



# AAAC Mentoring Circle

*Mentee training guide*

**WELCOME TO THE PROGRAM!**

# Expectations for participants



## Respect

For other  
volunteers,  
program staff  
and mentees



## Inclusivity

Understanding  
the differences  
of others



## Participation

To the best of  
your abilities



## Confidentiality

Regarding  
what might be  
shared by  
participants

# Objectives

1

The mentee will learn the best practices of being a mentee.



3

The mentee will understand what is expected of them.



2

The mentee will feel equipped to handle challenges that might arise during the mentoring relationship.



4

The mentee will feel confident in their ability to navigate the mentorship.



# What is the AAAC Mentoring Circle?

## Mission

The Mentoring Circle's mission is to contribute to the retention of Black students at VCU. The objective is to provide students with mentors who have the experience, compassion and resources to assist the mentee with their collegiate experience.

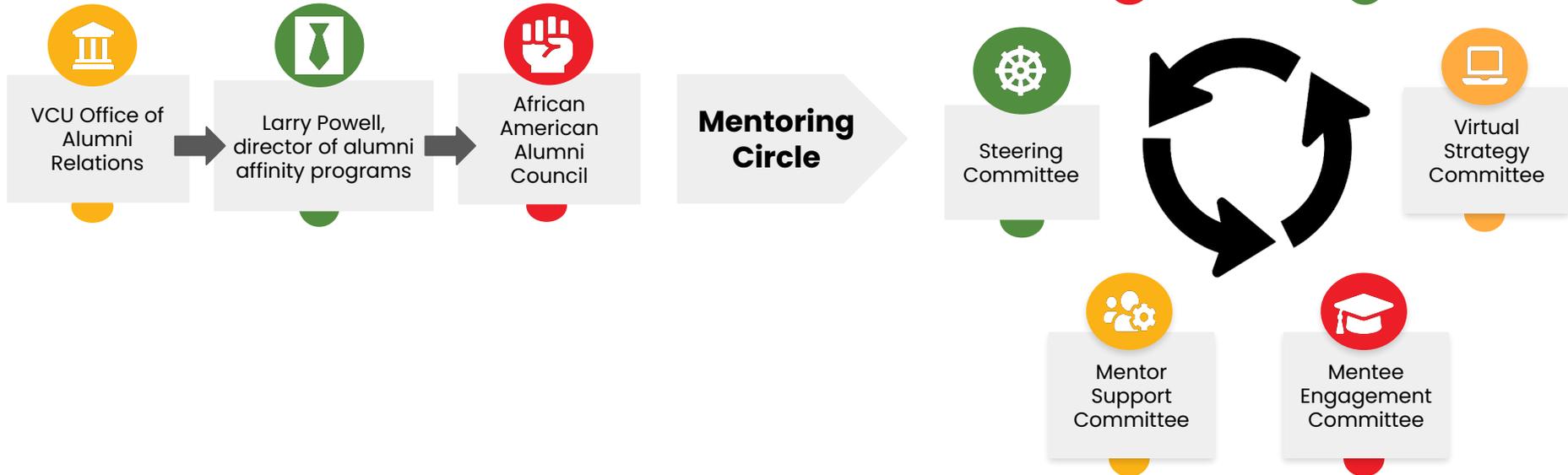
## Values

The Mentoring Circle values patience, effort and the time our volunteers give to the program.

## History

AAAC members were looking for ways to help future generations of Black alumni. Conversations with students led to the creation of the Mentoring Circle in 2015. Since the program's inception, nearly 600 Black students have been paired with alumni mentors.

