

**[00:00:00] Bonni Stachowiak:** Today on episode number 367 of the *Teaching in Higher Ed* podcast, Resa Lewiss and Adaira Landry join me to talk about fuel-efficient mentoring.

**[00:00:15] Production Credit:** Produced by Innovate Learning, maximizing human potential.

**[00:00:24] Bonni:** Welcome to this episode of *Teaching in Higher Ed*. I'm, Bonni Stachowiak. This is the space where we explore the art and science of being more effective at facilitating learning. We also share ways to improve our productivity approaches so we can have more peace in our lives and be even more present for our students.

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I'm so excited to be welcoming today's guests to the *Teaching in Higher Ed* podcast. Resa E. Lewiss is a Professor of Emergency Medicine and Radiology at Thomas Jefferson University Hospital. She's the Director of the Point of Care Ultrasound Division. She speaks and publishes on equity, health design, leadership and mentorship, point of ultrasound, medical education, global education, simulation, and national policy. Resa also led point of care, ultrasound education courses, regionally, nationally, and internationally. She's the creator and host of the *Visible Voices* podcast, covering topics of health care, equity, and current trends.

Adaira Landry is an Assistant Professor of Emergency Medicine at the Harvard Medical School. She is the Assistant Residency Director for the Harvard Emergency

Medical Residency program and an Academic Society Associate Director and Advisor for the Harvard Medical School. Dr. Landry is the Co-Chair for the Diversity and Inclusion Committee within the Brigham and Women's Hospital Department of Emergency Medicine Office of Inclusion Diversity Equity and Social Justice. She's the Co-Director of a national mentoring program, Diversity Mentoring Initiative, hosted by national organizations, Emergency Medicine Residents Association, EMRA, and Academic College of Emergency Physicians. She's also a wife and a mother to three girls. She hopes to raise her children to understand and value the importance of supporting others in need.

Adaira and Resa, welcome to *Teaching in Higher Ed*.

**[00:02:45] Adaira Landry:** Thanks for having us.

**[00:02:47] Resa Lewiss:** Great to be here.

**[00:02:47] Bonni:** Just yesterday my husband, who also has a podcast, he just got a question from someone in a leadership academy that he runs, which was today's exact episode. I was so excited to be able to talk to you today about fuel-efficient mentoring because all of us are really having such a hard time with fitting in the things that are important to us like mentoring. Let's start out just with, why is mentoring important? Why has it been important to you? Let's start with Resa.

**[00:03:19] Resa:** I'll share a story, and this is perhaps underappreciated type of mentoring and that's peer mentoring. Some of my first mentors are from high school and from college. These are friends that did not pursue medicine or health care. One, in particular, was a Comparative Literature major and studied Economics. It's one of those friendships where we may not speak often, and when we do, it's immediate comfort catch-up.

I will often bring to him challenges I'm having with my position, people management, leadership, how to handle difficult conversations. He has provided some of the most insightful global recommendations that are global and specific to me and my situation because he knows me. I'll just say that, I think when people think of mentorship in this day and age, there's so much that's written about it. It

seems very structured and formalized, but it's happening all the time. We just may not recognize it as such.

**[00:04:20] Bonni:** Absolutely. Adaira, how about for you?

**[00:04:23] Adaira:** When I was in medical school, I felt like I was struggling a lot to find direction and to find guidance on the next steps and to find people to help me through both of those. When I went into residency, I had my first mentor relationship, a formalized mentorship relationship, with another woman of color, a Black woman emergency medicine physician, who was in a position where I wanted to be. She was very successful, established, respected, smart, everything.

I remember distinctly one day we went out to lunch. This was very early on in our relationship. She took me out and she was sitting right across from me at the table and she said, "Adaira, I think you're going to be chief resident." That was a very respected position at the time. I just felt so seen. It was a really unusual feeling to hear someone who was in a position where I wanted to be, tell me that I can achieve the same thing that they had. It was a first for me.

I really feel like that moment I had, where I felt like someone looked at me and saw potential and room for growth and achievement, I really want to give that to other people. It was this feeling that I think everyone deserves to have. I hope you've had it Bonni and Resa and the listeners because if you haven't, you're really missing out on that moment where you know there's someone out there who really believes in you. It was just really great to have and that's really what's motivated me.

