Mentoring Conversation Catalysts:

Professional Development:

Choosing a career:
1. Rather than telling me what you want to be, tell me how you want to spend your time.
2. What really interests you? What day-to-day activities are most rewarding?
3. Do you need more help figuring out what you want to do or how to get what you want?
4. Who are your current professional role models and why?
5. Do you want to focus on a specific organ or set of diseases (Cards, GI, etc.) or do you prefer multi-systems disciplines (Gen Med, Onc, etc.)
6. Do you prefer managing acutely ill patients or chronic diseases?
7. Do you like procedures?
8. Do you want to work with learners (students and residents)?
9. Do you prefer inpatient, outpatient, or a mix?
10. If considering academics, what would be your niche? What are the “hot” areas of research in your planned field?

Scholarship/Research:
1. What are your feelings toward research? Is this based on experience or perceptions from a distance?
2. Have you taken part in any research projects (bench, clinical, QI/PS, etc.)? If not, what is preventing your participation?
3. How could your participation in a research project help your career goals?
4. Have you identified any potential mentors that could help you gain more research experience?

Teaching:
1. Are your satisfied with your teaching skills? In what situations do you struggle?
2. Residents often are intimidated by the idea of teaching. Do you have any concerns?
3. Have you had to deal with difficult learners (interns, med students)? How did you handle the situation?
4. What strategies do you use to teach clinical skills and reasoning?
5. Who are your teaching role models and why?

Life-Work Balance:
1. How does your spouse/family feel about your work responsibilities?
2. How do you relieve stress?
3. What hobbies do you have outside of work? Do you have time to devote to these activities?
4. Are you mindful of your own health (diet, exercise, etc.)?
5. Where do you want to live? What is the job market like in that area?

Educational:
1. What areas of clinical work do you struggle with or have limited exposure? How could you address these deficits?
2. Are you satisfied with your standardized test scores? Will you have any problems achieving your career goals based on your past scores? What resources are available to help improve your test performance.