PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERIES

The Two-Way Street

How to Mentor Effectively and Get the Most out of Mentorship

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Disclosures

The presenters have no relevant financial relationships or conflicts of interest to disclose.

Who is in the audience?

What department are you from?

I have experience being a:

I have served as a mentor to (select all that apply):

I currently have someone who I meet with regularly who I consider to be a mentor:

If you have a mentor currently, how satisfied are you with that relationship?

What are some potential barriers to effective mentoring relationships (for the mentor or mentee, or both)?

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify common barriers to effective mentoring relationships.

2. Apply strategies that mentors and mentees can use to build more effective mentoring relationships.

3. Commit to one mentoring best practice they will incorporate into their own mentoring relationships.

EVIDENCE REVIEW

The Evidence Base for Mentoring

What does the evidence tell us about the benefits, barriers, and prevalence of effective mentoring?

Mentoring Research

Limitations

- Studies tend to focus on perceived benefits of mentoring for the mentee rather than observable outcomes
- Lack of standardized definition and standardized outcome measures
- Lack of adequate controls
- Too short to determine long-term outcomes

THE EVIDENCE BASE

Benefits of Mentoring

FOR MENTEE

- Improved career satisfaction
- Scholarly productivity/academic promotion
- Better work-life balance

FOR MENTOR

- Professional satisfaction
- Exposure to new ideas
- Increased skills and knowledge
- Increased confidence

FOR INSTITUTION

- Faculty retention
- Improved patient care and teaching
- Reduced burnout

“Part of the mentorship process is to define within a competitive world those traits that make the individual unique and which increase their value.”

— Fishman, 2021

THE EVIDENCE BASE

What the Research Shows

A dot-matrix summary of published mentoring studies, organized by benefit, enabler, and barrier category.

	Benefits					Enablers					Barriers		Consequences of a lack of or inadequate mentorship		
	Career development	Personal development	Academic craftsmanship	Psychosocial support	Job satisfaction	Mentor availability	Mentor expertise	Supportive relationships	Mutuality	Responsive to shifting needs	Personal and relational dynamics	Organizational factors	Decreased job satisfaction	Limited career development	Reduced academic productivity
Athanasiou et al. [33]								●							
Blood et al. [34]					●	●	●		●	●				●	
Carapinha et al. [35]									●		●				
Chung & Kowalski [36]		●		●	●		●	●	●				●		
Colletti et al. [37]	●										●			●	
De Saxe Zerden et al. [38]	●											●	●	●	●
Dutta et al. [39]	●	●	●	●				●							
Elliott et al. [40]	●	●		●				●	●	●	●	●			
Files et al. [41]	●	●	●		●										
Fleming et al. [42]	●	●	●								●	●			
Foster et al. [43]	●										●			●	
Jeffers and Mariani [44]		●								●	●	●	●		
Koopman & Thiedke [45]	●								●	●	●	●			
Levine et al. [46]											●	●	●	●	●
Mayer et al. [47]	●		●		●										
McGuire et al. [48]	●		●												
McMains et al. [49]	●	●	●									●			
Ramanan et al. [50]	●		●			●	●				●				
Seemann et al. [51]									●			●		●	
Simon et al. [52]	●		●	●											
Sonnad & Colletti [53]	●							●			●	●		●	
Steele et al. [54]	●		●	●		●			●	●	●	●			
Strauss et al. [55]	●		●	●		●		●	●		●	●			
Turnbull & Roberts [56]		●	●								●	●		●	●
Varkey et al. [57]	●	●	●		●				●			●			
Wasserstein et al. [58]					●	●			●	●			●		
Welch et al. [59]	●	●		●				●	●	●					

Source: Cross et al., 2019

THE EVIDENCE BASE

The Mentorship Gap

Fewer than half of academic medical faculty identify themselves as having received mentoring.

Barriers to Effective Mentoring

PART 1

The First Meeting

A brief case for discussion

Instructions: Turn to your worksheet and complete Part 1. Take 1 minute for individual brainstorming, then a few minutes to discuss with your neighbor.

Keep your worksheet handy — we'll return to this case as each strategy is introduced.

FOUNDATIONS OF MENTORING

Building the Foundation

- Psychological safety: safe to be vulnerable, ask for help, not know
- Anticipate anxiety
- Tell your story: share setbacks and nonlinear turns, not just successes

Phrases mentors can borrow

"Starting a new faculty position is a big transition — most people feel like they're drinking from a firehose. That's completely normal."

