



STRAWBERRY VALLEY COUNSELING SERVICES

BOUNDARIES

Promoting Balance in Rural Settings

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Benefits of Boundaries: Clearer expectations,
improved global wellbeing, stronger connections
and outcomes.

Dual Relationships: Teacher, neighbor, coach, doctor, beautician, etc.



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**THIS IS A
TOUGH TOPIC**

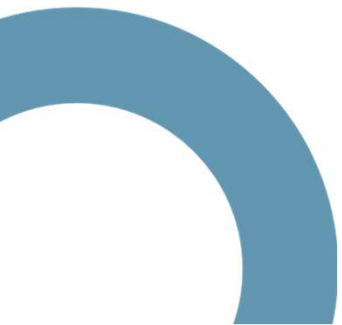


Navigating Professional Boundaries in a Rural College Context

Building Trust While Maintaining Structure

Small Campus - Tight-Knit Community

**When have BOUNDARIES been difficult for you to
mantain?**





DEFINING BOUNDARIES

Physical

Personal bubble, touch (handshake vs. hug), office space, privacy, confidentiality,

Emotional

Emotional disclosures, sharing personal stories/struggles, refrain from giving advice or counseling. Refer to appropriate campus or community services.

Digital

Social media access, posts, comments, likes, etc,

Time

Managing availability, working hours, responding to emails, voicemails, texts...

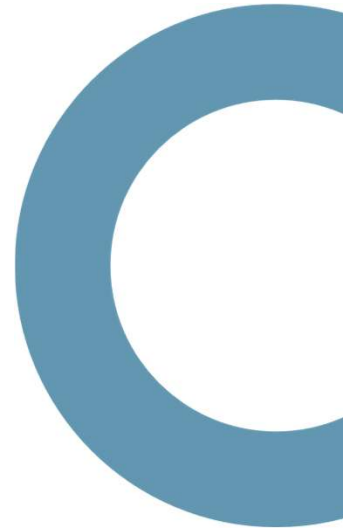




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WHERE DO WE NEED BOUNDARIES?



Home

Boundaries help to keep our personal lives private and our homes places of respite.



Place of

Employment

Boundaries help to define roles, improve communication, and encourage teamwork.



Extracurricular Activities

Boundaries help us to honor shared spaces.



Social Environments

Boundaries allow us to see and respect the myriad hats we each wear.





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Boundaries with Students: A Power Differential

- **You are in a perceived position of authority, you are not a peer.** Maintain professionalism even in casual settings.
- **Social Media:** Avoid friending current students on personal accounts.
- **Communication:** Keep conversations professional and use appropriate channels, i.e. work phone and email, not personal accounts.
- **Disclosures:** Maintain appropriate emotional distance.





Boundaries with Colleagues & Peers



- **Respecting Time.** Avoid after-hours communication unless urgent.
- **Avoid Gossip.** When discussing sensitive topics and/or specific people, maintain professionalism and integrity.
- **Role Clarity:** In small settings/departments, roles can become blurred. Be specific and clear about expectations.
- **Support Each Other:** Create a culture of respect and honor, where is it safe to say “no” without backlash.





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MANAGING DUAL RELATIONSHIPS



In rural environments, dual-relationships are often unavoidable.

Personal Environments

When you work in a public institution, you are more likely to be recognized when in a personal role.

Extracurricular Activities

Gym, organized sports, volunteer positions, etc.

Place of Employment

When at work, you may supervise people from public areas or your personal life

Public Environments

Stores, restaurants, spas, doctors offices,

If a conflict were to arise, document it, and inform your immediate supervisor/manager.



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WHEN BOUNDARIES ARE CROSSED

It is important to know the "why" when a boundary is crossed or when a dual-relationship has blurred lines.

Did a boundary get crossed because both people frequent the same places and it just happened organically?

Did a boundary get crossed due to counter-transference? ("Am I doing this for the student/colleague, or am I doing it for myself?")

Your Own Triggers

Are you experiencing discomfort to the request or need? Does the situation mimic your own past experiences?

Disregard or Disrespect?

Have boundaries or defined roles been overlooked or not taken seriously? Do you feel obligated to engage?

Are Outside Resources Limited?

In rural areas, it is common to have limited resources necessitating boundary crossing.

Special Attention

Do you feel drawn to the other person, or do you feel the other person is getting too close to you?





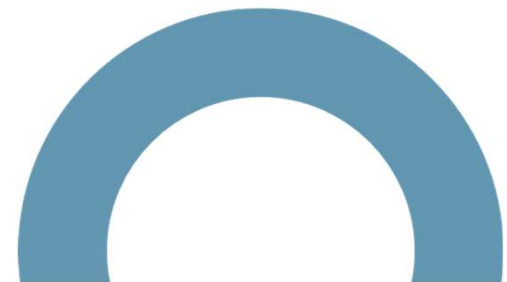
What was one of the trickiest dual relationships you had to navigate in this community?

How did you handle it?

Do you feel you handled it successfully?

What would you repeat?

What would you do differently?





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TRUSTING THE PROCESS

When roles change within dual-relationships



You're the Boss

You might find yourself in charge of a friend, neighbor, etc.