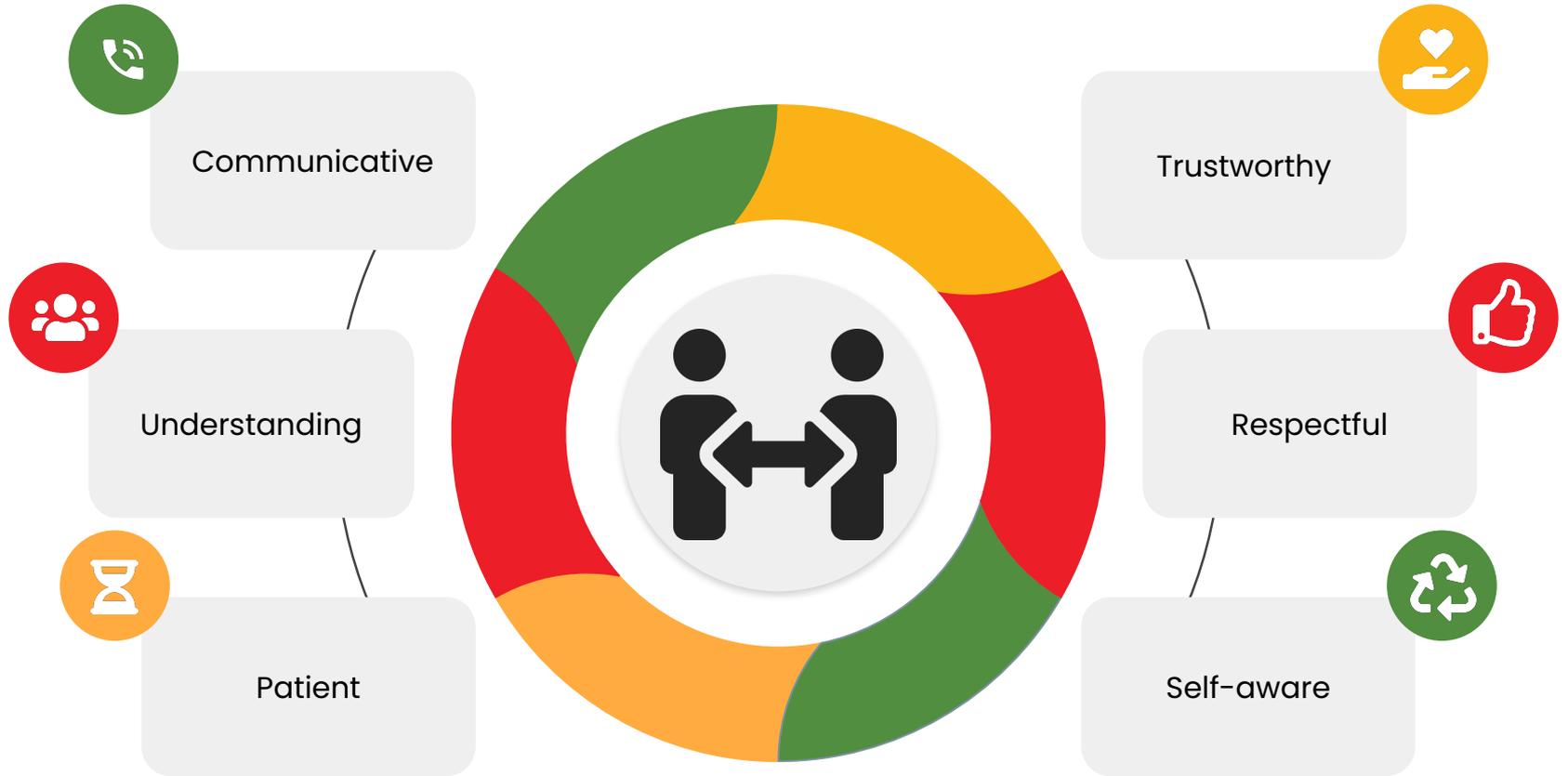
# Mentoring Circle structure



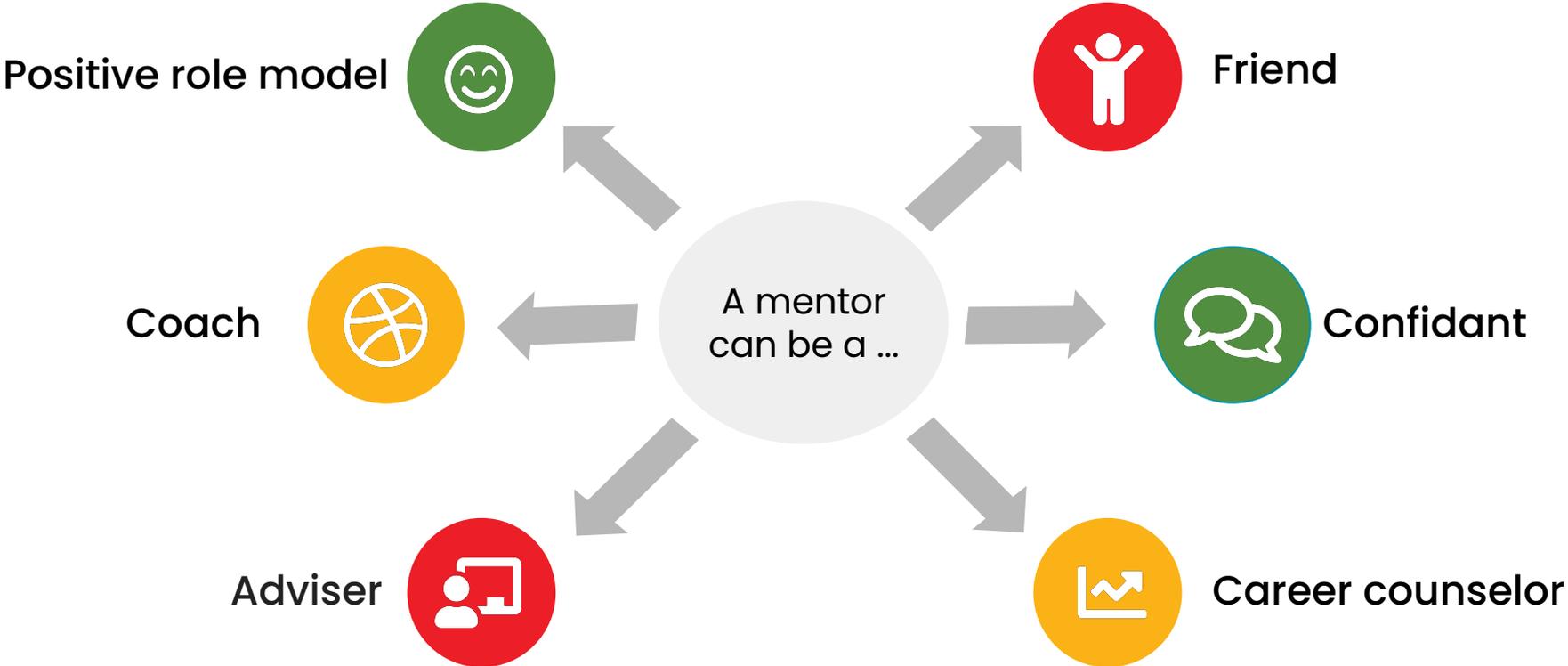
*Your role as a*

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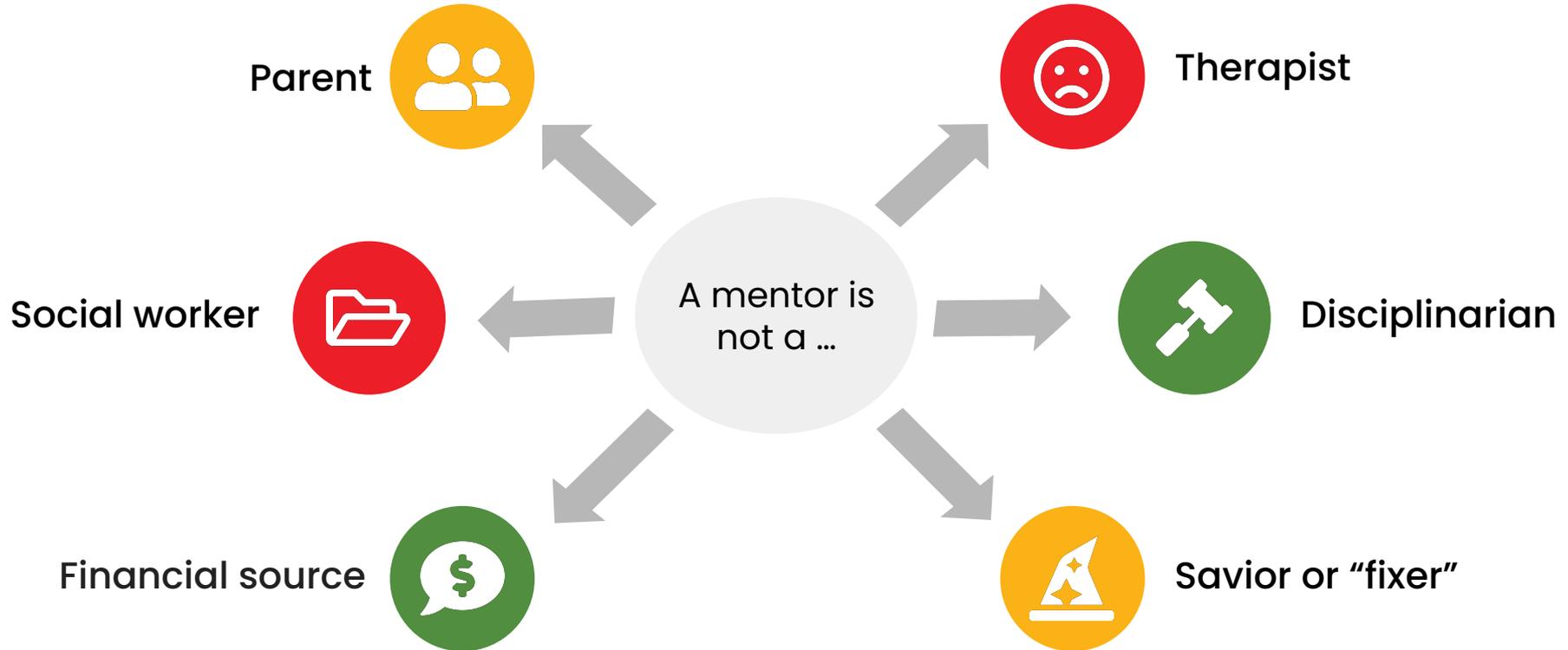
# Qualities of a good mentee



# What is a mentor?



# What is NOT a mentor?



# In your role as a mentee DO:

Get to know your mentor.

Tell your mentor the goals you're aiming to achieve.

Ask for help with resources, school, etc.

Be consistent, but flexible. Communicate changes in plans.

Take charge in decision-making.

Be open to what your mentor can teach you or share with you.

# In your role as a mentee DON'T:

Expect to have instant rapport with your mentor.

Let the mentor guide your whole mentorship.

Ignore the mentor's effort.

Judge or jump to conclusions.

Violate boundaries your mentor might have.

Expect your mentor to take the place of parents, teachers, social workers or clergy.



