

# Mentoring/ Supporting Students Inclusively During a Crisis

**Naledi Saul, MPM.**  
**Director, OCPD**



# Agenda

## 1. How it's supposed to work

A one slide summary of the physiology of a mentoring relationship

## 2. How it goes wrong & what you can do about it

During a crisis:

- What are the top 3 reasons that a mentoring relationship starts to deteriorate?
- How can you effectively assess and support your mentee?



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# The One Slide History of Mentorship



Homer! Greek Mythology! Odysseus went on an odyssey for 40+ years.

...and while he was away, his friend, **Mentor**, watched over and advised his son, Telemachus, from boyhood to adulthood.

A **mentor** is a person who positively influences a protégé/mentee's (personal, academic, professional, spiritual, etc.) development.

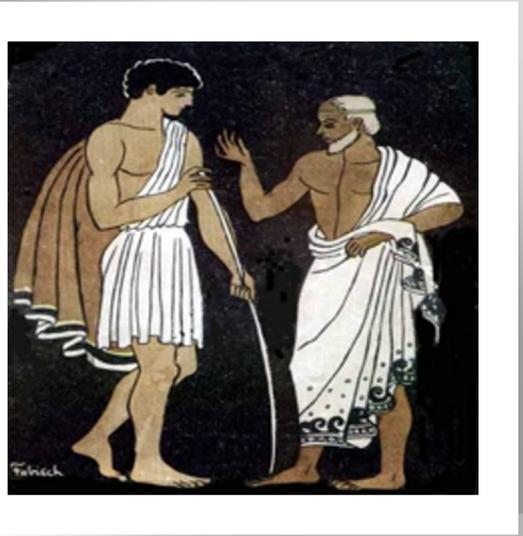


*...that great advice and mentorship really came from the goddess of wisdom, Athena, who spoke through Mentor.*

## A Mentor's **Core** Question:

- ❖ Is my **protégé** making progress towards their own **self-defined developmental goals**?

# The One Slide History of Mentorship



*...that great advice and mentorship really came from the goddess of wisdom, Athena, who spoke through Mentor.*

From the French protégé: "one who is protected,"  
Orig: from Latin *protegere*



## 10 benefits a mentor could offer:

1. Access to resources
2. Access to opportunities
3. Time and attention
4. Emotional support
5. Role modeling/inspiration
6. Advice, direction
7. Skill development
8. Access to your network
9. References
10. Protection

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Mentoring: What's  
the moment it all  
goes wrong?

#1

The mentor  
under-  
protects  
their protégé



# What makes a crisis a crisis?

## 1. Disruptive

A crisis is an event that may have a low probability of occurring, but should it occur, can have a vastly negative impact on individuals/ organization.

## 2. Indeterminate end date

The causes of the crisis, as well as the means to resolve it, may not be readily clear.

## 3. Unclear Impact

Finally, the true impact of the crisis may not be initially obvious.



Source: *A Framework for Crisis Management*, Renata Millet

# Your Question: “Have I changed my mentoring focus and approach during a crisis?”



**These factors should flip a switch for a mentor. They should begin mentoring differently.**

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What’s different about mentoring during a crisis?

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What’s different about mentoring during a crisis?

1. **Assess yourself:** What level of mentorship can you provide right now?
2. **Assess the person:** Focus flips from project/productivity to the person
3. **Re-Assess the goals:** and benchmarks of success
4. **Re-Assess the strategy:** What’s the optimal method of execution now?

# Your Question: "Have I changed my mentoring focus and approach during a crisis?"

**Assess the Person**

**Re-Assess the Goals**

**Re-Assess the Strategy**



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# A sample 20-minute check in

## Assess the Person

### 1<sup>st</sup> Check on the PERSON

- How are they doing?
- What's been most challenging since you last met?
- How have they been handling that?

## Re-Assess the Goals

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Check on the PROGRESS

- What were they able to complete since they last met with you?
- What was easy and what was difficult for them? Why?

## Re-Assess the Strategy

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Check on what's NEXT

- What makes the most sense to work on next?
- How will they accomplish this?

### 4<sup>th</sup> Finish with YOUR NEWS

- Share what you've heard/learned and been thinking about since you two last talked.

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# A sample 20-minute check in : Assess your protégé, and help your protégé assess themselves

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## SUPPORT

1. "How are you doing?"
2. Have them self assess. "On a scale of 1-10, how are you/your workload this week?"
3. What's working/most difficult right now?"
4. "What support do you have?"
5. "What strategies have you been using to handle that?"
6. "What else would be helpful?"
7. "What does it look when you're not doing well?"
8. "Is there something specific from me that you would appreciate?"
9. If you hear about something/or something happens – ask if they've been affected. If people they know have been affected.

