



Niagara Training & Adjustment Board
le Conseil de formation et d'adaptation
de la main d'oeuvre de Niagara

**FOSTERING OPPORTUNITY:
A MENTORSHIP MODEL FOR
WOMEN IN NIAGARA**

APRIL 2006



NTAB would like to extend our sincere thanks to our sponsors for their continued support.



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The Niagara Training & Adjustment Board would like to thank all those who have contributed information and input to this report. It is only through such involvement and active participation that we can continue to identify training and adjustment issues and strategically formulate local solutions that will impact Niagara's labour force development. Your input is very important and appreciated.

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NOTE:

The Niagara Training & Adjustment Board acknowledges the limitation of this document and will continue to seek out information in areas that require further analysis and action.

Proposed Model for Women's Employment Mentoring Program: A Community Mentoring Model

Introduction

Women's economic participation in the labour force in Niagara and indeed Canada is rising bringing it about equal to men's; however, women's economic opportunity (their relative earning power) lags far behind. (*See Report of the World Economic Forum, July 2005*). This translates into disproportionately high rates of female poverty (1 in 7 or 2.5 million women) and, since most single-headed households are headed by women, this means large numbers of children also live in poverty. Across all occupation clusters in Niagara, earned income for females averaged 67.3% of earned income for males. (*NTAB Trends, Opportunities & Priorities, 2004*).

Strategic interventions designed to improve women's economic opportunities will leverage social and economic benefits because of the roles women play as caregivers, educators and managers of the family unit. A successful mentorship model that can be piloted in Niagara as well as other communities could represent such a strategic intervention.

This study was carried out to support the development and establishment of a sustainable mentorship program for women in Niagara. The purposes of such a mentoring program could include:

- ✓ increased participation of women in the labour force in Niagara
- ✓ improved job retention by women coming out of employment assistance programs
- ✓ increased skills to match local labour market among women in Niagara
- ✓ better access to better paying jobs
- ✓ increase in entrepreneurship and home based businesses among women

This report will provide the reader with the:

- ✓ mentorship model
- ✓ training curriculum for mentors
- ✓ selection criteria for mentees
- ✓ implementation plan for Phase II
- ✓ evaluation

The Partners

The Women's Employment Mentoring Program is an initiative of three community partners – Niagara Training & Adjustment Board, YWCA Niagara Region, and WIN (Women In Niagara – women's business networking group within the Small Business Club of Niagara). The initial research and model development has been funded through NTAB's local partnership fund sponsored by Service Canada and Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

The three partners recognize that by collaborating on a women's employment mentoring program, each can achieve its particular goals.

Niagara Training & Adjustment Board is a community-based, non-profit corporation serving the Niagara Region as a champion of workforce and labour market development. NTAB functions as a neutral broker of research, disseminator of information, and facilitator of collaborative partnership development to foster community action on identified trends, opportunities and priorities. Specifically, in its 2004 TOP Report, NTAB identified increased participation of women in the workforce as one of its priorities.

YWCA Niagara Region exists to improve the quality of life for women and their families in the context in which they live. Specifically, YWCA offers employment assistance services to women seeking entry or re-entry to the workforce. Many of the YWCA's clients experience multiple barriers to employment including, significantly for mentorship, the lack of role models and successful women in their lives who can guide them through the employment seeking process. YWCA sees community mentoring as a way to address this gap in the lives of some of their clients and improve their chances of success in gaining and retaining employment.

WIN (Women in Niagara) is a networking group created to inspire enterprising women and build alliances in a fun interactive environment through learning, laughing and sharing. Specifically, at its inception, WIN founding members expressed an interest in mentoring other women striving to achieve success in work and life. They saw this as a community service and a way of giving back. A 2006 survey of WIN members confirmed that the membership supports the idea of WIN embarking on a mentoring partnership with the YWCA and demonstrated that many members are willing to act as mentors.