# **Building successful mentoring relationships**

# Creating caring environments



# Setting and reinforcing boundaries

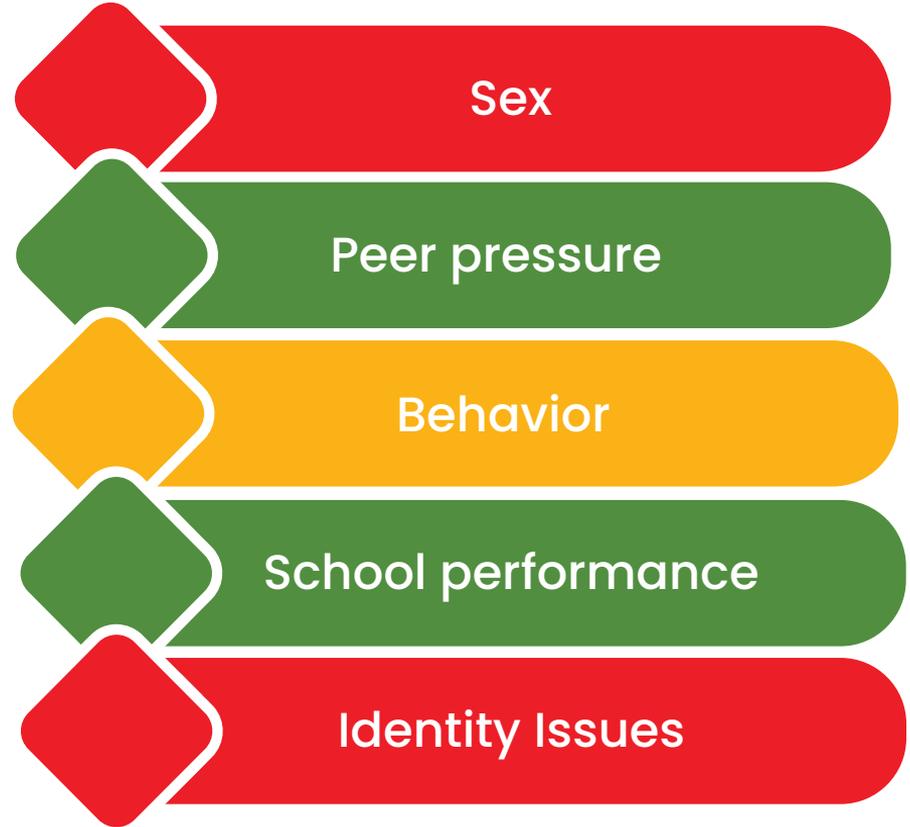
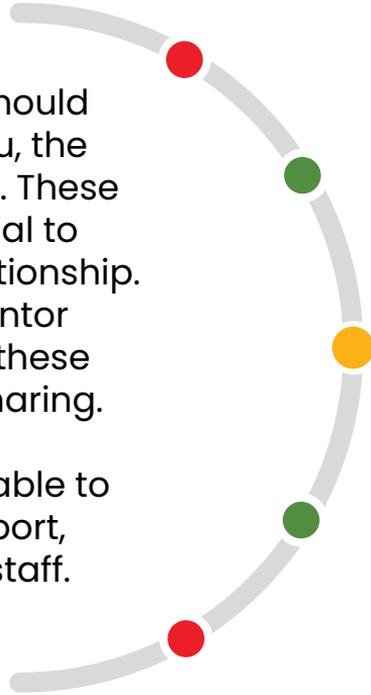
- Know your personal boundaries.
- Discuss and set boundaries at the beginning of the relationship so there is a mutual understanding.
- If a boundary is crossed, share with your mentor the action, behavior or language that made you uncomfortable.
- Understand that the mentor might also have boundaries they wish to be respected.

- Reinforce boundaries by communicating when they are crossed. Example, "Choose a better word to describe that."
- Explain why certain boundaries are in place. Example, "That language makes me uncomfortable."
- If boundaries continue to be crossed, contact program staff.

# Delicate topics

Topics such as these should only be discussed if you, the mentee, bring them up. These topics have the potential to make or break the relationship. Be mindful that the mentor might feel affected by these topics, so ask before sharing.

If your mentor feels unable to provide adequate support, reach out to program staff.



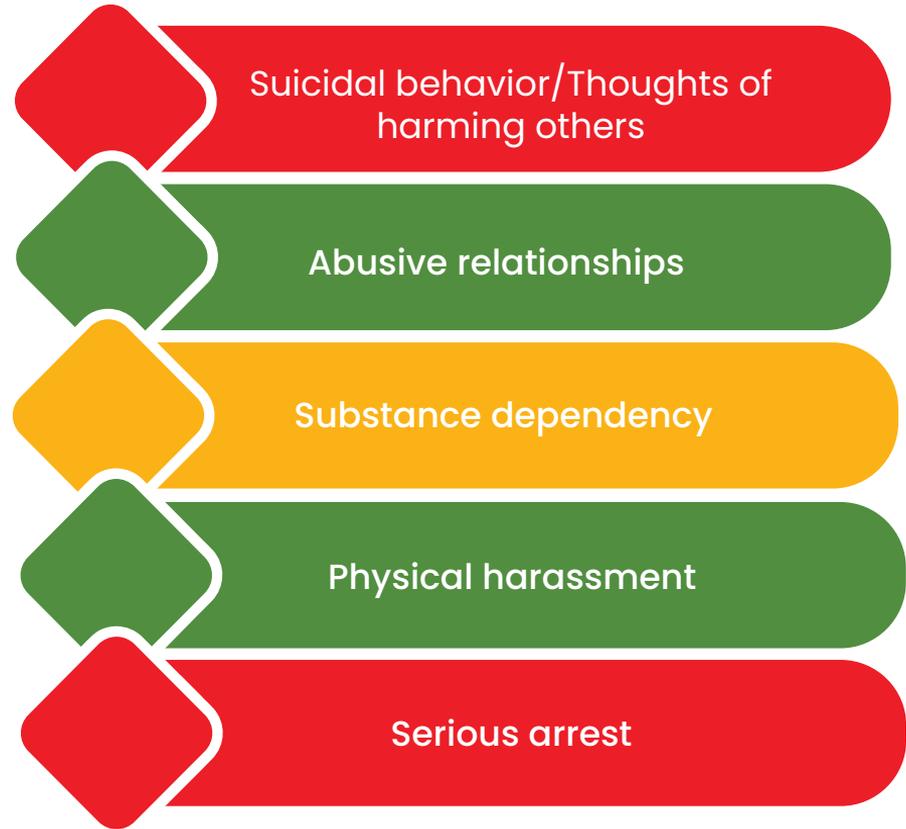
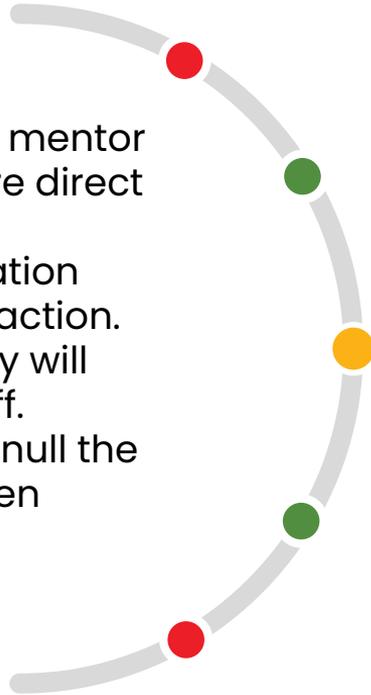
# Delicate topics requiring intervention

Please be aware that the following topics will require mentors to report to program staff, who then will take action as needed.