**[00:05:54] Bonni:** What you just described has come out so much in the literature, specifically on first-generation students, which of course happens to also often be people of color. I've heard this described both as a positive thing. Again, I've also read it in the literature, this idea that we might express our confidence in people we might be mentoring, or might have in our classes, et cetera.

I've also heard people say that it can sometimes be seen, they didn't use the word condescending, but that's the tone that's come across for me. I wonder if either of you has any thoughts around the distinction between when we really need to,

ought to, be very transparent about our belief in other's efficacy. Again, a lot of self-efficacy comes up in this body of literature around how to foster academic success in others.

Do you have ideas about then when it goes too far, or when it's not appropriate to share, or how to navigate that piece? Ever since someone shared that with me, I thought, "Oh gosh, I tend to be someone who does that a lot." I do see this importance of expanding others' imagination for what they're capable of because you're absolutely right, people have done that for me and I have been in places where I thought, "I never would have come up with this on my own." It's often out of others' encouragement. Any thoughts on helping us to navigate this difficult space between expressing confidence, but also not coming across as inappropriate in any way?

**[00:07:28] Adaira:** I think if I were to summarize what you just mentioned, to me, it's themed around this idea of really delivering careful support and recognizing that just because you are a mentor to someone does not mean you are a cheerleader to someone. I think what happens often is we want to keep pushing people to what we think is their limit, or where we think is our limit. Someone like the mentor I mentioned, I think she knew where I wanted to go and so I felt like she was being very thoughtful in what she said to me. Oftentimes, I would say in my early days as a mentor, and I'm still pretty junior at it, by the way, I often would give advice or give comments to folks that I thought were in my best interest and not necessarily theirs. That was a learning point for me. I work in a particular field of medicine and I work in the emergency room, and so if a student comes to me and says they want to be orthopedic surgeon, so working in the operating room, perhaps in my early days, I might've said, "No, I think you should do what I think is best for you, which is you should work in the emergency room."

That to me is a black hole we can get into. That can really suck the life out of the relationship because that to them means, "You're not listening to me. You're not thinking about my best interests. This relationship is actually about you and you promoting what you think the right choice." I would say that part is something that I would be cautious of. I don't think you can poison a relationship by being

supportive of what someone wants if you feel like that is achievable. I think you just have to be cautious about making sure that it's in their best interest. It's something that they want to do.

**[00:09:18] Resa:** Dovetailing off of what Adaira has shared, I would say that there has to be this sense of trust and psychological safety. I think if that's been established in the mentor-mentee relationship, then there can be less concern however no concern. Bonni, your question connotes caring and connotes wanting to be careful and intentional. I think my summary is words matter. I'll share a story.

When I was attending in New York City in the emergency department, a young resident came in, she was about to start her shift. It was wintertime. It was busy. Patients were sick and I was handed an EKG and it looked concerning that maybe the patient was sick with something involving the heart. My junior resident joined, I said, "Here's an EKG, can you go see that patient, I think she's sick?" I didn't think anything of it. About two years later, that resident got up the courage to say to me, "You know Resa, there was this time on shift, it was wintertime, I had just arrived, I hadn't even put my stuff down, you handed me an EKG and told me to go see a patient."

Of course, it doesn't completely matter the details of what I recall and what she recalls. Maya Angelou says, this is not verbatim, but it's not what you say, it's not what you do, it's how you make people feel. I think it's really important to be mindful of that and to intentionally create psychological safety so that the words are safer.

**[00:10:55] Bonni:** Well, you have some wonderful advice for us about not only how we can establish the kinds of mentoring relationships that each of you have described, and they're so vital in people's lives, and how meaningful is that, that we could be some small part of that in someone else's life. The reality is, there's only so much we can do with the time that we have. How do we do and you call it fuel-efficient mentoring, and it fits so well with the theme of this podcast since June of 2014. I'm excited to hear from you.

