

MENTORING: WHY IT MATTERS TO OUR AUXILIARY

One of the greatest strengths of the VFW Auxiliary has always been **members helping members**. Over the years, we've learned from one another—how meetings run, how to support our Posts, how to serve Veterans, and how to work together as a team. When that connection is missing, people can feel unsure, unneeded, or lost, and eventually they drift away.

Today, many new and younger members join with good intentions but **little understanding of who we are or how things work**. Without guidance, they may feel overwhelmed or disconnected. That's where mentoring becomes so important.

WHAT MENTORING MEANS IN THE AUXILIARY

Mentoring is simply **sharing what you already know**. It's welcoming a new member, explaining why we do things the way we do, and helping them find their place. Traditionally, this has meant experienced members guiding newer ones—and that is still the heart of mentoring.

But mentoring can also work both ways. Younger members may bring new ideas, technology skills, or fresh perspectives that help our Auxiliary move forward. When we learn from each other, everyone benefits.

HOW MENTORING HELPS OUR AUXILIARY

Strong mentoring helps:

- Keep members involved and committed
- Pass down knowledge and traditions
- Build confidence in new members
- Strengthen friendships and teamwork
- Ensure leadership for the future

Simply put, mentoring helps **keep our Auxiliary alive and strong**.

THE SIX SIMPLE STEPS TO GOOD MENTORING

You don't need special training—just willingness and care.

Connect

Take time to get to know new members. Learn why they joined and what matters to them.

Communicate

Explain expectations clearly and encourage questions. Make them feel safe asking for help.

Collaborate

Work together. Invite them to help with activities and share responsibilities.

Circulate

Introduce them to other members, officers, and committees so they feel included.

Cultivate

Help them grow by sharing your experience and encouraging their strengths.

Celebrate

Recognize their efforts and successes. A simple “thank you” goes a long way.

AT THE HEART OF MENTORING

Good mentors are:

- **Available** – willing to give time and support
- **Thoughtful** – sharing experience and guidance
- **Good listeners** – taking time to truly hear concerns and ideas

OUR RESPONSIBILITY

Many of us stayed in the Auxiliary because **someone took us under their wing**. Now it's our turn. By mentoring new and younger members, we honor our past, strengthen our present, and secure the future of the VFW Auxiliary.

Mentoring isn't extra work—it's part of who we are.

I have given the District presidents Healthy Auxiliary certificates to be given to the auxiliaries in their district that are healthy. So every auxiliary that has their audits up to date will receive one.

This afternoon Robyn wanted us to have 3 campfires to discuss some of the Bylaws for our Auxiliary. The (3) categories are Auxiliary, Membership, and Department. Each group has questions that they will discuss briefly and One person will be the spokesperson. For Auxiliaries Rebecca our Chaplain will be the spokesperson, for Membership our Jr. Vice, Adrienne will be the spokesperson, and for Department our Sr. Vice, Tracie will be the spokesperson.

At the campfire for Auxiliary bylaws we will have District #2, #5, #6, and #16; for Membership Districts #17, #3, #4, and #1; and for Departments Districts #15, #11, #9 and #7.

When Robyn was at the Sr. Vice conference they did something similar with questions that required a true or false answer. She asked me to put this together, but she chose the Spokespersons. It should be fun and educational. Sorry we don't have any marshmallows!

Thank you.

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