# Intervention

If you share with your mentor any topics that require direct intervention, they will contact 911 if the situation warrants immediate action. If less immediate, they will contact program staff. Topics such as these null the confidentiality between mentor and mentee.



# Communication stages

## Beginning

The beginning of any relationship can be awkward. Focus on getting to know your mentor.

Mistakes made in this period are the mentor making all the decisions or expecting too much too soon in a mentoring relationship.

Mentors will initially keep things light with their mentee, to show support.

## Building

The relationship is starting to build momentum and trust. This phase of the relationship involves deepening your friendship and the experiences you are sharing.

During this phase, be wary of becoming too dependent on your mentor.

Be aware that your mentor is not a fix-all savior. If you have problems beyond the scope of the mentorship,, talk to program staff about getting extra help.

## Trust

The mentoring relationship is off the ground!

There is increased rapport and the relationship feels secure

Enjoy your mentorship and try to stay consistent.



# **Functioning within the Mentoring Circle**

# Expectations



## Participation

By becoming a mentee, you're agreeing to participate in the program to the fullest extent of your ability.



## Communication

Communicating with program staff is necessary to make sure the program is as fulfilling as possible.



## Engagement

Engage with your mentor but also participate in program events when you can.

# Using VCU Link

VCU Link, the university's professional networking and career advice platform, serves as the hub for the Mentoring Circle. [View a short tutorial video on using VCU Link.](#)

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# VCU Link

# Resources

## Mentee manual



The AAAC Mentee Manual can be found on the Mentoring Circle's VCU Link page, under the Resources tab.

## Resource guide



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## Mentee Support Committee



The Mentor Support Committee is designed to help you along your way.

# Thank you for participating in the **Mentoring Circle!**





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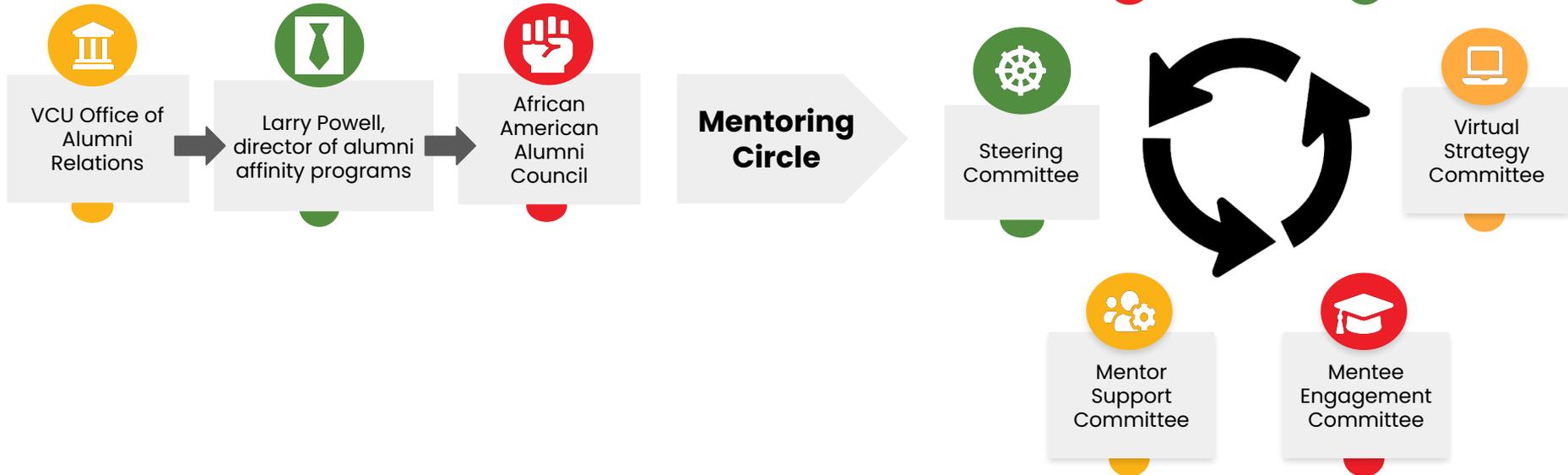
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# Mentoring Circle structure