Could you talk a little bit about how we first start out by defining boundaries and expectations? This reminds me a little bit of the story that Adaira shared, just in terms of your story Adaira sounded like you both knew you were entering into this new relationship, defining the relationship from the beginning. Could you each share a little bit about defining boundaries and expectations?

**[00:11:50] Adaira:** I'll start by saying this is the most important part of a relationship. Just I think, in general, with all relationships, we should understand the boundaries. Resa and I have our own boundaries. Bonni, even in this very limited relationship, you and I will have some as well. It's really important to understand, where can I engage, how can I engage with someone I'm involved with? When it comes to mentorship, I think that is so important to figure out, what are the goals of this relationship and what are the boundaries of it?

Let's start with a goal. To me, the goals need to be clear, as far as what are your needs? What are your wants? What are your desires? What can I provide for you?

It's really important to make sure because sometimes, I think someone's going to be a great mentor. When I find out exactly what it is that they do, or what time they have, or their energy. Those three things, by the way, I think are really important to figure out in someone. Their schedule, their energy, and what knowledge base they have. I don't think it has to meet all three of those but you absolutely need two, I think for a good relationship to thrive.

If you meet with someone, and you realize they only have 15 minutes, and you need way more than that, then that expectation is going to be mismatched, if you don't clarify that early enough or if their knowledge isn't really pertaining to what you're looking to fill, their knowledge does not fill your gap, those are going to be too big barriers that's going to be really hard to overcome.

I always think about it in that way, when I'm meeting someone. I think when it comes to the boundaries, a lot of it has to do with time. I think that's the biggest one. When someone ask me to meet with them, I usually recommend it's during business hours. I don't try to do mentoring, on the weekends when I'm with my family

or late at night. There are some exceptions to that. For the most part, I try to keep it during business hours. I also think about the time limit.

Sometimes, two weeks ago, I met with three different students in one day. I met them all, by the way on social media. Each of them sent me a calendar invite for one hour, which, in isolation, one hour is not that big of a deal, but if you deal with a lot of mentees, or a lot of people, lots of meetings, and that's a lot of time. I went back and I said actually, I think we only need 20 minutes for this introductory meeting and this is what we're going to discuss. I was able to do three within that one-hour window versus the three within three hours.

That helps it be very sustainable. Really describing, the goals or relationship and then as well as the way it's going to function I think is really important early on.

**[00:14:34] Resa:** I would say that Adaira and I are aligned in that we do not see mentoring and mentorship as a drain or as an overwhelming, make the plate tip over, and if anything, it's energizing. We would encourage many people to reframe it as such. The benefits to you as the mentor are equal, not the same as the benefits to the mentee. I think one of the important aspects that mentees and people seeking mentorship must understand is it's a two-way relationship. It's not one way.

We definitely have had meetings with mentees where there's this expectation that we're going to provide everything for them. In fact, recently a mentee read the article, and basically said, "Oh, I realized, actually, I have to do my part," but it hadn't struck her that she had to play a role in this relationship. I think understanding responsibility, and there's something about when that structure and expectation is created, that it helps the mentee, mature, gain confidence, and gain independence.

**[00:15:41] Adaira:** I think one of the hardest things, it's really hard for mentors, I think, to tell, especially junior students or learners, I need you to do these things like schedule the meeting, create the agenda, send out the emails. I know, I felt bad initially and so I would just absorb all of that work. Then it starts to feel like a burden because you're spending all that energy on administrative duties, and less on

thinking about ways to solve their problems, or to collaborate or to build up their careers, or just to listen.

In the end, it ends up being better for the relationship to offload some of that work because it teaches them that sense of responsibility, but also it gives you room to really serve as a mentor.

**[00:16:26] Bonni:** How do you then structure that first meeting and you talked about it being perhaps 20 minutes or so? Then how do you go from there to then changing the relationship where I want you to schedule the meeting? How do you provide them with that kind of information and direct clear communication?

**[00:16:46] Adaira:** Just to back up a bit, it sounds like what we're describing here is the idea that some relationships are arranged in a way through formal programs. That's usually through these like pairings where you started a program or you started college or high school, and then someone is assigned to you based off of a survey you filled out or something like that. That's very clear. The first meeting is the beginning of this relationship that hopefully will work out hopefully, our energy, our knowledge, and our schedules align. That's very clear. You come into the meeting, and perhaps the first meeting is just let's get to know each other and our backgrounds.

