

## **The Meitheal Model as a Possible Structure For IPPN/NAPD Group Mentoring**

*(Courtesy of PDST) The Practicalities*

- People who have 5 years or more completed
- People who wanted to continue in a community of practice
- Facilitated by Education Centres
- 5 in each group, 6/7 would be better, 8 is too many
- 2 hours long
- Admin Principals during school hours and sub cover for TPs
- Plan-facilitated for 2 years only, then continuing without formal facilitation
- 5 areas in the country-Limerick, Ennis, Wicklow, Mayo and Dublin (PDST Associates)

### **The Skills**

- Building relationships and rapport
- Listening
- Using intuition and Knowledge
- Questioning and Feedback
- Selecting an option to commit to (The GROW Model)

### **The Actual Meeting – 4 Sections**

1. What's going well in your school? When this is articulated, participants feel a lot better. Their confidence is boosted and they feel a sense of real achievement. This is re-enforced when other participants compliment them and when there is a planned forum for this. It cannot be tokenistic. Participants in a group follow the work and successes of other participants
2. A Menu of Professional Development Tips. To inform this, the facilitator dips into a bank of resources shared with all facilitators. Teaching and learning is mentioned frequently here as participants often speak about initiatives which are going well.
3. The core of the meeting-Unloading. The person gets the floor for 10 minutes and the others ask questions after listening intently. The GROW model forms the basis for this stage. Exploratory questions are used firstly to clarify the reality. Deeper and more powerful questions are then used to facilitate the thinking of the contributor eg Why did you react this way? What was most upsetting for you? The group comes up with options for the contributor as well as facilitating the individual to come up with options for themselves. The options are recorded on a flip chart which the person can take away if they wish
4. The contributor commits to trying one or more of the options and is encouraged to keep a reflective log. A short evaluation of the meeting takes 5 minutes at the end

### **What Helps?**

1. Meetings with the Leadership Co-Ordinator for de-briefing
2. Always beginning with a cuppa!

3. The group is meeting with a leadership academic to make Meitheal explicit of r the facilitators, and to link to international best practice whilst ensuring uniformity of practice amongst facilitators
4. The participants meet in advance and a commitment is signed. This is done in May/June

*The Values*

*Respect, Commitment, Honesty, Confidentiality, Generosity, Networking and Connecting*