"I want to hear about what's hard, not just what's going well."

"Can I tell you a little about my own path? It wasn't exactly a straight line."

Purposeful self-disclosure — not the volume of it — is what drives relationship quality.

FOUNDATIONS OF MENTORING

Set the Frame Early

- Clarify: frequency, format, communication preferences, scope
- **Mismatched expectations = #1 cause of mentoring failure**
- Consider a brief mentoring compact

Even an informal five-minute conversation at the end of the first meeting prevents a lot of downstream frustration.

MENTORING COMPACT

- ✓ Meeting frequency
- ✓ Preferred format (in-person / virtual)
- ✓ Communication channel & response time
- ✓ Scope: what's in / out of bounds

Practical Scaffolding

- Schedule recurring meetings — don’t rely on ad hoc
- Help them set goals → translate into agenda items
- Offer a "menu" of topics you can discuss

Many mentees don’t know what mentors can help with — listing topics gives them permission to bring things up.

MENTORING MENU

- Career planning
- Scholarship & research
- Teaching
- Work–life integration
- Navigating politics
- Promotion

Be Responsive and Accessible

- Timely responses between meetings signal investment
- Accessibility — technical and emotional — is a hallmark of effective mentoring

You don’t have to respond instantly —

but you do have to respond.

Award-winning mentors consistently name accessibility as what separates good mentoring from great mentoring.

CASE DISCUSSION

Cases: Mentorship Challenges and Opportunities

Instructions: Turn to Part 2 on your worksheet. In groups of 2–4, read the scenario and discuss the questions in your small group.

CASE DISCUSSION

Scenario A: The Overwhelmed Mentee

A

What might an effective mentor do?

- Look beneath the surface
- Listen before solving
- Prioritize 1–2 next steps
- Connect to additional resources when needed

CASE DISCUSSION

Scenario B: Feedback That Didn’t Land

B

What might an effective mentor do?

- Lead with curiosity
- Balance candor with support
- Give specific, collaborative feedback
- Address the rupture—don’t avoid it

CASE DISCUSSION

Scenario C: The Stalled Promotion Packet

C

What would an effective mentor do?

- Get curious—not frustrated
- Explore barriers to follow-through
- Problem-solve together
- Coach; don’t rescue

EMPOWERING THE MENTEE

Coach the Mentee to Drive

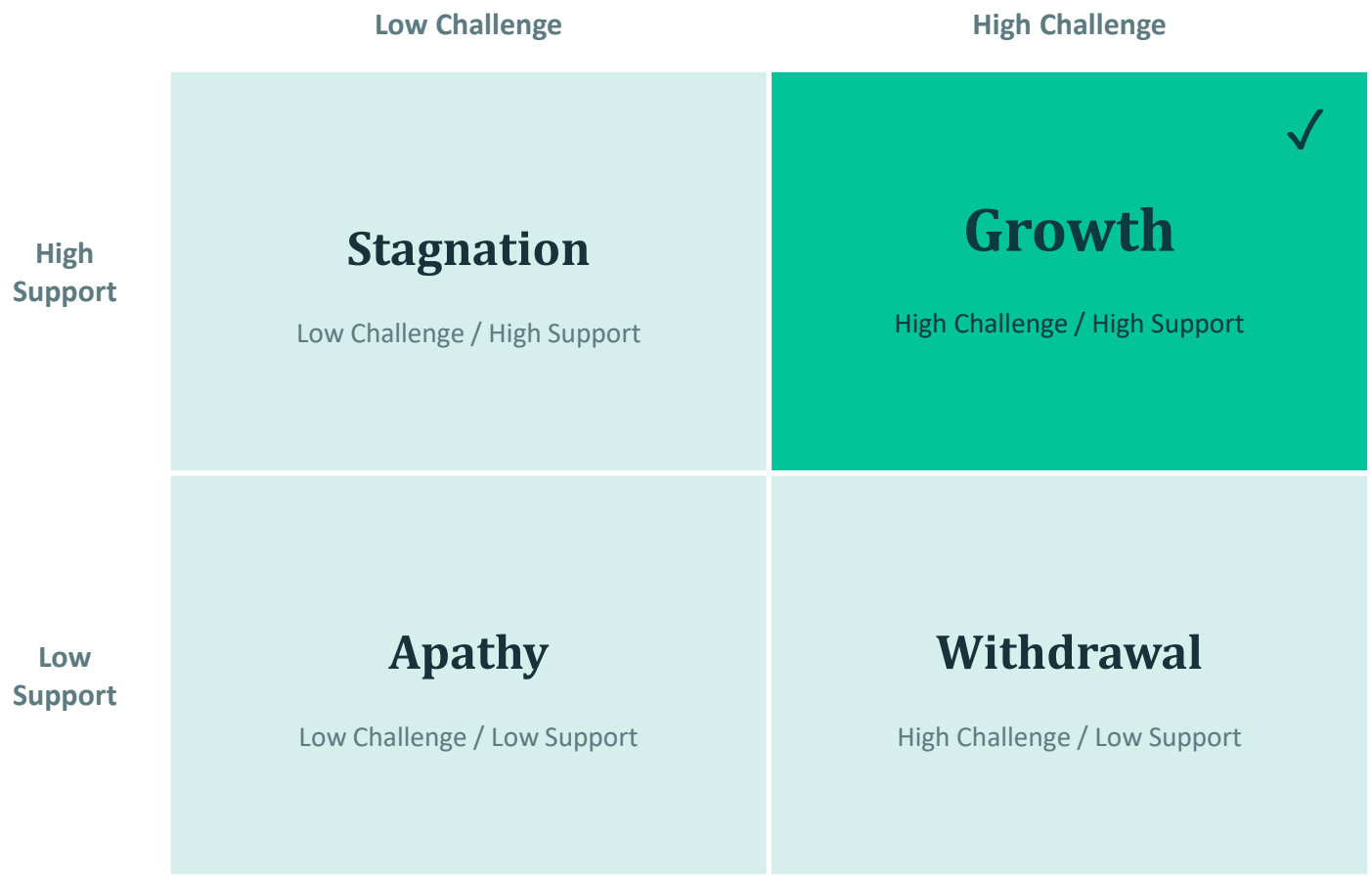
- The best mentoring relationships are mentee-driven
- Coach them to: schedule, set agendas, follow up, send updates
- Don’t assume they know this is expected — tell them