We'll keep it light and make sure that we actually feel a connection and this feels right to us. I don't think you need to invest a full one hour to that but if you have the time and that makes sense, then feel free to do that. You can usually get the vibe of someone pretty early on if it's going to work or not. Then I think what you're describing, which is to me, the preferred method is a more organic build, which is actually really how recent I started.

Resa and I, I think, first met when I was in residency, though, I actually have my first memory of meeting her when we were in Ireland because I think that was a very impactful conversation that we had. We didn't really connect for years after that. It wasn't until the pandemic that we started to really work together and collaborate. I see Resa as a mentor/friend, depending on which title we're wearing at the time.

We've never had a formal let's chat and see where this is going. I think it's because we both are more experienced with it and we just naturally progress that way.

I think for others who feel like this role isn't as defined, it actually is helpful to say, I would love it if you could mentor me on this project. Let's say last week, I had a meeting with someone, which is a true story, I had a meeting with someone who's an emergency medicine physician in California. I specifically said in the email, "I have a very many tasks that I would like to work on. I'm wondering if you'd be willing to be the mentor of this project for me." I just asked that directly. I said, "Before you say, yes, we should meet and discuss the project in more detail." We had a 20-minute meeting and discuss the project. To me, that gift-wrapped it up very nicely, and that she had some warning, as far as that there's a project, there's an ask, and then we're going to discuss it.

**[00:19:16] Bonni:** It also sounds if I'm reading this correctly, or I'm understanding this correctly, that she would also know that there was a formal ending. Obviously, you don't say, "See you. I'll never talk to you again," but I mean sometimes we're more willing to invest that time if we know oh, this is for a specific purpose because of and again, you've talked a lot about because of my time, because of my energy and because of my expertise, really relating to this project that you're working on. That can sometimes be helpful.

I found for me, if we're going to formalize the relationship, then at least I know what the focus is and that it does have a somewhat of an ending, although of course, we love to maintain those relationships and who knows what may pop up in the future.

**[00:19:56] Resa:** Bonni, I really love what you've been touching upon and that's that, not all relationships work and not all relations go on for the end of time. I've had mentors or people that have identified that I want them to be my mentor and I've tried, and I've tried, I've tried to set up phone meetings. I've tried to set up and they're too busy or everything gets rescheduled. I take that as a message now. Back in the day, it was very difficult and very disappointing. Then I realized that there has to be a comfort in an organic aspect to the connection.

As Adaira pointed out, sometimes that's time. It's timing and you may identify someone that you think is going to be good for you because of role, because of background and if it's not happening, then that's okay. There's not a failure. In fact, taking not-potential relationship off the plate opens you up to other people, other individuals that can play that role for you.

**[00:20:58] Adaira:** There's actually some controversy here. I think the counter-argument to this concept of fuel-efficient mentoring is that mentorships should be these very long, healthy relationships that are super in-depth. You really get to know this one individual and this idea of it being efficient, or fast food for mentorship his idea I think can really distract people from the whole point of this is to build a sustainable model so that you can mentor more. Resa and I feel like we have that longitudinal relationship where we've been working together now for over a year. We do it in a way that's still very efficient. Our meetings are short, we try to make sure that there's an agenda so we don't have two-hour meetings. I don't think I've ever met for that thing.

I think we had our first one-hour meeting ever last week. For the most part, we've tried to maintain our own practice of this concept with each other. For anyone who's thinking that this is about short, quick relationships. Yes, there are some that are very quick because you're working on one particular project, but there is room to expand this onto longitudinal relationships. The whole concept of it is really just making sure you don't burn out.

It was inspired a lot by what was going on in the pandemic, which we were at home, we were busy with all demands at home that were conflicting with demands at work. Then there's all those societal crises that were going on. Then there were people, juniors, trainees, students who were really probably feeling abandoned because they did not have that support that they have previously when we were all within the same institutional building. It was inspired by this idea of like, wow, there's still people we need to connect with, but we don't have time. We don't have the energy right now. This idea was really a solution to that massive problem that was occurring globally.