All three partners have the potential of achieving their organizational goals by collaborating on the design and delivery of a women's employment mentorship program.

The YWCA has clients seeking employment who would benefit from mentoring; WIN has women who wish to mentor women in need of support; NTAB wants to increase women's economic participation and performance in the labour market.

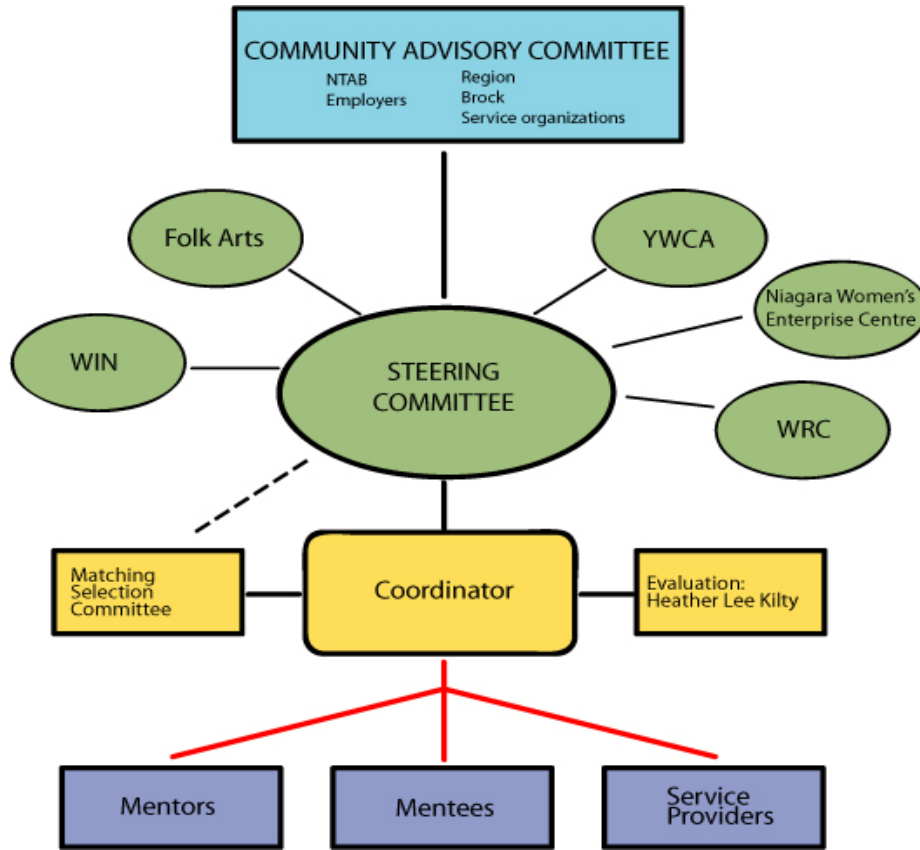
A Community Mentoring Model

Community mentoring means the mentoring program is comprised of components from the community rather than within one workplace or institution. The community nature of the model requires it to have a clearly prescribed scope and structure, well-defined and articulated roles and responsibilities, and accountability to stakeholders. These factors are critical precisely because the mentoring is not being conducted within one organization with a common organizational culture where these structures are already in place and understood.

The partners understand the need to ensure the model meets the test of good design before implementing it on a wide spread scale; therefore, a pilot is being proposed to establish the core elements of the program. The research on mentoring advises to start small, be modest in your initial goals, be diligent and rigorous, and use information gathered in the pilot to refine and improve the model.