This isn’t being hands-off — it’s empowering them.

CALIBRATING GROWTH

Balance Support and Challenge

The Daloz Model



The sweet spot is high support plus high challenge.

EMPOWERING THE MENTEE

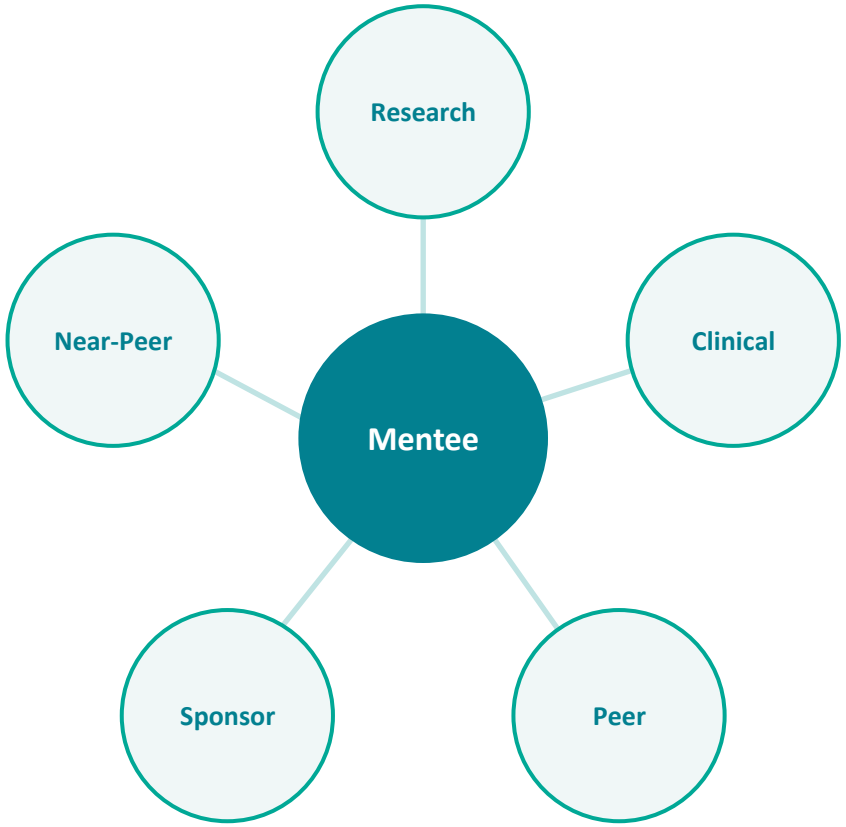
Build a Mentorship Network

No single mentor can meet all of a mentee's needs.