**[00:23:00] Bonni:** What you're saying is so important as somebody who wrote a book about productivity, it's still a word that makes me current a little bit only because to what end. To what end are we trying to be efficient, to what end are we trying to be productive? Of course, what does productive even mean? But when we think deeply about those values, the value of being a mentor, the value of being mentored, then I think any systems or structures that we might put into place can be really healthy because then it does make it, as you say, more sustainable. I think that is so important.

I took on a formal mentoring relationship with a professor at our institution. We did those pairings that you described. This was official and there's that time where hopefully you get to know one another and all of that. She's been very kind and gracious to say that even though that's been, she's been now around for, I think, three years or something like that she still considers me her mentor. She is Asian-American. Recently with the increased attention on Asian-American racism and violence, she came to me and wanted some help in terms of navigating her own advocacy for some of her colleagues at our institution.

That was, it really felt good and even felt good that we could be clumsy together. I was trying to have it where, "Oh my gosh, I do not want this woman to have to do any more work in addition to her normal job on this." I offered, we can edit these videos. They did some video meetings and things like that, so we can edit it. She came back and said, "No, actually I would rather that you teach us how to do it because we want to be able to do this for the long run."

I just love that we know each other well enough that we can, she's a very direct woman. My default setting is very direct too, but she can be like, "No, don't help me that way. That's not helpful do this instead," and we just go, go, go, go, go and we ebb and flow in our relationship. I really enjoy that to me, that makes the mentoring feel that much more meaningful when it's not do it because you said you're going to meet once a week. I think that's a super dangerous thing to put ourselves in versus the seasons when you really need another person in my case because I do know the institution well and could help point her to different resources as she asked for them.

Also just having that foundation laid that you can really get to it quick space of here's what I need. Here's what I don't need. I just really, I get fueled by that speaking now I'm extending your analogy all over the place here, but that really does give me a lot of fuel in my work. It makes it feel meaningful.

**[00:25:29] Resa:** It speaks to the psychological safety of the relationship. That's just a perfect example. Just to circle back to the story I shared when the resident, that was very honest with me about how I had made her feel. We were actually weren't in a mentor-mentee relationship. It was just an opportunity of feedback that I was glad to receive. It completely changed the way I approached my residents and also the I communicated. That goes back to the foundations of the mentor-mentee relationship, which is the approach and the communication

**[00:26:05] Adaira:** Yesterday, I was on a group chat with some colleagues and we have to meet with our panel. We have a cohort of students that we meet with and he met with all 15 of his or however many it was. At the end of it, he said, oh my gosh, so many meetings. My response was, why don't you do group mentoring? That's one thing we haven't talked about yet. A lot of the stuff that we say to people who are in similar stages of their careers is pretty similar. There might be some slight variations based off of individual circumstances, but for the most part of themes, you get saturation pretty quickly. I discovered this idea it's not that I discovered it, but I discovered it as something that I can use it within my own flow and workflow which was group mentoring.

it's been previously described in other venues. I just hadn't seen it in medicine. It allowed me to bring students who are on the same stage of training together. Instead of doing eight students individually, I brought all eight students into that one hour together. Few benefits of that, one is that they get to learn from each other. I think that's actually the most powerful opportunity that's given is that they can see that, "Oh my God, my fears, my stress, or my stressors, it's all normalized because I know other people are having the same thing. I feel same from that perspective."

Also is beneficial to me because instead of spending eight hours meeting with folks, one-on-one, I can now spend one-hour meeting with eight people. That again,

speaks back to the idea of it, broadening my reach and really helping me with being able to do it more often and for longer. I didn't feel the quality was compromised because a lot of them have very similar questions and because it was all virtual they could always message me private comments or whatever, and I didn't feel like that was happening. To me, there are all these secret ways of really making it so that this doesn't feel like a burden. It actually feels like a reward that we are privileged to participate in.

**[00:28:12] Bonni:** Would you talk a little bit more about the expectations as far as putting more of the burden in appropriate ways back on the person being mentored, what do they need to do to prepare and how do you share that with them? How do you set those expectations and both that they'll even know how to set an agenda for you, send you a calendar invite. Do you have guidance that you give them along the way?