- *Is your protégé able to assess their state?*
- *How confident are they in their abilities right now?*

## SUPPORT

1. "Let me start by acknowledging what you've been doing well."
2. "Let me acknowledge what you've accomplished since we last spoke. "
3. "How long did it take you? Was that your estimate?"
4. "How did you get it done?"
5. "Do you feel on track to reach your goals?"
6. "Does this goal still seems achievable?"

- *Assess how confident do they feel that they can meet their goals/your expectations?*

## SUPPORT

1. "What are next steps?"
2. "Do you have any concerns about achieving this?/What do you need?"
3. "What would be helpful as you work on this?"
4. "How long do you estimate it will take you?"
5. "Have you considered contingency plans?"

- *Assess: how clear are they about their strategy?*
- *How feasible are you with their plan?*

## SUPPORT

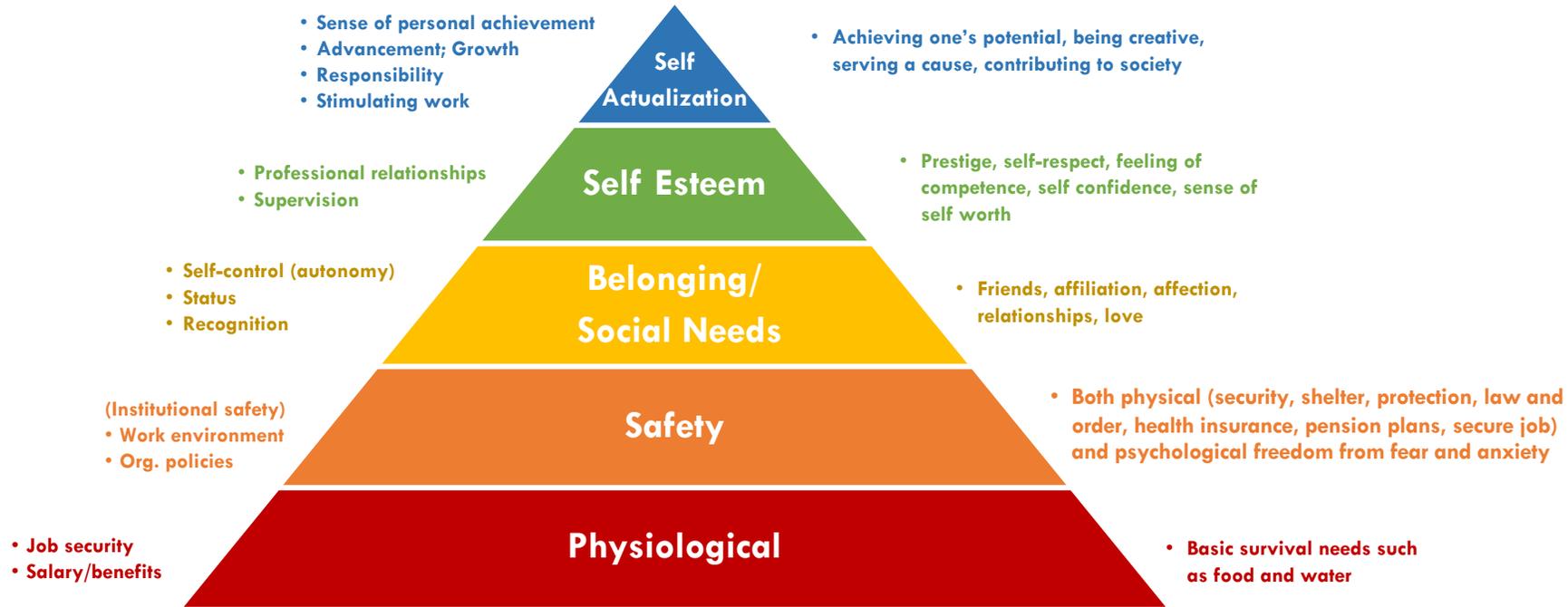
1. "Let me tell you what I've heard/learned and been thinking since we last talked."
2. "Do you have thoughts or questions about what I've shared?"
3. "What else do you have questions or concerns about?"

- *Assess: what do they seem to need to hear right now?*

# : Assess your protégé, and help your protégé assess themselves

## Frederic Herzberg : Theory of Motivation 1968

## Abraham Maslow's : Hierarchy of Needs (1943)



What's different about mentoring during a crisis?

