It is a good example the project of [University of Girona](#) which aims to analyse how the social mentoring projects can improve the social inclusion of the migrants and refugees.

There is a lot of work to be done, and if we want to do things properly, we must roll up our sleeves and work with passion, love and care, to contribute our little bit in fighting against social inequality.