Encourage a diverse network:

- Peer mentors, near-peer mentors
- Mentors outside the department or institution
- Mentors with different expertise (research, clinical, leadership)

The traditional dyadic model alone is insufficient.



CALIBRATING GROWTH

Honest Feedback

- Timely, specific, balanced (affirming + corrective)
- Frame constructively: suggest alternatives, don’t just critique
- Ask permission before offering unsolicited feedback
- **Consider: Is the relationship strong enough to hold this?**

Support **Candor**

Feedback delivered before trust is established can feel like judgment rather than guidance.

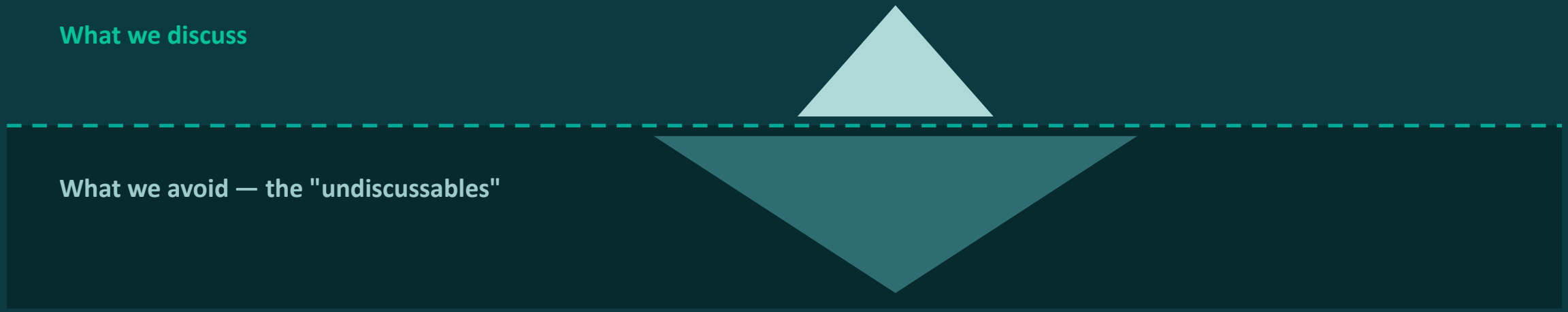
CALIBRATING GROWTH

You Don’t Have to Know Everything

- Be honest about the limits of your expertise
- Connect mentees with others who can help
- Your role: not having all the answers, but being a "connector"
- This models intellectual humility

NAVIGATING DIFFERENCE

Navigate Difficult Conversations



- Differences in identity, values, generation can become "undiscussables"
- Unaddressed, they erode the relationship silently
- Preparing for these conversations is a learnable skill
- Mentor with cultural humility: ongoing self-reflection, not a one-time training

NAVIGATING DIFFERENCE

Be a Sponsor, Not Just a Mentor

MENTOR

talks WITH you

Guidance. Advice. A sounding board for decisions.

SPONSOR

talks ABOUT you

Opportunity. Nominates, recommends, amplifies — when you're not in the room.

Sponsorship is especially critical for women and underrepresented faculty, who are less likely to have informal sponsorship networks.

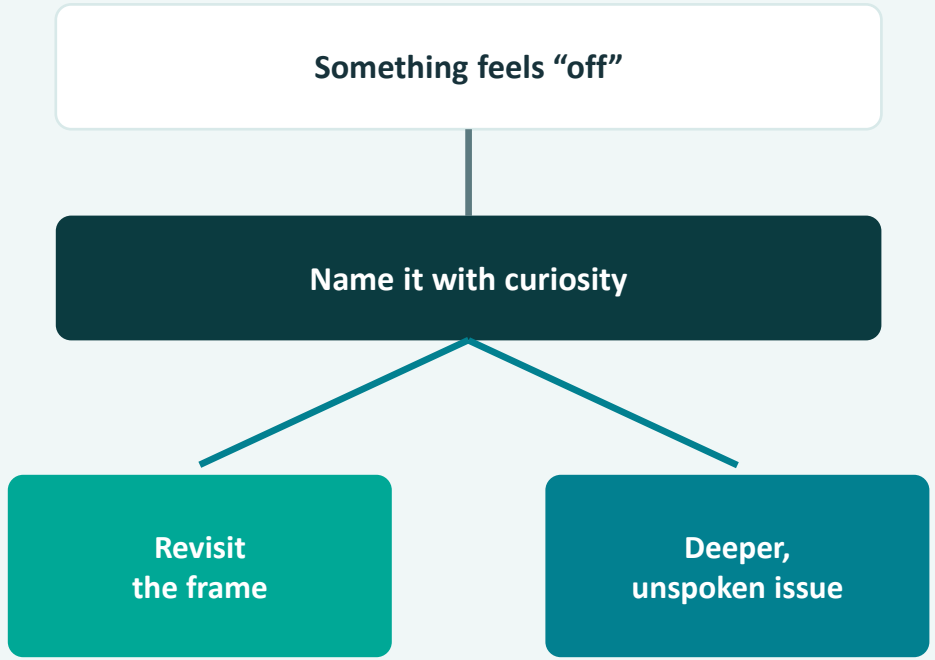
SUSTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP

