

Situation #5

Situation #5: A tutor suspects that their learner is being emotionally and perhaps physically abused by a family member. The learner is asking increasingly more of their tutor to help them with the situation and the tutor is becoming uncomfortable and even scared. What do you do?

Situation #5 – What the Organization Did...

This was a hard one, especially since we weren't aware of the situation for quite a while. It didn't come to our attention until the tutor called us because it had gone past their comfort level. They were nervous to do so earlier because they still wanted to help their learner reach their goals and didn't want to break the trust they had built.

We told them that this wasn't something they should have to deal with alone and it would be okay if they wanted to end the match – we would do this for them in the most sensitive way possible. However, they wanted to preserve the tutor-learner relationship, so just wanted advice on how they might potentially move forward. We talked about policies and setting boundaries and suggested that they re-define the relationship to get it back to being just about the learning, not the personal situation.

We gave them resources to share about places/people that could provide a safe space or counseling if the learner wanted that. We asked the tutor to keep us updated, connecting after each of the next few sessions. They immediately noticed a change when they re-defined the relationship and connected the learner to resources. They were able to continue with the tutoring that the learner needed to feel empowered to take another step to looking after themselves. The pair continued until the learner actually addressed her personal situation and removed herself from it by moving away.