If you work in health and care, you may find it useful to look at coaching or mentoring and how these can be used to support you to be your best self and reach your full potential……… both at work and in your every day life.

Coaching and mentoring is suitable for everybody, you can access as much or as little as needed and it is available to all, regardless of role, responsibility or seniority. It is provided at no cost to the individual and you can access coaching or mentoring through the Midlands Leadership and Lifelong Learning team who are part of NHS England and Improvement.

There are a diverse range of offers that cater to all needs and we will endeavour to find the right coach or mentor for you.

Wherever you are on your personal journey there is always something we can do to support you and coaching and mentoring are great tools that can be used either alone or to complement other development.

**So what is coaching and mentoring and what it the difference?**

Lets start by looking at coaching

Coaching takes a holistic view of you as a person and is about more than just work. It is based the idea that you are the person who best knows the answer to your problems…. and rather than offering advice or solutions, coaching uses questioning techniques that enable you to think things through and to arrive at your own solution. The agenda is set by you and you can use as many or as few sessions as is useful and can revisit at any time. You may wish to access coaching for different reasons and at different points in your personal development journey, some of the things people bring to a coaching session are:

* Starting a new role and developing self-confidence or tackling imposter syndrome
* Wishing to become more organised and better at time management
* Feeling stuck in their career and not knowing what to do next
* Tackling a particular challenge in work or everyday life that feels overwhelming and breaking this down into manageable pieces.

Coaching is above all, supportive tool that helps you in the ‘hear and now’…. unlocking your potential and supporting you to move forward towards achieving your goals .

If as part of your lifelong learning journey you are interested in learning how to become a coach and have coaching conversations with others, there are multiple paths you can take.

You may want to start by developing some basic skills to be able to have better conversations at work and in everyday life. Some of the ways these skills are useful are:

* Having better conversations with patients or service users, empowering them to make shared decisions on their care that best suit their needs.
* Helping colleagues, family members, or peers to think through challenges they are facing and come up with their own solutions.
* Better delegation or division of workload, empowering others to take ownership rather than doing the “heavy lifting” on shared or team projects.

You may decide you want to learn more, and gain a deeper understanding and skillset, so you may wish to do a formal qualification in coaching. These are set at different levels and can be taken as a standalone or as building blocks, from an introduction to coaching to coaching at director level. Some of the qualifications we offer will enable you to register as a coach on the midlands coaching hub and use your skills to help health and care colleagues maximise their potential and gain more confidence and self-awareness as well as helping them work through the challenges they face.

We offer support and continued professional development to all our coaches, as well as the opportunity to connect with other coaches and share and discuss their experiences.

**Now let’s look at MENTORING**

Mentoring is usually more specifically career focused, and is a relationship based on the mentor sharing their expertise and knowledge which has been gained through, experience. Mentors are usually someone who is in a role that the mentee wishes to do, such as a nurse who may seek mentoring from a matron or an aspiring executive skking mentoring from a member of the board. A mentor is someone who can help guide you through your career journey. You can access mentoring as many times as you wish, some reasons people access mentoring include:

* Wishing to progress in their current field of work
* Deciding on a change of career direction
* Starting a new role and needing support and guidance
* Returning to work after a break or coming out of retirement
* Addressing challenges, they may face at work due to being from an underrepresented group

**Have you thought about becoming a mentor?**

If you feel you have knowledge and expertise to help colleagues to develop their careers through becoming a mentor, , we can support you with training to do this and enable you to register and use these skills to help develop your health and care colleagues so they can reach their career potential, this applies across all roles from junior levels to mentoring senior clinicians or directors.

In just the same way that coaches have support, we offer support and continued professional development to all our mentors, as well as the opportunity to connect with other mentors and share and discuss their experiences.

If you would like to find out more about accessing coaching and mentoring, or training in either of these skills, please visit us at our website.

<https://midlands.leadershipacademy.nhs.uk/our-offers/coaching-and-mentoring/>