

Fostering belonging, being and becoming through co-mentoring

Vicki Schriever¹

Alison Black¹ and Sandra Elsom¹

¹ University of the Sunshine Coast

This paper presents an autoethnographic account of three women academics who are forging their own approach to mentoring. Vicki, Ali and Sandie share their lived experiences of mentoring, the relationship they have cultivated and the impact it has on their lives. The hierarchical mentoring relationship of ‘mentor’ and ‘mentees’ is disrupted, as we seek to create a co-mentoring sphere, a shared space for friendship, connection and collaboration. Our co-mentoring has emerged as a safe space of trust, care, strength and inspiration, as we share and support one another in our struggles and achievements, both personally and professionally. *Belonging, being* and *becoming* has been used as a framework to structure our paper and a lens through which to view our experiences. *Belonging*, acknowledges that connection is vital for all of us and that relationships and interactions are crucial to our sense of belonging. *Being* recognises the importance of knowing ourselves, of making meaning, of engaging with the joys, complexities and challenges of everyday life and work. While *becoming* recognises organisations and people change, as do our identities, understandings and priorities. In this paper autoethnographic narrative vignettes are presented alongside the literature to reveal that through valuing belonging, being and becoming in our co-mentoring we can work in kinder ways that foster an ethics of care, hope and friendship.