(Please see page 6 for Mentorship Program Flowchart)

MENTORSHIP PROGRAM FLOWCHART



FUNDING PARTNERS

- OWD
- NTAB
- Brock University School of Nursing

SERVICE PARTNER ROLES

WIN	Folk Arts	YWCA	WRC	NWEC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hire Coordinator > Monitor Progress > Look for Long Term Funding > Evaluation/ Recommendation > Matching > Recruit Mentors > Support WIN Member/ > Consult with Staff > Database/Member Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hire Coordinator > Monitor Progress > Look for Long Term Funding > Evaluation/ Recommendation > Matching > Recruit/Refer Mentors > Pre-Screen/Refer Clients > Support Clients/ > Consult with Staff > Diversity Filter > Promote Program in Diverse Community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hire Coordinator > Monitor Progress > Look for Long Term Funding > Evaluation/ Recommendation > Matching > Pre-Screen/Refer Clients > Support Clients/ > Consult with Staff > Select Mentees > Project Management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supervise Staff - Accounting - Reporting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hire Coordinator > Monitor Progress > Look for Long Term Funding > Evaluation/ Recommendation > Matching > Pre-Screen/Refer Clients > Support Clients/ > Consult with Staff > Advise on Rural Issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> > Hire Coordinator > Monitoring Progress > Look for Long Term Funding > Evaluation/ Recommendation > Matching > Pre-Screen/Refer Clients > Support Clients/ > Consult with Staff > Training for Mentees in hard skills

Proposed Mentoring Guidelines

- At the outset, the roles of mentor and mentee should be mutually agreeable.
- The mentor's role is to respond to the mentee's developmental needs. The mentor must not impose her own agenda.
- Both parties should take equal responsibility for progression of the mentoring partnership.
- Any matters discussed between the mentor and mentee should be treated as confidential.
- The mentor should not act on behalf of the mentee. The mentor and mentee should be open and truthful with each other, and in connection with the relationship itself at all times.
- The mentor and mentee should respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring that they do not impose beyond what is reasonable.
- Where possible (depending on both parties' geographical location) the frequency and length of meetings should be mutually agreeable, along with the means of contact between meetings for minor issues.
- The mentor should provide constructive feedback to the mentee, while the mentee should attempt to tackle any areas for development.
- Both mentor and mentee must be happy with the location of meetings giving due regard to safety, security, mutual well-being and travel arrangements.
- Mentors should be able to decide whether it is appropriate to refer a mentee elsewhere for advice but should not themselves offer specific advice. The mentor's role is to challenge and support the mentee.
- The relationship should last for a mutually agreeable time period, whereupon it can be continued or terminated.
- Both mentor and mentee share responsibility for the smooth winding down of the relationship with the Mentorship Coordinator once it has achieved its purpose.
- Either party may terminate the relationship after discussing the matter with one another and the Mentorship Coordinator ensuring mutual respect and understanding of the conclusion.
- The mentoring relationship is entirely voluntary for both parties.

Community Advisory Committee

The mandate of the Advisory Committee is to maximize the chances of success of the Women's Employment Mentoring Program by providing expert advice and strategic input to the pilot. Building on the YWCA's excellent track record with Job Route for Women, and in partnership with WIN, Women's Resource Centre of West Niagara and Folkarts - Immigrant Women's Network Niagara, the Women's Employment Mentoring Program will offer the mentoring option to increase services to women where they do not exist and to improve the outcomes for women where they do. The following Terms of Reference will support the actions of this committee.

Membership

Funding partners, successfully employed business and professional women, successfully self-employed women; Region of Niagara, Meridian Finance, Board members of the partner organizations, women serving organization.

Time Commitment

Approximately 8 meetings over two years (meeting quarterly).

Functions

- advise and guide the Steering Committee in planning and executing the women's employment mentoring pilot
- receive progress reports
- offer expert input
- provide strategic advice on the program
- act as champions and supporters of the program to increase community buy in and accountability
- meet quarterly

Mentors

In a community model mentors are volunteers who do not receive remuneration for their services; however, the program should cover out of pocket expenses such as travel. Eligibility requirements for the mentors need to be established and training and supervision provided. For the purposes of the pilot, it is proposed that only women be accepted as mentors. The introduction of male mentors in a program that will include women with issues of abuse and exploitation by male partners and authority figures, will add a level of complexity to screening and monitoring that the limited resources of the pilot will not have the capacity to manage responsibly. *(Please see Appendix A - Application Form for Mentors, pg. 15)*