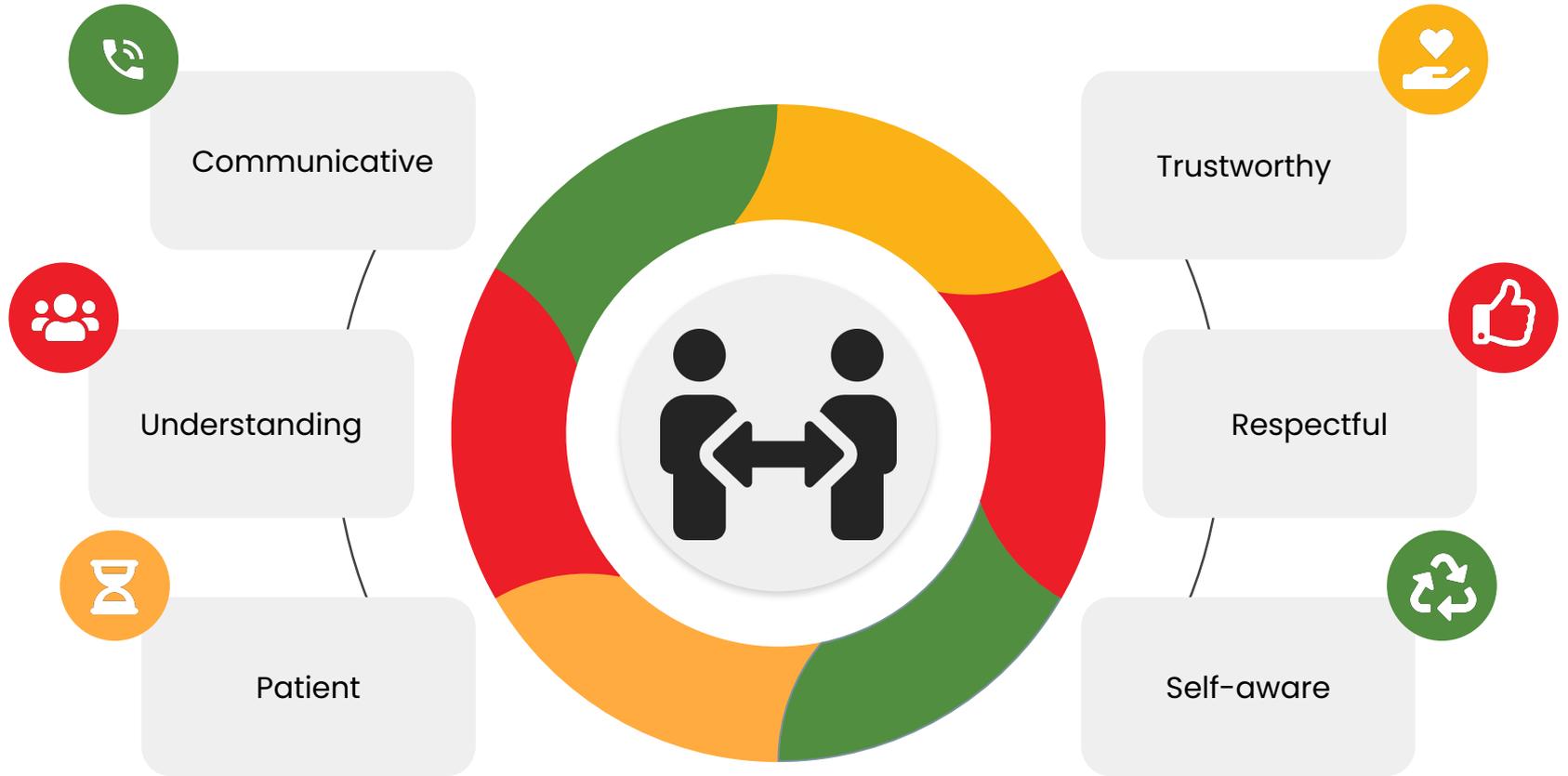




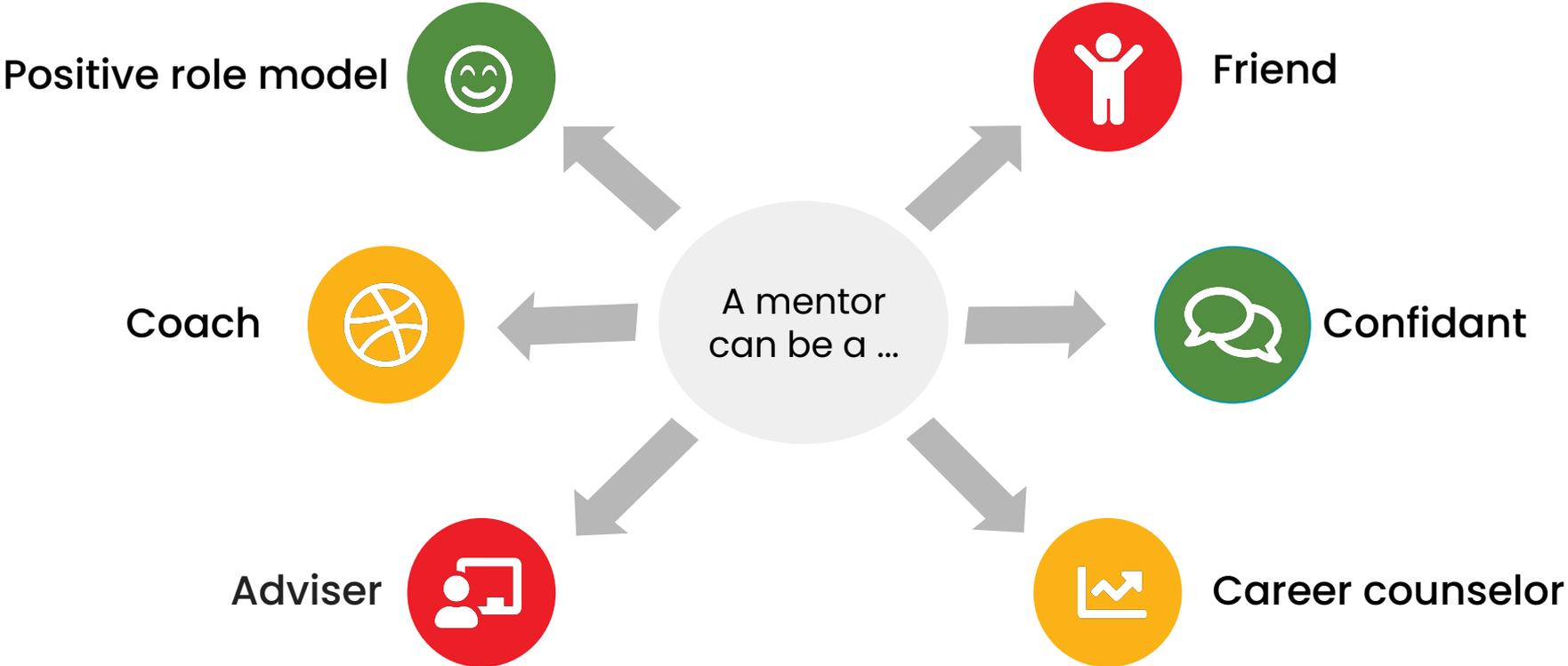
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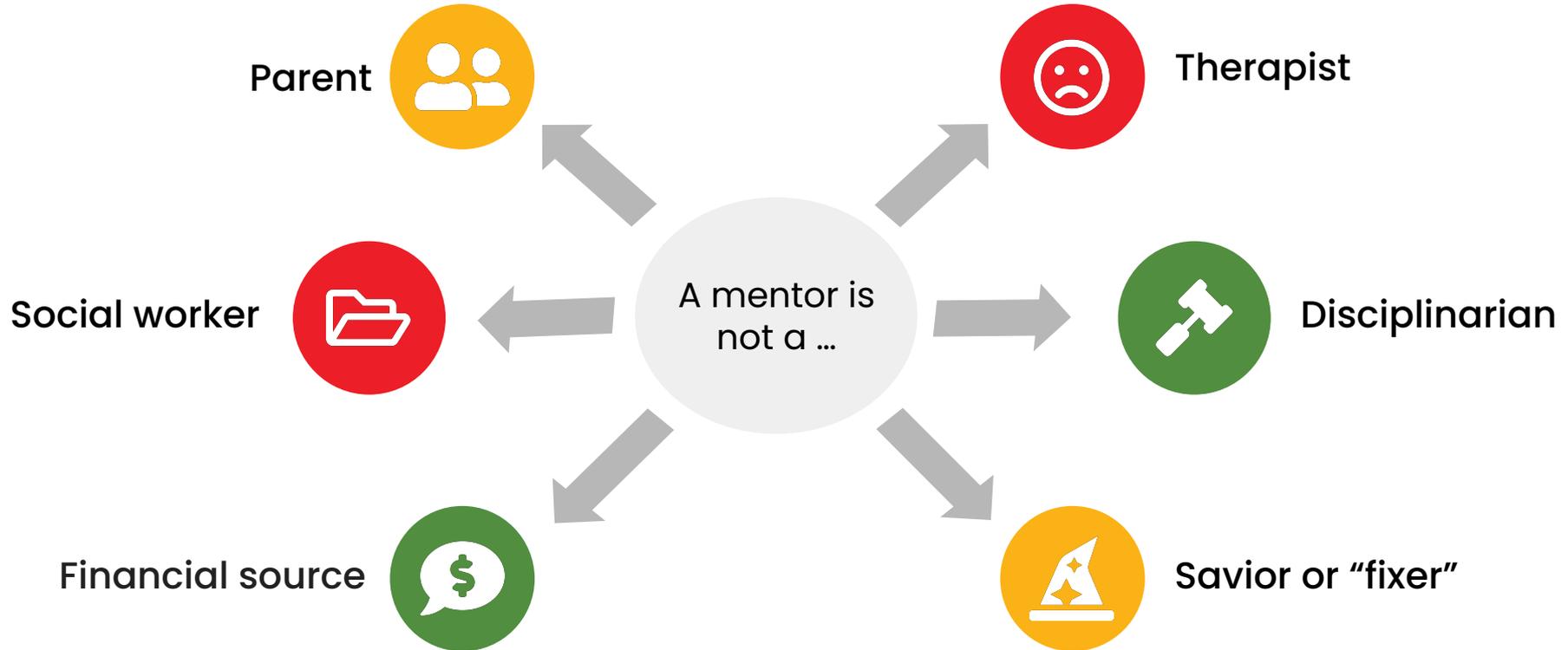
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# In your role as a mentor DON'T:

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Lecture, moralize or preach.

Tell your mentee what to do.

Judge or jump to conclusions.

Violate confidences.

Try to take the place of parents, teachers, social workers or clergy.



