

## DEALING WITH EMOTIONAL REACTIONS

If you invite your mentees to talk about their feelings, there will be times when those feelings are associated with an emotional reaction. Here are some guidelines on how to handle this situation:

1. Acknowledgement: "I can see this is upsetting for you."
2. Empathy: "I can understand why you would feel upset."
3. Invite dialogue: "Would you like to talk about this now?"
4. Listen.
5. Provide appropriate support.
6. Suggest other resources if and when appropriate to do so.
7. Empowerment: "What would YOU like to do about it?"

Do not suggest solutions unless specifically asked to do so. It may be that simply listening is all that is required.

Do not say anything that sounds like, "If I were you, I would..." Give them room to sort out the problem for themselves.

The Mentoring Partnership Handbook, 2006

