

The Frances Maitland Memorial Lecture 2000

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Thank you Linda and members of the Alliance for selecting me to present this first Frances Maitland Memorial Lecture. It is certainly a tribute to Frances that Merck has generously endowed this annual lecture series to continue the spirit of mentoring that Fran so inspired. I am honored to be here today to tell you about my friend and mentor. Thank you again.

I need to let you know that preparing for this lecture was an emotional experience for me. Frances Maitland had a powerful impact on my life and her loss is still new. There are others in this room who also share my personal feelings for this incredible woman and I am certain that if we were to make eye contact it would be difficult for me to tell Fran's story. So I hope that you will understand if I keep my eyes right on my notes for this presentation.

The Alliance has asked me to provide a lecture that would emphasize the value and importance of mentoring to newcomers to CME and the organization. This was a lifelong commitment and passion of Frances Maitland. In the next few minutes I would like to introduce you to Fran, tell you about our mentor/mentee relationship and how she inspired the various mentoring activities of the Alliance. I hope I can also offer some suggestions and encouragement to everyone in this audience to accept the call to mentoring and accept the gift that only a mentor can give. So why don't I begin here.

I was raised and have raised my children to give back for the gifts that we have been given. One of the greatest gifts in my life came in the person of Frances M. Maitland.

For those of you who never had the pleasure of meeting Fran, let me introduce you (slide picture of Fran). She's beautiful isn't she?

Frances was born in India. Her father was a medical missionary who returned to become the town physician and raise his family in Collingwood, Ontario, Canada. Fran sometimes helped her father with his medical practice; undoubtedly this influenced her choice to pursue a career in nursing. She attended the Havergal School for Girls through high school and later entered the University of Michigan where she met her husband. She raised four children of her own as well as three stepsons.

When we celebrated Fran's life last May, we dubbed her a "Renaissance Woman", for truly her interests and experiences were vast and varied. She was, among other things, an avid skier and reader, an art and animal lover, a food and wine connoisseur, and a hospital and Habitat for Humanity volunteer. And while these were all aspects of this most brilliant woman, it was Frances the businesswoman, the mentor, I came to know best.

Let me share with you just a brief overview of Fran's career and accomplishments.

Her daughter, Celia Brownell, shared with me some of Fran's early career history. She told me that after moving to Chicago in the 60's, Frances actively volunteered for many charitable organizations including Lighthouse for the Blind. However, Celia noted "seeking additional challenge and responsibility as well as a more active connection with her longstanding interests in medicine Fran joined the staff of the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons".

In the early 70's she became the assistant executive secretary for The Council of Medical Specialty Societies. It was here that Fran took the lead in developing and administering a new system for the accreditation of providers of CME. This system was the foundation of the program she then nourished and built solid when the function moved to the ACCME in 1981.

Frances Maitland was a guiding light through the most innovative and sometimes perilous times in recent CME history. It was Fran who took up the charge and effectively convinced the FDA to allow the voluntary accreditation system to regulate the separation between education and promotion.

It was Fran who recognized the need for ACCME to be both consistent and user friendly. Thus was born the surveyor and provider training programs that continue today as a vital part of ACCME's activities.

In assuming the position of Executive Director for the Alliance in 1991, Fran led this organization to greater visibility and professional stature. She was the visionary who saw the benefits of bringing fully into the activities of this organization our colleagues from the pharmaceutical industry. The networks and partnerships that she created make it possible for CME to survive in these pressured times of health care cost containment.

Can you imagine how lucky I feel to have had this very accomplished woman as my mentor?

I met Frances in 1987. I was fresh out of graduate school and ready to tackle the world of organized medicine. I landed at the ISMS, just at the time it was due for reaccreditation. Isn't this story familiar! Needless to say, I didn't even know what an Essential was. But early on my predecessor, Tom Pearson, told me to give Frances Maitland a call. And what a wonderful suggestion that turned out to be.

