

Mentoring scenario support

Scenario	Suggestion
<p>My mentee seems to be growing reliant on me/is reliant on me for answers to their problems</p>	<p><i>Ensuring that you go through the initial contracting phase of the mentoring relationship will help with this. Having clarity as to how the relationship will work and putting the necessary boundaries in place from the start, should help avoid any mentee reliance. Having role descriptions, and/or a contract to hand during the contracting phase will be a useful reference. Documents should outline that it is not the mentor's responsibility to provide answers for the mentee, but to guide them in developing solutions to their own problems. We have an example contract and a 'what to expect' - for mentees document available on our mentoring support page. If you find that reliance is growing despite initial clarity, it may be appropriate to use some challenging questions throughout your sessions. It may also be appropriate to use methods such as affirmation building that help explore values, self-limiting beliefs and build self-esteem. If dependence continues, it may be worth reframing the relationship, signposting the mentee to specialist services or training opportunities or suggesting a change of mentor.</i></p>
<p>Our meetings are continually postponed</p>	<p><i>This is most likely a question of commitment. Using questioning techniques that probe how committed the mentee is in achieving their goals may be useful - using rating scales can be a good tool for this. It is also worth highlighting the fact that meetings are continually postponed, and ask the mentee what they feel is contributing to this -and then question/address appropriately, bearing in mind any possible self-limiting beliefs. It may also be appropriate to adopt email or telephone discussions in place of a face to face session, if you feel that this will encourage engagement.</i></p>
<p>We are struggling to build rapport</p>	<p><i>An initial 'chemistry session' can help determine if a mentee and mentor have rapport. Mentors should make significant effort to engage with mentees, which can be achieved by asking questions that encourage the mentee to talk about themselves, expanding on areas</i></p>

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	<p><i>of commonality (and difference) and creating an atmosphere of collaboration. However, if, after all attempts, there is still a lack of rapport then it may be best that mentee and mentor mutually agree to end the mentoring relationship.</i></p>
<p>My mentee seems stuck on a particular issue</p>	<p><i>Explore if there are any self-limiting beliefs or assumptions at play below the surface. Questions such as "What are you assuming in this situation?" can assist in helping mentees to reframe and re-evaluate the issue at hand. Revisiting the initial goal and supporting the mentee to set new goals can also assist in helping mentees who appear 'stuck'. Simply stating that you have noticed that the mentee seems to be stuck on a particular issue can help provide clarity.</i></p>
<p>I am concerned that my mentee needs specialist support and/or advice that I cannot provide</p>	<p><i>As part of your mentor role, it is important to recognise when you are out of your depth. Listen to your instinct and if you feel that you are out of your depth, you most likely are. If you feel that your mentee requires specialist support you should signpost them accordingly. As such, as part of your mentoring role you should familiarise yourself with relevant bodies as well as support organisations, networks, and charities. Signposting to specialist services is available on the RCPCH website at: https://www.rcpch.ac.uk/resources/career-development-paediatricians#resilience-and-wellbeing</i></p>
<p>Our discussions leave me feeling burdened</p>	<p><i>Feeling burdened after a mentoring session can occur when you are attempting to mentor without a clear mentee agenda, are experiencing mentee resistance or do not have clear expectations of each other's role. It may be worth: revisiting the 'mentoring agreement' or contracting phase, exploring if the mentee requires further training or support and examining mentee motivations.</i></p>