

TABLE 6.4 Identifying and Addressing the Mentee’s Professional Concerns and Fears

Typical Questions, Concerns, or Fears (Use as a Basis for Discussion of Goals)
Effective time management at work
How often are appointments scheduled?
What if I am too slow seeing appointments, obtaining a history, or performing a diagnostic or medical treatment?
How much time do I have to perform surgeries?
How can I provide timely and efficient treatments for patients while ensuring thorough, quality care?
What do I do if I need more time to perform a task?
How can I be more efficient with my paperwork?
Client relations issues
How do I deal with difficult client interactions, such as clients in a fee dispute, clients who refuse my recommendations, or clients who leave me a bad review?
What if my looks, age, or title/position play a role in client questions about education, experience, or competence?
What if a client makes a biased or derogatory comment about me or a colleague? How do I take a professional and principled approach to that when communicating with clients?
What can I do to support a client who cannot afford my recommendations?
How do I best communicate with clients to encourage compliance?
How can I most thoughtfully communicate serious medical concerns with clients?
How can I support clients in an affective emotional state, for example, if their pet has a serious medical issue or chronic illness?
What if my recommendation for palliative care or euthanasia is not accepted by the client and I believe the patient is suffering?
What do I do if I believe a patient’s wellbeing is at risk from neglect or abuse?
Personal issues
How can I manage debt or a low salary?
How can I balance work and family?
What can I do if I do not have enough time for my family?
What do I do if I need an accommodation and it is refused?
How do I notice, prevent, and manage burnout or challenging ethical situations?
What do I do if a hospital policy goes against my personal values or ethics?

(Continued on next page)

TABLE 6.4 Identifying and Addressing the Mentee’s Professional Concerns and Fears, Continued

Team or hospital issues
How do I develop trust and rapport with my colleagues and clients?
What if I disagree with hospital policy, and how can I make my concerns heard?
How do I learn to get along with the practice team?
How do I address a difficult relationship with a long-standing team member?
What if I am not getting along with the practice owner or manager?
What if I have an ethical concern about a colleague’s behavior toward a patient?
What if I experience bullying or isolation/exclusion by a colleague or someone in a position above mine?
What can I do if I hear a colleague make a disrespectful remark about another colleague, or I am asked to engage in gossip?
How can I best support a colleague who is struggling with their mental health or negative team dynamics?
How can I best advocate for myself, my community, colleagues, clients and patients, and for improvements in process, pay, or policy?
How can I leverage my social privilege or position to support colleagues whose concerns or ideas are not being heard or whose needs are not being met?
What are some actions I can take to positively influence workplace culture?
Proficiency issues
How do I manage doubt and stress as a practitioner?
How can I increase my confidence in my skills and knowledge?
Will I be by myself? If so, when?
Will someone be available by phone when I am by myself?
How will I learn to perform new surgical procedures or treatments?
What if something bad happens during anesthesia?
What do I do if I make a medical or surgical error?
How do I handle the unexpected loss of a patient?
How do I admit I do not know something without feeling like a failure or like I am not good enough?
I am interested in eventually owning my own veterinary hospital. What do I need to know?

The **2023 AAHA Mentoring Guidelines** are available at aaha.org/mentoring.

These guidelines were prepared by a Task Force of experts convened by the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) and were subjected to a formal peer-review process. This document is intended as a guideline only, not an AAHA standard of care. These guidelines and recommendations should not be construed as dictating an exclusive protocol, course of treatment, or procedure. Variations in practice may be warranted based on the needs of the individual patient, resources, and limitations unique to each individual practice setting. ©2023 AAHA.

