

How Would You Respond?

Case Study

Learning Objective:

Create a culturally aware mentoring relationship by promoting dialogue built on the foundational principles of mentoring practice.

Instructions

As you review this case narrative, think about your own setting (i.e. research lab, education and teaching, clinical settings). Please bring your experiences to this example.

Case Narrative:

I am working with a fantastic mentee: very efficient and thoughtful, and one who generates a fair amount of data directly relevant to my project. I think this mentee is having a positive research experience, but when I asked her how things are going, she mentioned a negative interaction with another graduate student that had racial undertones. I was taken aback by her response. I had not noticed such a dynamic in our space or from the other student. Right now, this student is the only African American woman in our entire department. I want to respond in a way that is meaningful way, but I worry that the next moments will be uncomfortable, or I might do something that is incorrect.

Group Discussion

- As someone who has been, is now or will be in the position of mentor, in what ways do you relate to the narrator in this case study?
- What challenges does this case bring for the narrator? What challenges does it bring to your mind as you read it?
- What value would there be in having a culturally aware conversation with your mentee? What are the risks?
- If you were to decide that the value of having the conversation is worth the risk, how could you achieve your goals for the conversation and minimize the risks that concern you?

(turn over)

Free Write

Write three questions that you could ask, or statements you could make, in this case study scenario that would communicate that you are genuinely...

- a) Interested
- b) Seeking to understand (not judge)
- c) Care about and are committed to your mentee's success