**[00:28:36] Adaira:** Meetings definitely need a purpose and sometimes the purposes, I just need someone to listen and we don't have to problem-solve today. I just need to talk to you about something and so that helps, I think, is to set the purpose. Because then I know ahead of time, does this need to be in person or is virtual okay. Via zoom or can I just have the phone call? I think I always want people to tell me why they want to meet. then I can go from there in regards to scheduling out how far out can this be? All things in regards to time can be decided. Then from there the venue too, if it's a quick meeting, I can do that while I'm at the pre-pandemic, like at the gym, I can be at the gym, listening to them talk, and I can help them solve that.

If it's a very personal topic, I would never want to do that. That's why I need to know what we're talking about ahead of time. Other small things are, for me, and I learned this from one of my early mentors, is that if the meeting is not on my calendar, it does not exist. I abide by that rule. If someone hasn't sent me a calendar invite, I don't feel obligated to attend anything if it wasn't on my calendar. Same for Resa, like I said, I see her as a mentor. I sent her the calendar invites for all of our meetings. To me, that is something that is a basic fundamental requirement.

I think the agenda, it doesn't have to be super detailed. Like I don't need to know what's going to happen in the first five minutes or not. I just need to know what's the overall purpose of the meeting. I do like summary check-ins or some wrap-up. Like, what are the next steps? When we're meeting next? I like the student to drive that, or the mentee to drive that as well.

**[00:30:19] Resa:** What I would add is that clear is kind, and I didn't come up with that phrase, but clear is kind, and I think the more specific and the more concrete, the better. If someone emails and says, can we meet sometime next week, perhaps in the past, that would have been okay. Now I push for more specifics and more details in terms of is it emergent, urgent, or non-urgent. To Adaira's point, is it personal? Is it professional?

Also I, myself, when I reach out requesting meetings, I now offer specific days and times as opposed to how's your calendar because that's putting work on the other person. Whereas I say, how are, and I give three options, for example. That's been really well received and a whole nother topic on which, we can tie this in is email efficiency and the timing of emails and how we write emails and the specifics of content of emails, but it has benefited the mentor, mentee relationship really well.

**[00:31:17] Bonni:** Boy, that times and days can be so important. Of course, we can do that and my suggestion is that people. If you're going to offer those three times, take a quick second, enter those three times into your schedule, because like you said, if it's not in the calendar, it doesn't exist. If you did send those times out, then block those times off. I always use the abbreviation TENT as in tentative. That's my code language to myself that says, these are one of three times that I offered this particular time.

Then, of course, a lot of technology tools, let us suss this information out at the moment. If you have a scheduling tool for office hours or appointments like this, then you can have it right there on the form. What is the purpose of this meeting? I'll generally try to say something in the language I phrase it like so that I can best prepare for this meeting. Sometimes that people, if they're not used to this is an entirely new set of social norms that people-- I recognize my cultural identity within

how I experienced time, and so not everybody experiences time that way. This might seem like an attack. What do you mean? Why do I have to tell you what I want to meet with you? I'll explain so I could be best prepared.

I put it back on me to help them understand this is ultimately about serving you well and to serve you well, I need to do that and recognize what it is we're going to talk about and how important that has really been a time saver for me, both literally in terms of the minutes taken, but also in terms of being psychologically prepared to have a meeting. Like you said, is this the meeting I could have while going for a walk? Or is this the meeting that I really would need to be in person and really be fully present for in every sense of the word?

**[00:32:59] Adaira:** Yes. That little comment you made is actually a big comment, which was what do I need to be prepared for this meeting? Sending out documents ahead of time, that need to be read is another way of just coming up across, coming across as polished. I think that's just more of a skillset for just life in the professional world in general. Like how do I make this clean and tidy? Sending things ahead of time and having the agenda and being on time, like all those things are just really great professional skillsets.

I will say, as a mentor, it is very important for us to coach people on how to become mentees as well. If you feel like there's a lot of potential with your mentee, they just are unorganized. Like that's a perfect opportunity to turn from being a mentor, which is not necessarily about giving these very direct, actionable solutions to problems. You can turn it into a coach and say I really want to work with you, but you have to do these four things like you're not doing it. I need you to do that and it makes it uncomfortable. In the big scheme of all this, you're really helping them out by giving them these professional skills, that insight.

