



## Basic Philosophies as a Mentor

The following basic ways of thinking can help orient you to your new role as a mentor.

- Most importantly you will need to be creative and flexible to succeed as a mentor. If your mentees do not understand something, you will need to explain it another way. You will need to make everyday things into lessons. You will also need to stay calm and collected when obstacles arise.
- Take the mentees' ideas and desires seriously. Goals need to be realistic and valued by the mentees; otherwise they will not succeed.
- Focus on the present situation. Ask what should be different, what can be changed. Do not look for someone or something to blame, e.g. bad parents, poverty.
- Focus primarily on what the mentees do well. Help them increase their assets.
- Change takes time and patience. Do not expect to create instant change. Devote time to developing rapport and building a relationship with your mentees.
- One way you can help create an atmosphere that is conducive to trust is by being consistent and communicative with your mentees. For example, don't promise more than you can actually give. If your visit will be brief or if you will be late, let the mentees know. In short, model characteristics of an effective working relationship.
- Mentorship can only succeed with a serious level of commitment. Whether you have finals or a job, etc. you are expected to be continually committed both in terms of energy and hours.