Address Impasses Early

- When something feels "off," name it with curiosity
- Unaddressed impasses erode trust
- Sometimes signals a need to revisit the frame

"I notice we keep coming back to the same action items. I'm not bringing this up to pressure you — I'm wondering if there's something getting in the way that we haven't talked about yet."

"I want to circle back to our last conversation. I may not have raised that in the best way, and I'd like to hear how it landed for you."



Naming the impasse opens the door either way.

SUSTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP

Mentoring Needs Evolve

Directive

More structure early on

Collegial

Shared decision-making
Increasingly collaborative and mentee-driven

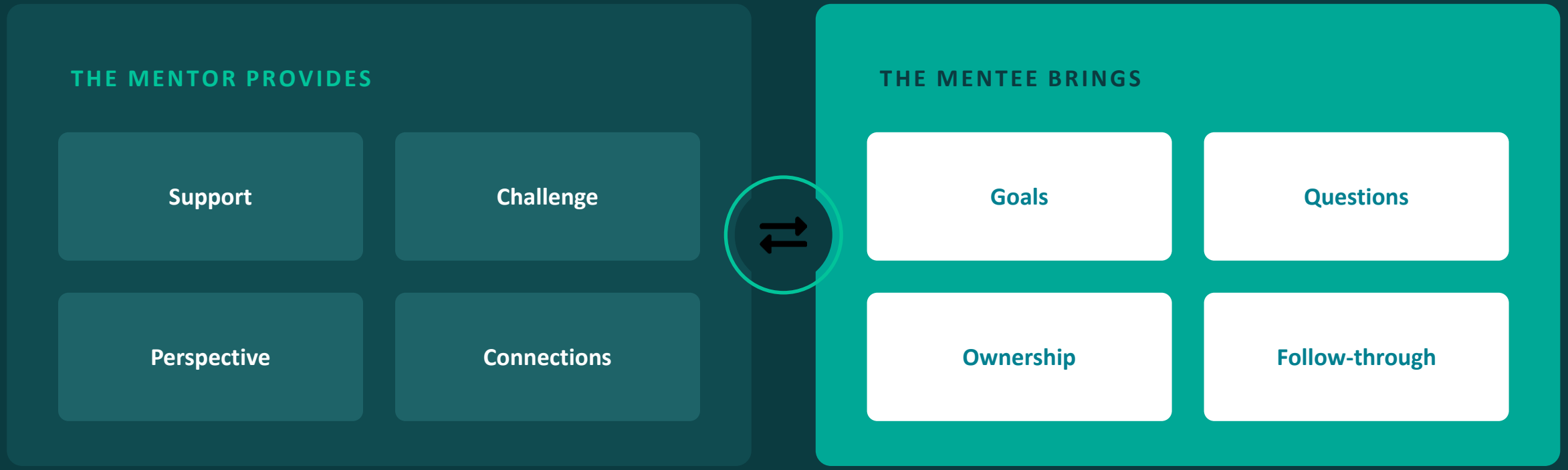
Peer

Mutual, lifelong relationship

- **Effective mentors re-calibrate as the mentee's needs evolve**
- Solicit feedback: "How is this working for you?"
- Not all relationships last forever — and that's okay
- Frame endings as graduations, not breakups

SUSTAINING THE RELATIONSHIP

It’s a Two-Way Street



The mentor provides support, challenge, perspective, and connections. The mentee brings goals, questions, ownership, and follow-through.

YOUR COMMITMENT

What is ONE best practice from today you will incorporate into your mentoring relationships?

Write it down. Share with your group.

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