**[00:34:08] Bonni:** One thing that I've found really helpful for me too, you talked about the time, the energy, and the knowledge. I'm thinking that I even in my own mind add in passion. One thing that might surprise you is that I don't really have a passion for talking to people about how to start a podcast. I find that not because usually what they want to talk about is all the technology. I've got a page on my

website if you want to start a podcast. I link them out to someone who really does have a passion for that, who really does have the expertise in that. That the time I'm spending, I'm not the right person to talk to you about how to start a podcast, probably ever, but specifically, because most people want, what software do you use, what technology, and I'm just not interested in it.

I'm not really the expert as it relates to most people's needs at the phase when they're considering starting one. I always think it's great if we can think about that passion element and what do we really feel passionate about mentoring and feel free? My gosh, the world is your oyster when it comes to having plenty of people to send others to if that just isn't your thing. That I think can also help them be more resourceful too, on how to get the most out of when you do get people's precious time and how do you really maximize it. I think that's helpful modeling that we can do for them. Do either of you do things like that, where you try to send them in another direction, if this is just not a good fit, either for your time, energy, knowledge, and/or passion,

**[00:35:31] Resa:** I'll see that. I do think it's the responsibility of the mentor to maintain boundaries and to not make the relationship about oneself. That is the responsibility of the mentors to recognize if it's not the right fit. For example, because of subject matter expertise, someone may come to you, excitedly wanting you to mentor them and you realize, you know what, I'm not going to be best equipped. It shouldn't be a no, I'm sorry, it's a, you know what I don't think, or either I don't have the time or I know someone that really can guide you for this specific topic and taking the responsibilities of a mentor to provide a few options, a few people, checking ahead of time to make sure those people are open to that outreach.

That's, again, making sure that you are not making the mentorship relationship about yourself. Very important. I share that because I have had people that have come in the guise of mentorship, but it ends up really not being about me and helping me. It really seems to be a little self-serving.

**[00:36:36] Adaira:** To your point about the efficiency with information, I love that you had the guide on your website so that you don't have to meet with people and tell

them over and over again, you have that. Actually, I do this. Every year residents or students will graduate. I have a stock email that I send to everyone that has some things that are updated based off, on what's going on in society or in the field of medicine. For the most part, this very long email would take me an hour or so to write every year or more longer.

Now it takes me like 10 minutes or so, or shorter because I can just quickly copy and save it from the last email. Being able to outsource almost to like yourself or your past, and that you don't have to like do things over and over again is really helpful. I keep almost like a facts page within my email or my Google drives so that I know this question comes up often enough. I'm going to save this email. I think that's great, and that helps me.

**[00:37:37] Bonni:** This is the time in the show where we each get to share our recommendations and mine don't always fit with the topic that we're discussing, but today's does. I recently had the great pleasure of being able to hire someone to come join our team, he's going to lead our library. For the first time, the new group of us, what will be the new team as soon as he starts got together. My husband, Dave sent me his favorite list of questions to get to know someone, these things are sometimes called icebreakers, but neither one of us really likes that word, but that's essentially what it is.

I just think back to the time that we took, we did share a meal together outside, and just the time that we took to just-- okay, we're out of interview mode, this is now going to be us. We're so excited about it. Just the time that we took to get to know each other was so helpful. Even something as simple as people talking about their first job, that's an interesting question, but how does your first job reflect on who you are today? It cracked me up because my first job was at an ice cream shop called Baskin-Robbins.

I used to try to always have people's orders memorized when they would come in, or I'll take a whole family's order. I laugh because my little achievement-oriented self would show up back in my 14 and a half years old self when I started working there. We learned a lot about each other in a very short period of time and really

laid that foundation. I'm just super excited about the ways in which our relationships were strengthened.

I've got a list of questions to get to know someone that I'll be putting in the show notes. I encourage people to use it, whether you feel like people and you've known them for years or whether you're just starting out, it's a great set of questions to pick through and use as appropriate. Just taking that time, it's like fertilizer, it'll pay off big time. Questions to get to know someone. Resa, what about you? What do you have to recommend for us today?