We, Fran and I, recognized from the start that there was chemistry between us. I could always count on her advice and counsel. She never told me what to do or how to do it but she listened patiently as I laid out all the options. And then with infinite wisdom, Frances would list the pros and cons of each alternative and would relate the political history that saved my neck a thousand times over.

Frances shared her network to speed my career development. She put me on committees with people like Howard Madigan and George Oetting. Pretty awesome for a young pup (I was young then) to be at the table with the gurus of state accreditation. She directed me to the right meetings and gave me exposure. She told me how I might have handled a situation differently when things didn't turn out quite right.

So I guess it was no coincidence that I followed Fran to ACCME. And in the few months that we overlapped there, the only time we ever saw each other on a daily basis, our commitment to each other became even stronger. As I gained confidence and demonstrated my skills in financial and policy issues, Fran deferred to me. And so when she retired from ACCME to take over the Alliance, I was ready. Frances had picked me, then groomed me to be her successor.

There was so much more she gave of herself that stays with me today. She was, as I mentioned before, a businesswoman. And I say this specifically, rather than the all-inclusive, businessperson, because Fran was a staunch advocate of career women, in particular working mothers. Again how fortunate for me to have this woman's support as I wrestled with leaving a project behind to attend an all important soccer game versus dealing with the guilt of missing a school play for an absolutely critical deadline. Frances helped me to strike the balance. She showed me that it was possible to have a career and family without circuit overload.

She also taught me much about grace. She was truly a profile in courage as she fought successive bouts of cancer in her last years. Never did any of us hear a word of self-pity or doubt from Frances. She told us straight up what her odds were and then fought valiantly. She lived her life to the end with no sad stories of regret.

Let me be clear that this mentoring story is not mine alone for Fran had an eagle eye for talent and shared her knowledge and networks with many. In fact, so numerous were her mentees that I came to suspect that she must have been cloned! For it seemed impossible that any one person could have given so much individual time to so many in the course of a mere twenty-four hour day.

There were dozens of tributes to Frances that were collected in the memory book the Alliance put together for her family – CME folk who had been touched by her mentoring spirit and wanted the Maitland/Brownell/Pesch clan to know just how much she had affected our lives. As I looked through these and other things that had been written about Fran, I realized that I had not found the right words to tell you what is in my heart. And while I could have picked from many ... a beautiful poem by Joe Green, a loving memory shared by Patricia Spencer, a touching dialogue between Fran and Kevin Bunnell ... there are two that I would like to share with you today:

When Fran retired from ACCME, the late Will Duff penned these words: “She has been a friend to us all, and helped many hundreds seek the ‘right’ road when faced with a CME problem. I have yet to find a person who doesn’t have at least one Frances Maitland story to tell, and the amazing thing is that they are all positive and true! It is difficult to find the right words to use at times like this; you want to say so much, yet Frances has told us all, at least once, not to use a hundred words when ten make the point.”

And then there is this from George Oetting: “She was my mentor in the world of CME at the national level as she was for so many others, identifying people who contribute to the CME effort in some way, and then passing on suggestions to those who selected future leaders. Many stormy, large CME meetings and committee sessions reached an impasse only resolved by Fran with her calm, objective manner, combined with the respect that all attendees had for her knowledge of CME.”

So you see, I was not alone. Frances had a formula for building the pyramid. She instilled in us level by level the need to help each other out. And she challenged us in the Alliance to reach out beyond what we could do as individuals to find ways to help those who were new to CME find answers. And so we built the CME introductory session that you attended this morning. And Frances was right, because scores of your predecessors have said that without this intro they would have been lost in the sessions that followed.

And when she recognized that institutional funds were waning and outcomes were a requirement for attending any meetings, she told us, “Better make sure these newcomers don’t get lost at this meeting – they need to go home with practical solutions or they won’t be back again. Make sure they make the most of their time here.” So we put our heads together and figured out a core curriculum, CME 101 – collection of workshops with “start up” information for the CME novice. And boom, it was a success.