Eligibility Criteria for Mentors

Mentors must meet all of the following criteria to be considered for matching with a mentee:

1. Woman over 18;
2. Successfully employed or self-employed;
3. If you are an immigrant to Canada, you must have been here for 10 years;
4. If you are retired, you must have been successfully employed or self-employed within the past 5 years;
5. Demonstrated interest in and commitment to supporting women experiencing barriers to employment;
6. Clearance through Police Records including Vulnerable Person Screening (paid for by the program);
7. Attendance at training provided by the Women's Employment Mentoring Program.

Matching

Having been deemed eligible, accepted into the mentoring program, and undergone the training, we will do our best to match you with an appropriate mentee.

In the event a suitable match cannot be found, the Women's Employment Mentoring Program will endeavour to involve trained mentors in other aspects of the mentoring program: this could include activities such as delivering volunteer training, conducting seminars, making presentations in the community, and networking activities.

Training

The training component will be coordinated by the mentorship program staff. The actual training modules will be delivered by community organizations and individuals who will donate their time and expertise because they want to support the mentoring program and because it advances their organization's goals. The training curriculum will cover topics that will provide mentors with a solid understanding of what is expected of them as mentors, the challenges the women they are mentoring face, the other services available to their mentees, information about the labour market in Niagara, and guidelines for what to do if they run into problems. *(Please see Appendix B - Mentor Training Curriculum/Modules for Mentorship Program, pg. 17)*

Mentees

For the purposes of the pilot, mentees will come from the YWCA's Job Route for Women program and the other program partners. The principle employed here is that the mentees have an existing employment service support base. This will ensure the mentor has a clearly defined and limited role that complements other professional support services in the mentee's life. The mentor does not have to "go it alone," but rather knows she is part of a team that may include employment counsellors, trainers, job developers, personal counsellors, treatment programs, etc. Adding mentorship to an existing menu of services will also provide a means of evaluating the benefits of mentorship by comparing participants who have mentors with those who do not.

Mentee Criteria:

- Must have a clear and realistic goal within an identified specific field, be able to maintain focus, and have made the appropriate steps in education/training.
- Must be deemed ready to make a commitment of one year to the program.
- May be unemployed or underemployed; may have the training but lack the human or social assets to maximize opportunities in their field.
- The need to have a solid foundation in the "five dimensions of employment". These are assessed on an ongoing basis, and a normal process of the Job Route for Women program.
- Through "One-on-One" Employment Consultations, Targeted Workshops and **assessment tools*** as deemed necessary, Job Route Coordinators are able to assess each candidate's readiness and the validity of their employment goal.

***Discover What You're Best At:** Assesses existing employable skills

***Barrier Card Sort:** Assesses employment barriers and strengths

***Niagara College Career Assessment Inventory:** Assesses interests as they relate to vocational fields

***Environmental Sort:** Identifies suitability of work environments

***Qualitative Ideal Self:** Assesses primary values

***Myers-Briggs:** Assesses learning, environmental preferences, and values

Confidentiality and Sharing of Information

In this context, it will be important to clarify expectations around confidentiality and sharing of information. Provision will be made in the mentoring agreement for the circumstances under which the mentor or mentee may share any information gathered in the mentoring sessions with other service providers and the extent to which other service providers may share information about the mentee with the mentor. The principles guiding the sharing of information will be clearly articulated and agreed to before the mentoring commences and the process for addressing any violations of the principles will be defined in advance.