# **Building successful mentoring relationships**

# Creating caring environments



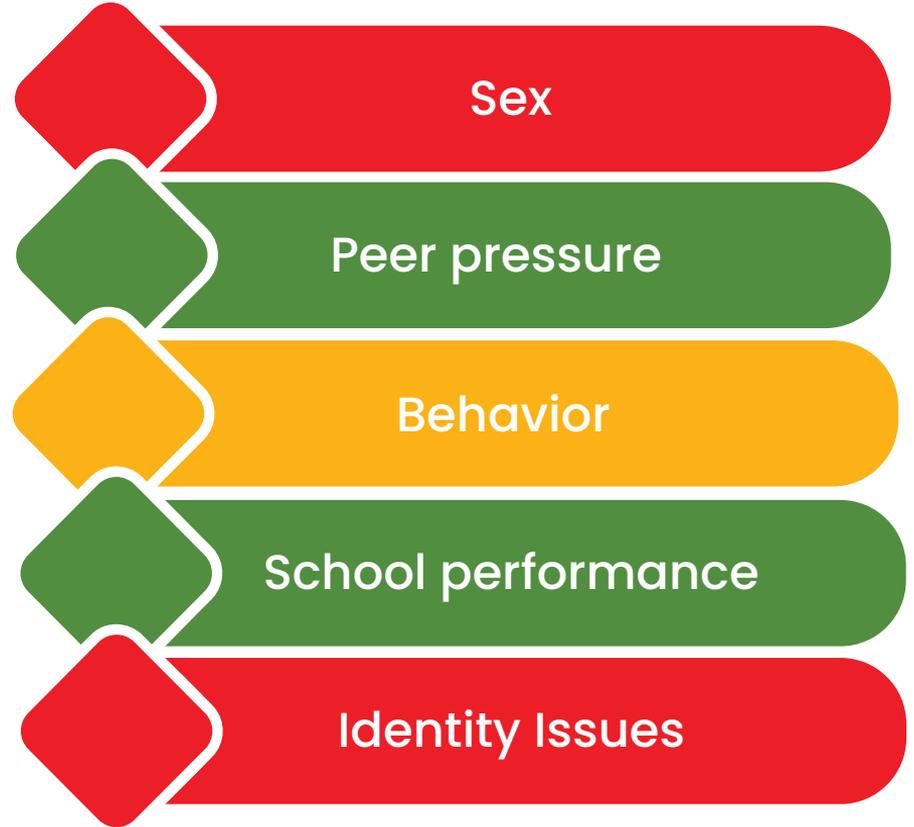
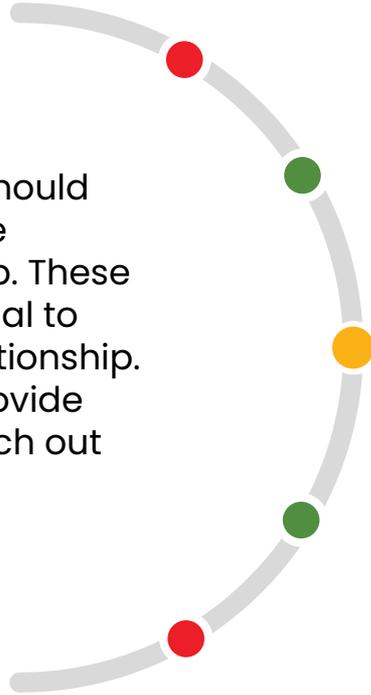
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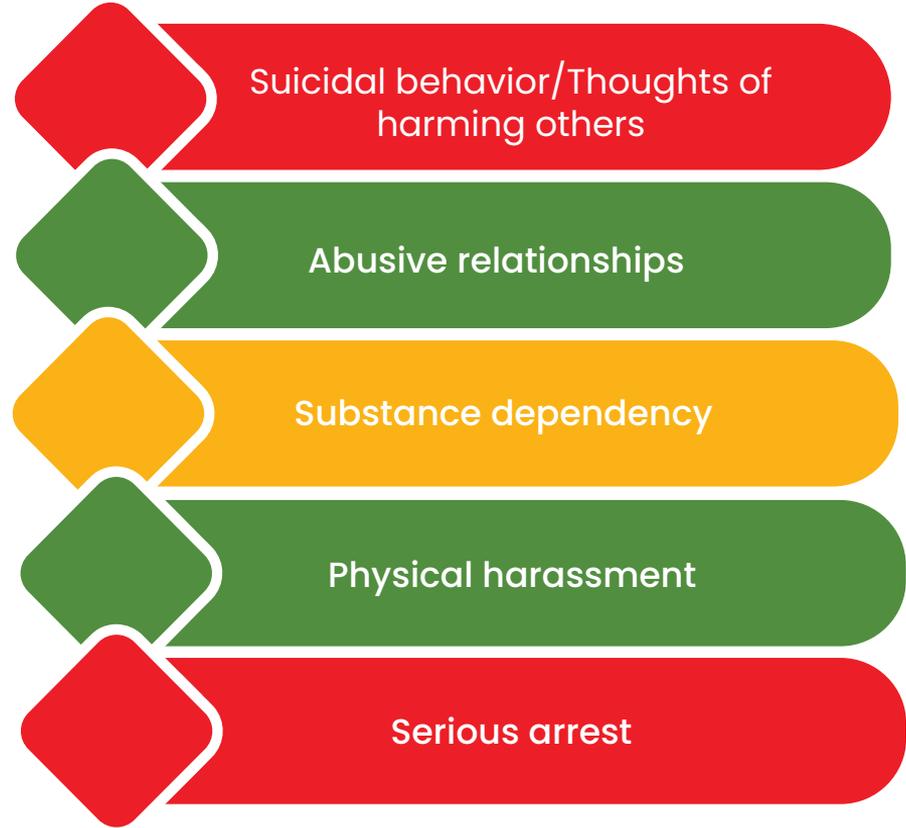


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Mistakes made in this period are the mentor making all the decisions or mentors expecting too much too soon in a mentoring relationship.

By initially keeping things light in interactions with your mentee, you will show them that you are there to support them and will discover the many strengths they already have.

## Building

The relationship is starting to build momentum and trust. This phase of the relationship involves deepening your friendship and the experiences you are sharing.

During this phase, your mentee might start to become dependent on your support and caring.

You might feel that you have to try to “fix” your mentee’s life. If your mentee is unloading problems on you on a regular basis, talk to program staff about getting extra help.

## Testing

Once the mentoring relationship is off the ground, it is normal for your mentee to start testing boundaries of the relationship.

This can be a confusing time for mentors, especially if the testing occurs after a period of trust building and increasing rapport with the mentee.

Stick by your mentee through this tough time and continue to reaffirm your commitment to the relationship. Reinforce the limits and boundaries you’ve established.



# **Mentoring within the Mentoring Circle**

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