

Situation #3

Situation #3: An experienced and well-liked tutor, who has been with the organization for a long time, starts saying inappropriate things and swearing in class. What do you do?

Situation #3– What the Organization Did...

We were shocked. We asked her to come in to speak to us. We very gently asked some questions and she was in tears when she heard what she had been saying. She immediately went to her doctor and found out that she was suffering from PTSD and something had triggered this situation which was affecting her social skills – something she was unaware of.

She removed herself from that situation, apologized to those who had been affected by her lack of social graces, and waited until her treatments had progressed before tutoring for us again. While this was a very touchy situation for both the tutor and the students, by handling it gently we were able to keep a very good tutor.

The volunteer in this situation gave us permission to share this: “Sometimes mental health issues arise that hit you out of nowhere. By handling it the way you did, I was able to keep my volunteer position and my dignity. I was unaware of what I was doing but it definitely needed to be dealt with. Now, I explain to my students about my treatment and ask them to monitor me. They know they are to immediately let me know if I do something inappropriate. Thankfully, they assure me that there has not been occasion for them to do so. You could have told me to leave, but like you do with your students, you gave me the time and space to deal with my mental health issues.”