Length of Pilot/Duration of Mentoring Relationship

The proposed length of the pilot is 24 months with the duration of the mentoring relationship lasting a minimum of 9 and up to 18 months. Most mentoring programs reviewed recommend one year or shorter duration. At the conclusion of the pilot, evaluation of this first mentoring period can determine if a longer or extended mentoring period may be indicated for this particular client group in some cases. For example, during the first mentoring period, the goal to gain employment itself could take a year; and then the goal of retaining employment could require a second year. Since the program's initial development, the three partners have submitted a funding request under the Ontario Women's Directorate to support a two-year pilot of the model and to expand the partnership to include Folkarts - Immigrant Women's Network Niagara, Women's Resource Centre of West Niagara and Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre. Niagara Training & Adjustment Board has also submitted a funding request through the Local Partnership Fund for a one year pilot implementation of this model. The securing of additional funding through the Ontario Women's Directorate will support inclusion of additional model enhancements that will otherwise not be included.

Pilot Flow Chart

In the 24 month pilot phase, we will test, evaluate, and refine the following elements:

Mentor Recruitment Process

WIN will recruit mentors using clearly written materials setting out the goals of the program, describing the role of the mentor, the expectations of mentors and commitment required, and eligibility. The materials will be distributed only to those women who have indicated an interest in becoming a mentor through our community consultations (WIN members, the focus group, and referrals from the program partners). The goal is to identify and train 30 mentors with the understanding that a match is being sought for 20 mentees. *(Please see Appendix C - Sample Recruitment Tool, pg. 21)*

Mentee Selection Process

Program Partner Employment Services staff will review their client cases and apply an assessment tool to determine potential mentees. The staff team together will review the potential mentees and determine which to approach about participation in the mentoring program. The employment counsellor will talk with the potential mentee about the mentoring opportunity and explain what is involved. If the client is interested in participating, a self-assessment tool will be offered to the potential mentee to help her decide if she is ready for mentorship. The goal is to identify 20 women who are ready and eager to be mentored.

Application Process

Potential mentors submit a completed application form, statement of interest and the names of 2 references.

Potential mentees submit their goals at this point in time, what they are looking for from a mentor and why they feel this arrangement could help them.

Mentor Training

Everyone who agrees to be a mentor participates in training; then agrees to be available to mentor for at least a year after the training. The training will be made available to more mentors than required as everyone will be selected at first; some may not match the mentees; others may have to drop out or need to be changed part way through.

Curriculum:

1. What is mentorship? – getting clarity on what it is and what it is not
2. Communications/Listening Skills
3. Know yourself (your values, temperamental preferences, hot button issues)
4. Know the mentees
5. Know the Niagara labour market
6. Know the barriers women face to employment
7. Know what to expect and what do when you run into problems

Building Sisterhood – Breaking Down Walls

Before the Matching Committee attempts to match the mentors with the mentees, it is recommended that a 2 hour facilitated session be held with all potential mentors and mentees. The purpose of this session is to give both groups a chance to be together and get to know each other as *human beings*. While it may become obvious who are mentees and who are mentors, the session will not be structured along these lines. Rather, the activities will be designed to foster a sense of commonality and to allow the group to explore issues that affect them all as women. Later when the mentee has an opportunity to select from the three mentors proposed by the matching committee, she will have some preliminary personal experience upon which to choose.

Matching Process

For each mentee, a small committee will select 2-3 potential mentors that seem a good match; mentorship staff review with the mentee; mentee and staff will agree on one. This gives the mentee a stake in the choice of mentor, is not passive and takes some ownership for the match.

Mentor/Mentee Orientation

- A joint session to review the “rules of the game” with both parties.
- Review stages of the relationship.
- Help them get started – creating a mentoring agreement (template to be provided) and setting up the first meeting.
- Confidentiality will be included in agreement with the guidelines provided.
- Instructions and recommendations will be provided on what to do if problems occur.

Ongoing Monitoring

- Regular contact between program staff and mentor and mentee
- Weekly for the first month – checking in, troubleshooting, making sure on track.
- Measure progress against goals monthly.
- Mentorship program staff will keep records of what seems to work and what doesn't.
- Emphasis will be placed on tracking, cross-referencing, identification of patterns and trends.
- Meet with staff to monitor client progress and review results.
- Maintain regular contact with mentors to assess the mentor's satisfaction level.
- Record indicators of success and problems.

