

Mentoring lesson 4: Find your compassion

Are you struggling to feel benevolent towards your mentee? Julie Starr poses some questions to help you find your compassion

Benevolence - compassion and generosity - and a sense of connectedness towards a mentee aren't always easy to achieve. So, if you're not feeling benevolent, what is the cause? Negative beliefs, lack of confidence, avoidance of risk and stress responses can all be barriers. Do you find yourself thinking: 'I don't have time for this' or 'They seem to want something from me and I'm uncomfortable with that'?

Answer the following questions to understand what's happening in the relationship:

1. What four to five adjectives would you use to describe the current nature of the relationship? For example, cool, professional, warm, awkward, etc.
2. How would you prefer to describe the relationship in future? Such as warm, friendly, familiar, relaxed, engaging, etc.
3. How would you describe your own feelings and manner/behaviour towards your mentee? Are you cautious, guarded, or professional?
4. What beliefs are operating/in play in this mentoring relationship? For example, what do you think about this person that contributes to how the relationship feels?
5. What are you willing to do, to open up a different type of relationship with this person? For example, reduce your own formality, perceive them differently etc.

It often helps to look at a relationship where you do feel compassionate or generous towards someone else. Then reflect on the differences: How can you feel the same towards someone else? As always, you have the answer - you simply need to be willing to look.



About Julie Starr

Julie Starr's *The Mentoring Manual* has clear principles, tips, and free supporting downloads to enable managers and leaders to build effective mentoring relationships. Her other books, *The Coaching Manual* and *Brilliant Coaching* build coaching ability through simple principles and practical approaches. Julie is the founder of Starr Coaching, a leading provider of leadership and management development. Find out more at www.starrcoaching.co.uk and www.LearnStarr.com