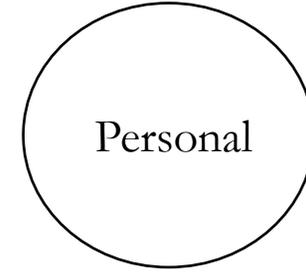
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- Sense of personal achievement
- Advancement; Growth
- Responsibility
- Stimulating work

- Achieving one's potential, being creative, serving a cause, contributing to society

- Professional relationships
- Supervision

- Prestige, self-respect, feeling of competence, self confidence, sense of self worth

- Self-control (autonomy)
- Status
- Recognition

- Friends, affiliation, affection, relationships, love

- (Institutional safety)
- Work environment
- Org. policies

- Both physical (security, shelter, protection, law and order, health insurance, pension plans, secure job) and psychological freedom from fear and anxiety

- Job security
- Salary/benefits

- Basic survival needs such as food and water

Ghosting Alert!

1. Assess yourself: What level of mentorship can you provide right now?
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Mentoring: What's  
the moment it all  
goes wrong?

#1

The mentor  
under-protects  
The protégé



Mentoring: What's  
the moment it all  
goes wrong?

#2

The mentor  
over-protects  
The protégé



# Your Question: “Am I promoting the agency of my protégé?”

## In an attempt to protect them, the mentor:

1. Refrains from inviting them to meetings
2. Excludes them in correspondence, meetings, or opportunities
3. Disengages from them, because they are concerned about saying the wrong thing and upsetting them.

Teaching your protégé discernment, because the next place probably won't have a you.

## Inclusive best practices

- Acknowledging agency/autonomy
- Designing equity into policies and processes
- Transparency about goals and performance/conduct expectations, evaluations and feedback.
- Displaying vulnerability
- Authentic: bringing your whole self to work”
- Intentionally using tools, processes and community as checks and balances to mitigate conscious and unconscious bias.



The mentor under corrects

All of the power bases more naturally lie in on the side of the mentor. So when you over-correct, your protégé may be reluctant to confront you about it. You may feel like an accessible mentor, but they haven't forgotten you hold the power

- 1. Legitimate
- 2. Referent
- 3. Expert
- 4. Reward:
- 5. Coercive:
- 6. Informational:

Bertram Raven

*Let's talk power differentials,  
and the two social psychologists  
who studied the bases of power*



John French



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<b>1. Legitimate</b>	Your official right to make demands and to expect others to do what you say.
<b>2. Referent</b>	Your reputation: Your perceived worthiness and right to others' respect.
<b>3. Expert</b>	Your level of knowledge and skill in a particular area.
<b>4. Reward</b>	Your ability to reward people for doing what you want.
<b>5. Coercive</b>	Your ability to punish others for not doing what you want.
<b>6. Informational</b>	Your ability to control the access to information that someone else needs to accomplish something



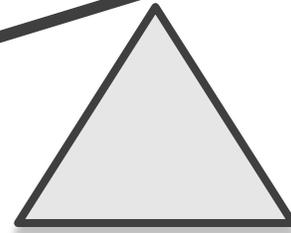
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## Mentor

## Protégé



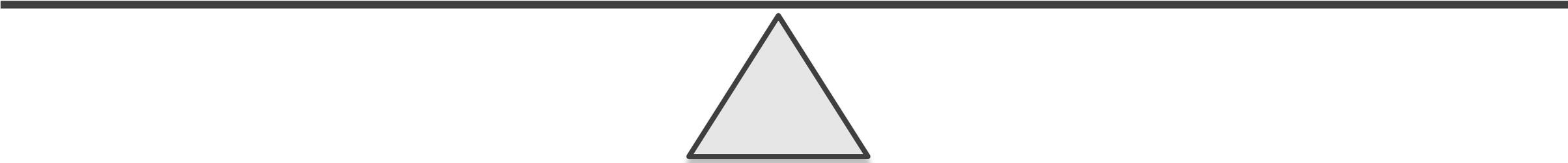
1. Title, Tenure, Reputation (**Legitimate**, **Referent**)
2. Expertise (**Referent**, **Expertise**)
3. Resources: funding, contacts, time, attention  
(**Rewards**, **Coercive**, **Informational**)
4. Ability to fire (**Rewards**, **Coercive**)
5. Recommendation/Access (**Rewards**,  
**Coercive**, **Informational**)



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**Mentor**

**Protégé**



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## In an attempt to protect them, the mentor:

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3. Disengages from them, because they are concerned about saying the wrong thing and upsetting them.

### Questions:

- “How is your workload right now?”
- “What would help?”
- “We could modify our goals or strategies as a part of your development plan. For example X or Y. What do you think?”
- “It’s up to you.”

Teaching your protégé discernment, because the next place probably won’t have a you.