Midpoint Evaluation

- Bring everyone together for half-day session.
- Give mentees and mentors an opportunity to meet in groups and share experiences and learnings.
- Feedback to large group without giving identifying information to promote learning while ensuring anonymity.
- Administer individual questionnaires to mentors and mentees to receive feedback about program design.

Preset End Point

- Bring group together for a celebration; natural conclusion; opportunity to evaluate; change in the nature of the relationship.

Evaluation

- Review evaluation results that have been built in and determine any changes to the design before proceeding to repeat or expand the program.

Conclusion

Based on the research carried out as part of this feasibility study and input from community stakeholders who participated in a focus group capacity and one-on-one interviews, there is a significant interest in the Niagara Region for the implementation of this model. The partners have made a commitment to seek additional funding to maximize the outcomes for both the mentor and the mentee, while building on the current model through experience and lessons learned.

~ **APPENDIX A** ~

Mentorship Application Form

The Women's Employment Mentoring Program is a partnership of the YWCA Niagara, Women In Niagara (WIN), Folkarts - Immigrant Women's Network Niagara , Women's Resource Centre of West Niagara and Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre. If you are interested in being considered as a mentor for women who need help entering or re-entering the workforce, please refer to the eligibility criteria attached. If you believe you are eligible, complete the following application form and return to WIN by [deadline].

1.Name: _____

2.Address: _____

Town/City

Postal Code

3. Phone: _____ 4. Fax: _____

5. Email: _____

6. Occupation: _____

7. Employer or Name of Business:

8. How long have you been involved in the above? _____

9. Can you commit a minimum of 4 hours per month plus 8 hours for training at the start of the program, for one year. Yes _____ No _____

10. Other volunteer community activities you are involved in or have been involved in:

11. Hobbies or Interests: _____

12. Please provide a 2-3 page statement explaining why you would like to be a mentor and what you would bring to the relationship with a mentee. Information you provide will be held confidential and will be used by program staff only to determine your suitability for the mentoring program.

13. Please provide the names of 2 individuals we can contact as references for you both professionally and personally.

1. Name: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

2. Name: _____ Phone: _____

Relationship to you: _____

By submitting this application I am agreeing to accept the policies and guidelines and to help achieve the goals of the Women's Employment Mentoring Program.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Thank you for your interest in the Women's Employment Mentoring Program.

~ **APPENDIX B** ~

Mentor Training Curriculum / Modules for Mentorship Program

1. What is mentorship? (Presenter: Heather Lee Kilty, Brock University)

i) A mentor has a high level of personal commitment to the person being mentored; it is the most intimate of learning approaches, and for this reason direction should not be given without great concern for the potential impact on the mentees. Through guidance and stimulation, even challenge, the content of the learning should be directed to self-discovery, and allow for reflection in this process so that mentors and mentees may gain equally. The primary focus is not on the development of technical competence but on the acquisition of intuitive skills that allow people to operate effectively at higher degrees of competence. Mentors may or may not be older than those they mentor; they will always be more experienced in the field for which they are mentoring. Key to this relationship is the development of trust in the mentor that allows them to serve as a guide who can impart knowledge and experience, opening doors to otherwise out of reach opportunities.

ii) Differences between Counselling and Mentorship

Counselling is primarily a remedial activity intended to help individuals to come to terms with issues in their personal or working lives. It varies from the emotional bond that often results in mentoring relationships; it is essential that the counsellor remains emotionally detached. It is important in counselling and mentoring that the helper is able to recognize when the subject needs the help of a professional specialist, such as a clinical psychologist.

iii) Mentoring works best when the need is the acquisition of wisdom. In this context, wisdom means the ability to relate what has been learned to a wide spectrum of situations, and to achieve insight and understanding into the issues discussed. The mentor must be able to maintain a broad perspective that includes respect for the mentees views.