**[00:39:31] Resa:** I have one activity, one podcast, and one book, the activity is walking and Adaira knows this. I like walking. I like taking walks. I think walking is not completely appreciated perhaps in our culture. I'm a big fan of reading biographies and some of the great thinkers, the great doers walked regularly, got out into nature, and walked. It allows you to get some exercise, get out into nature, and synthesize thoughts, and clarify. I find certainly, walking does that. Moreover, the walking meeting is one of these funny things. We've read about it in Harvard Business Review and other efficiency meetings. Yet, everybody knows about it, but no one does it. I often will say, "Oh, let's do a walking meeting," and people think it's really funny that I actually "do it," but I do.

They'll say to me, "Do we get to do a recent walking meeting?" I'm like, "Yes, let's do a recent walking meeting." It's fun, but it works. I actually find the dynamic of the conversation changes because we're up and moving together. The activity is walking.

The podcast I'm going to recommend is called *Here's Something Good*. Adaira and I have had the opportunity to participate in this podcast. What I like about it is it's a daily nugget Monday to Friday, so it's even respectful of time. It's less than 10 minutes. They feature and highlight women, women that are doing things in the world, women creators, women doers, women leaders, women business owners, and they do a good job of finding a diversity of voices. I find that a refreshing listen.

The book I'd like to recommend is called *Cutting School* by Noliwe Rooks. Professor Rooks is going to be Chair of African Studies at Brown University. She writes about public education and how access and types of education are not equal for everybody in this country. Given the theme of this podcast of your podcast, and what you expose your audience to, Bonni, I think it's really important the messaging that Professor Rooks has in her book.

She speaks about vocation schools, she talks about public education, she talks about segregated education, and more recently, she's highlighted as a subject matter expert talking about moving education to the virtual environment, how not completely thoughtful that was because of access to internet, access to online learning, and who perhaps really lost out over the last year because of this moving from out of the classroom in-person to a virtual environment. I'll end there.

**[00:42:16] Adaira:** I think the thing that I've noticed the most in the last month, especially, is how much time is a currency for me, and it's always being spent, and there really is never a way to add more to your account. All you can do is really change the slope of how fast you spend it. I've worked on trying to be more efficient at home with outsourcing as much as I can. While I'm outsourcing tasks, and work, and administrative duties to folks and things like that, I can spend more time with my kids, one of which is crying in the background right now.

That, to me, makes me feel like I'm spending time in a much more healthy and wholesome way, and so I'm thinking about time as a currency. It's almost like I do with money, do I want to spend money on this or want to spend time on this, and being as thoughtful as I would otherwise. That's something I would recommend folks thinking about.

**[00:43:19] Bonni:** Thank you both for being a guest on *Teaching in Higher Ed*, I am so inspired by your work. I'm so grateful to be connected with you. I truly, truly, truly hope this is just the beginning. I'm really excited about our conversation today. I feel inspired. I feel like you've given us new ways to think about the precious little time that any of us have. Thank you so much for being a guest today on *Teaching in Higher Ed*.

**[00:43:44] Adaira:** Thank you.

**[00:43:45] Resa:** Thank you, Bonni.

[music]

**[00:43:50] Bonni:** Thanks once again to Dr. Adaira Landry and Dr. Resa Lewiss. I really enjoyed our conversation and I'm so glad to be connected with you. Thanks to all of you for listening. If this is your first time listening to *Teaching in Higher Ed*, or if it's your 367th time, you can head on over to [teachinginhighered.com/367](https://teachinginhighered.com/367) to access the show notes for today's episode. You also can subscribe to our weekly update where you'll get those show notes straight into your inbox along with some other recommendations, some quotable words, and other fun stuff.

Head on over to [teachinginhighered.com/subscribe](https://teachinginhighered.com/subscribe). I want to thank you for listening and being a part of the *Teaching in Higher Ed* community. I'll see you next time on *Teaching in Higher Ed*.

[music]

**[00:44:51] [END OF AUDIO]**

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