And finally we all got it! What Frances was telling us sunk in and we started to look for other ways to help our colleagues who were new to CME or the Alliance. We recognized that it can be pretty confusing and even lonely to attend for the first time this meeting of over 1000 participants. And so we created the meeting mentors program. Last year we matched some 75 mentor/mentee pairs; this year we will probably exceed that number.

I’m told that it is not too late to take advantage of this service even if you missed the pre-registration cutoff. Julie Bainbridge has a pool of volunteer mentors just waiting to be assigned. So don’t be shy, this is a great opportunity to network and get some free advice.

Back to the story. There is no question that this is a great meeting for anyone who wants a quick immersion in CME. But not everyone can come to this meeting so the Alliance created the CME Basics Institute, a one-day intense program that teaches the fundamental skills, aside from accreditation, that are needed to become successful in CME. This year the program will be on July 29th in Chicago, immediately preceding the ACCME’s workshop on “Understanding the Accreditation Process”. Taken together these two programs will save a newcomer countless hours of trial and error. The faculty is exceptional and all are infected with the “Maitland Mentoring Bug”.

If this sounds like a commercial that’s because it is. One of my goals today is to make sure that you are fully aware of all of the mentoring opportunities the Alliance has to offer. This has become a

core value of our organization, and I am proud and know Fran would be proud of what has been put in place to assist newcomers to the profession. Marsha Sinetar, author of *The Mentor's Spirit* puts very simply: "A first step in finding a mentor is to participate actively with groups that mentor and learn from them". Rest assured that in joining the Alliance you have come to the right place to find mentoring.

Another message from Sinetar's book is that the sharing of wisdom is not just found in traditional mentoring relationships like Fran and mine. In fact, she proposes, the mentoring spirit is all around us. And sometimes you will find a mentor for a skill or a project, like Bernie Halbur. Over these past months Bernie took a personal interest in helping me with this lecture by sending me articles, quotes and great references on mentoring. Not the traditional relationship but nonetheless an example of the mentoring spirit at work.

In some respects mentoring has become a buzzword of the business world but the truth is the concept is time tested and it works. Mentor, did you know, was Ulysses' friend whom he left to be the caretaker and teacher of his son while he journeyed in *The Odyssey*. This is a craft that has been practiced for centuries because mentors do produce good products.

Finally, I would like to offer some take home messages for mentors and mentees that I found in ASAE's Association Educator newsletter of October 1999.

First for Mentees:

- Look for someone you admire and respect who has been through the things you'll be experiencing
- Be sure the elements of trust, enthusiasm, honesty and loyalty are present
- Be prepared to be an independent thinker who uses a mentor as a guide and teacher, not as a decision maker. Remember your mentor is not an unpaid consultant
- Mentors don't have time for someone who isn't serious – someone who wants to meet at their convenience, wants all introductions to occur immediately and expects to have a three step plan outlined ASAP
- Work with your mentor on brainstorming, creativity and career development but don't bother them with personality conflicts, minor decisions or day-to-day management

And lastly, some tips for being a master mentor:

- Ask questions that make your mentee think—questions that ask for comparisons, evaluation and reflection
- Be willing to confidently reveal your own challenges and frustrations
- Support without rescuing. Before you start, decide if your help will build greater competence or just more dependence
- Be a courageous role model. Learning requires humility, curiosity and risk. Let your mentee see these qualities in you

In closing, and this really is the end, I think it's fair to say that it was Frances Maitland who lit the light, the mentoring spirit, here in the Alliance. My challenge to each of you, newcomer and veteran alike, is to fuel this flame as you leave this program. Look for mentors, be a mentor, share your gifts.

And so, in the spirit of giving back for the gifts that we have been given, I would like to return to the Alliance the honorarium given to me with this beautiful plaque in the hopes that in some way it can further the mentoring spirit Frances modeled so well. Thank you again for allowing me to tell her story.

Mentoring References

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Web Sites

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