2. Communications / Listening Skills (Presenter: Heather Lee Kilty, Brock University)

There are so many factors that contribute to how we communicate, that we need to remain alert to: What we are saying; who we are communicating with; their background (ethnic/gender); the importance of non-verbal communication; and tone of communication (passive, aggressive and assertive). These are all factors that will be covered during this module.

Equally important, is the role of the active listener. This role is one that is often discounted; an effective listener requires that one listen for feeling, fact and verbal and non-verbal cues and checking back that one heard correctly. To participate effectively, the listener must shut out their own thoughts, forming no opinions, being aware of their stature, reflecting on what has been presented (feeling and content) and establishing a comfortable environment.

Communication is two ways; communication breakdowns are not a rare occurrence. It is important to address the issue of how to recognize, and take responsibility when a communication breakdown occurs. For the mentors as for mentees, the importance of reporting any communication breakdown to the Mentoring Coordinator will be stressed.

In order to effectively communicate these skills, a number of activities will be used:

i) Importance of Good Instructions: In partners, the mentors are instructed to write out step-by-step instructions for a simple daily task. Partners attempt tasks using only what has been literally stated.

ii) Importance of Active Listening: Each mentor will write a small story containing as many details as possible. After listening to the story, their partner must recall as many details as possible.

iii) Importance of Non-verbal in the Absence of Oral Communication: A picture of an office scenario is given. Using precise and descriptive adjectives and action verbs, the scene is described and presented without the use of the visual aid.

iv) Importance of Non-verbal Cues in Oral Communication: One partner is given the role of listener and the other is the talker. The listener prompts the partner to communicate the story with emotional connections. The listener hears the story without giving any feedback at all - neither verbal nor non-verbal. There is a debriefing on the process, and then roles are reversed.

3. Know Yourself (Instructor: WIN Volunteer or YWCA Staff)

i) Through the use of the True Colours Assessment tool, mentors will enhance self-awareness and confirm self-perception. However, Myers-Briggs is also suggested as an assessment tool.

⇒ Job Route Coordinators are a possibility to administer Myers-Briggs

⇒ Facilitators for True Colours include Kathy Yff from CPS (Career Planning Service), who is trained in administering both assessments (True Colours & Myers-Briggs); and Terri Bruce from DSBN (District School Board of Niagara), who is trained in administering True Colours.

ii) To identify primary values, an exercise on the quantitative ideal self would be used. Mentors would list qualities their ideal self possesses and their opposites. The mentors would then discuss the differing values with the help of a trained facilitator.

iii) To strengthen appreciation for the impact that values have on the working relationships, a trained facilitator would guide the woman through journal writing on work ethics.

4. Know your Mentees (Presenter: Niagara Region / Job Route Staff)

Mentees selected for the program will be women that have accessed individual and workshop assistance from the Job Route program and have achieved significant progress in working through the five dimensions of employment. The role of the mentor is not that of their counsellor, they must have demonstrated readiness by commitment to address their dimensions of employability. The mentor's partnership is a business partnership.

5. Know the Niagara Labour Market (Presenter: NTAB)

- ⇒ What are the main industries and employers in Niagara?
- ⇒ Where are the opportunities?
- ⇒ Where are women finding jobs?

6. Know the Barriers Women Face to Employment (Presenter: Sue Arai from Brock University and / or YWCA Staff)

The women that access Job Route face a number of barriers:

- ⇒ Discrimination
- ⇒ Low self-esteem
- ⇒ Lack of education/skills and training opportunities
- ⇒ Double burden - childcare, unpaid labour
- ⇒ Abuse/Violence
- ⇒ Extreme poverty
- ⇒ Alcoholism/Addictions
- ⇒ Mental health issues
- ⇒ User of services

Although it is important to know the barriers the mentee is facing, the YWCA focuses on building five assets: Financial; Social; Personal; Physical; and Human. Through research conducted by the National YWCA, Women in Transition Out of Poverty, January 2001, these five assets were highlighted as the basic building blocks that support women in pursuing self-sufficiency.