## Inclusive best practices

- Acknowledging agency/autonomy
- Designing equity into policies and processes
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The mentor under corrects

Mentoring: What's  
the moment it all  
goes wrong?

#2

The mentor  
over-protects  
The protégé



Mentoring: What's  
the moment it all  
goes wrong?

#3

The mentor  
fails to protect  
the protégé  
from the  
mentor

*Boundaries & Bias*

# What is the Life Cycle of a Mentoring Relationship

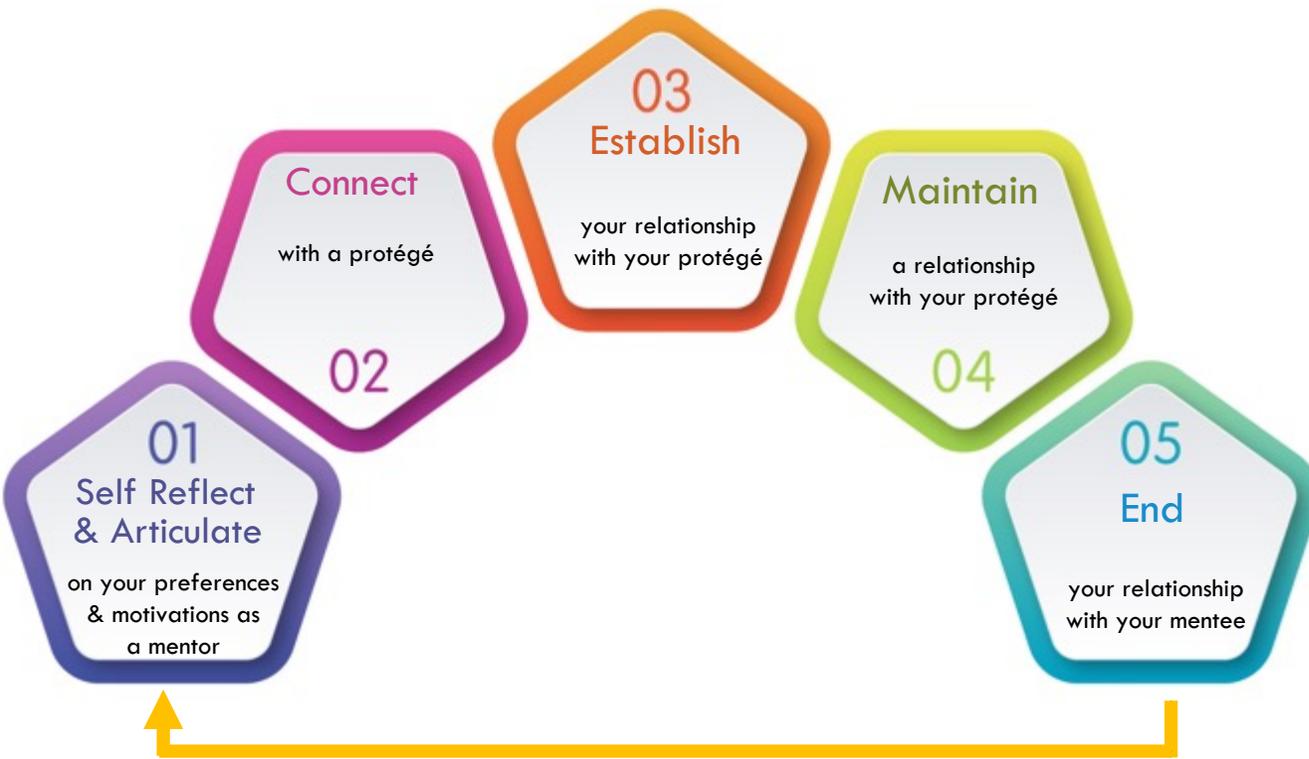
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The mentor under corrects

# What is the Life Cycle of a Mentoring Relationship



Boundaries, preferences and biases.

## 1. Assess yourself: What level of mentorship can you provide right now?

- What types of support am I willing to offer?
- What are my work style preferences?
- What are my conscious and implicit biases?



# Your Question: “What are my boundaries?”



## 10 benefits a mentor could offer:

1. Access to resources
2. Access to opportunities
3. Time and attention
4. Emotional support
5. Role modeling/inspiration
6. Advice, direction
7. Skill development
8. Access to your network
9. References
10. Protection

## Set those expectations

- ❖ **Decide** what type of support are you offering?
- ❖ **Consider your limits** and talk to them about what types of issues you refer on.
- ❖ **Assess their understanding and unspoken baseline expectations** by asking them about what they appreciated about their previous mentoring experiences
- ❖ **Set your expectations:** Talk to them about your previous experiences as a mentor to set expectations about what you will and won't be doing
- ❖ **Develop boundary reinforcing/exiting language:** "I can see that this is upsetting for you. I need to go now, but let's plan to talking about this more tomorrow."