7. Agreement (Presenter: Mentorship Coordinator)

The mentorship program is a commitment of one year, after which the parties may opt to terminate or to continue depending on the needs of the mentee and the availability of the mentor. In this module, basic expectations will be established which the mentor and the mentee undertake to fulfill. The mentor and the mentee will be expected to formulate an agreement using a template provided by the program. Areas covered in the agreement will include: frequency of meetings, location of meetings, types of activities to be pursued, contact outside of scheduled activities, cancellations or rescheduling of meetings, mutual expectations, goals to be achieved, circumstances for third party involvement, etc. The agreement should be a support to the relationship, providing guidelines that make both parties feel secure about what is expected. It should be flexible and open to amendment if both parties and the Mentorship Coordinator agree this makes sense.

8. Know What to do when you Run into Problems (Mentoring Coordinator / WIN)

The mentor is not personally responsible for the mentee's performance. The mentor must remain alert to the signs of a co-dependent relationship. The mentor is to look at the mentee relationship as one of supporting and encouraging but never replacing the mentee's agency and autonomy. Warning signs to watch for will be covered in this module as well as courses of action to be taken. Regular contact and meetings between the Mentorship Coordinator and the mentor as well as between the Mentorship Coordinator and the employment counsellors supporting the mentee will constitute the usual ways to identify and address problems as they arise.

~ **APPENDIX C** ~

WOMEN'S EMPLOYMENT MENTORING PROGRAM

PROGRAM INFORMATION

The Women's Employment Mentoring Program is a partnership of the YWCA Niagara, Women In Niagara (WIN), Folkarts – Immigrant Women's Network Niagara, Women's Resource Centre of West Niagara and Niagara Women's Enterprise Centre, supported by funding from the Ontario Women's Directorate and the Niagara Training & Adjustment Board. The goals of the program are:

- ⇒ increased participation of women in the labour force in Niagara
- ⇒ improved job retention by women coming out of employment assistance programs
- ⇒ increased skills to match local labour market needs among women in Niagara
- ⇒ better access to better paying jobs
- ⇒ increase in entrepreneurship and home based businesses among women
- ⇒ increased safety and security for women through economic self-sufficiency

Successfully employed or self-employed women are being invited to consider applying to be a mentor to a woman who is experiencing barriers to entering or re-entering the workforce. WIN members are especially well-positioned to act as mentors because of their wide network and appreciation of the value of social relationships to success. Application forms and eligibility criteria are available from WIN. Mentors will be matched with mentees to facilitate successful employment and the development of self-esteem and life skills.

The Women's Employment Mentoring Program is a community mentoring program and is offered on a volunteer basis. The cost of police screening and of training is provided free to those accepted as mentors. Travel costs associated with the mentoring program will be reimbursed.

BENEFITS FOR MENTORS

- ⇒ training in useful areas
- ⇒ exposure to other like-minded and concerned women
- ⇒ get to know yourself better
- ⇒ get to know your community better
- ⇒ new friends
- ⇒ the joy of making a difference

APPLICATION PROCESS

- ⇒ Interested potential mentors are asked to submit an application form available from WIN along with a short statement of interest and the names of 2 references (professional and personal).
- ⇒ All applications are confidential and will be used only by program officials to assess for acceptance into the program.
- ⇒ Applications are due by [deadline].

PROGRAM EVALUATION

In addition to the individual goals for the participants, it is also an aim of the program to learn what makes a successful mentoring program. Therefore, all aspects of the program will be evaluated and both mentors and mentees are expected to assist with evaluation through regular, confidential feedback as to the progress and development of the relationship, and formal and informal feedback regarding the selection process, training, support, value of mentoring materials, and the overall mentoring program.