Boundaries,  
preferences and  
biases.

## 1. Assess yourself: What level of mentorship can you provide right now?

- What types of support am I willing to offer?
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# Your Question: “What are my preferences”



01

Self Reflect  
& Articulate

on your preferences  
& motivations as  
a mentor

“While mentoring brings purpose and satisfaction, it can be draining. But while plenty of literature focuses on general mentorship strategies — the why, what, who, where, and when — strategies to save time and energy are often overlooked.”

1. **Engage:** How do you want your protégé to interact with you?
2. **Meetings:** How do you want to structure your meetings?
3. **Organization:** What are your preferences about how your protégé organizes themselves – for example, how they structure meetings?
4. **Communication:** What are your preferences about how your protégé communicates. How frequently?
5. **Conflict:** How do you expect your protégé to share difficult news? What is your definition of a successful mentoring relationship?
6. **Content:** What topics do you want to mentor on? Which ones do you wish to avoid?
7. **Recognition:** How do you want your mentee to express appreciation?

Boundaries,  
preferences and  
biases.

## 1. Assess yourself: What level of mentorship can you provide right now?

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Source: [hbr.org/2020/08/what-efficient-mentorship-looks-like](https://hbr.org/2020/08/what-efficient-mentorship-looks-like)

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# Your Question: “Have I put checks and balances in place to mitigate my bias and tendencies?”

## What you need to know about bias?

- Implicit bias is gap between our conscious, stated values and unconscious conditioning which usually is shaped by core societal values, beliefs, stereotypes and pre-judgements.
- We all have bias. Conscious and implicit bias does not mean you're bad; it means your human.
- Teaching about bias does not change people's thoughts. But our first goal is not to change your thoughts, it's to contain your actions.
- Awareness, coupled with rubrics, processes, transparency, diversity and community are all checks and balances to help to **move you past your first response (which may be biased) to your best response.**
- Crises create additional barriers to getting to that best response.

## Check your bias



## Contain your bias

1. If you are giving feedback, have you articulated performance expectations?
2. If you are evaluating them in any way, have you articulated your evaluatory benchmarks?
3. Do you have expectations that you have designated as “professional skills that they should know?”
4. What mitigating steps have you put in place to address your conscious bias?
5. Do you have a mentor board? People who you check in to test your decisions and responses?

Boundaries,  
preferences and  
biases.

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# Your Question: Do we continue, modify or end our mentoring relationship?



A. We continue to work together	B. We need to take a pause	C. This ends today
<p>Consider how much time you are still able to invest (weekly) with your intern.</p> <p>Look over the expectations you had previously set for them (Mentor Expectations Spreadsheet) and determine which of the expectations could still be covered, especially for those interns that will need to work remotely.</p> <p>Make sure to have a discussion about which expectations are (and are not) possible while remotely working together.</p> <p>Consider how often you will be checking in with your intern. Regular actionable feedback during this time will be just as important as ever in helping them meet expectations. Consider how often</p>	<p>If you need some time to work things out on your own first.</p> <p>Consider how long you may need before you can provide time again to work with your intern remotely (a week or two, a month, maybe revisit/reassess the timeframe in 1-2wks, etc).</p> <p>During this time your intern could possibly do some of the items under <i>10 potential activities for interns no longer able to work in the lab</i> (see below), but without your feedback/input/assistance for a couple of weeks.</p>	<p>If you feel you really need to focus on other aspects of your life currently and can no longer take on the responsibilities of mentoring an intern this semester please make sure to set up at least a 30min conversation online with your intern to let them know.</p> <p>Discuss with them why you need to end the internship. Let them know if they can use you as a positive reference in the future (if this is not the case, please let them know as well).</p> <p>Make sure to communicate your decision with both Laurence Clement and Karen Leung.</p>



Ultimately, you have a decision to make

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# What we covered

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# Summary

## Key questions:

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2. **Assess the person:** Focus flips from project/productivity to the person
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#1

The mentor under protects the protégé

#2

The mentor over protects the protégé

#3

The mentor doesn't protect the protégé from the mentor

## Key questions:

1. Are my actions promoting my protégé's agency? (recognizing their values, their assessment processes, their decision making processes?)

## Key questions:

1. What types of support am I willing to offer?
2. What are my work style preferences?
3. Have I put in checks and balances to mitigate my biases and tendencies?

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