You're the Student/Employee

You might find yourself in the care of someone you once taught or managed.

Trust

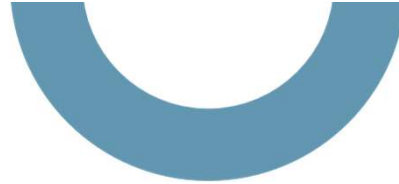
When we trust the other person's ability to navigate the situation, we both grow from the experience.

Success

When each of us accepts our position in varying roles, we relinquish control, convey trust in the other person, and display respect.



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WHEN BOUNDARY CROSSING POSES A RISK

Know your resources ~ Have a plan of action
Do NOT Handle Alone

Ask for

Look for someone nearby, a trusted supervisor or peer.

Offer

Ask if they want to talk here, in a private office, with a supervisor, professional, etc.

Warm

When campus or community options are available, facilitate a connection.

Call for

Call BIT, campus security, or local law enforcement for assistance.

De-Escalate

Communicate:

Stay calm and keep voice low, slow, and monotone.

Body Placement:

Avoid standing immediately in front of person.

Respect Space:

Maintain 4x physical distance.

Empathize, Don't Argue:

Validate the feeling ("I see you are angry"), not the behavior.

Goal:

Lower agitation to allow for rational discussion.



Document



EXAMPLE

De-escalation Tactics and Tools

Behavioral Influence Stairway Model (a practical application process)

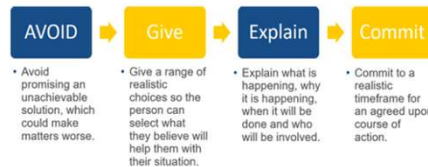
- **Introduction:** Establish contact with the person to establish a communication style.
 - Clear: May be upset but speaking rationally.
 - Attempt de-escalation.
 - Contaminated: Not making sense, unable to reason with them.
 - Contact authorities.
- **Empathize:** Start with empathy, not confrontation.
- **Build Rapport:** Employ Active Listening.
 - Listen to understand, not to respond.
- **Establish Influence:** Acknowledge and utilize the "5 Universal Truths".
 - UTILIZE the De-escalation Do's / AVOID the De-escalation Don'ts.
- **Behavioral Change:** AVOID/GIVE/EXPLAIN/COMMIT.

Active Listening Skills (P.R.O.M.I.S.E.S):

- **Paraphrase:** "So that I understand it correctly, you are upset because..."
- **Reflect:** "It sounds like this happened at the worst time."
- **Open-ended questions/statements:** "How can I help you today? Tell me more about that."
- **Minimal encouragers:** "Oh my, um hmm, I see."
- **I messages:** "I am sorry this happened. Let me see how I can help."
- **Silence:** This allows them to continue to vent (remember listen to understand)
- **Emotional labeling:** "That sounds very frustrating. I can see that this is upsetting."
- **Summarize:** Summarize their concern and bridge to how you can help.

5 Universal Truths:

- All cultures want to be treated with dignity and respect.
- All people would rather be asked than told to do something.
- All people want to know why they are asked or told to do something.
- All people would rather have options than threats.
- All people want a second chance to make things right.



De-escalation Do's

- Be situationally aware, stay safe.
- Remain calm.
- Be polite and professional.
- Show confidence, not fear.
- Talk in a clear voice.
- Relate to the person.
- Admit mistakes.
- Display welcoming body language.

De-escalation Don'ts

- Don't forget your personal safety.
- Don't raise your voice.
- Don't argue.
- Don't become emotional.
- Don't become aggressive.
- Don't accuse.
- Don't make physical contact.
- Don't make promises you can't keep.

Intervention Statements: Used to break the attention of two people in conflict.

- Hello, I'm noticing a disconnect between you two and I want to assist you moving forward. Can you please come with me?
- Excuse me, I've noticed your conversation and want to help. Can you please have a seat with me?
- Hi, I'm hearing some of your frustrations and want to discuss your concerns more. Can you please allow me to help?

De-escalation Statements: Used when you need to stop the current improper behavior.

- I'm uncomfortable with you raising your voice at me; please bring it down. We can have a professional conversation. I want to help but will not be able to if you do not speak with me respectfully.
- I want to understand your frustration, but I need you to lower your voice so I can assist you.
- I want to help you, but you can't speak to me in this manner. If you can't agree to talk to my staff with professionalism and respect, I will ask you to leave.

Reporting:

- If an emergency, call 9-1-1.
 - Follow department policy for having person trespass.
- If not an emergency, call UCIPD non-emergency number 949-824-5223.
- If you were threatened with physical violence, or were a victim of physical violence, please report the incident to the workplace violence administrator through the workplace violence prevention portal.

**REPORT VIOLENT INCIDENTS,
THREATS, OR CONCERNS**



Scan to Report

QUESTIONS?

workplaceviolence@hs.uci.edu



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LOCAL RESOURCES



Strawberry Valley Counseling Services

1005 Ream Avenue, Mt Shasta, CA 96067
530-423-5044



Dignity Health Mercy Mt Shasta
530-926-6111

City of Weed Police
530-938-5020

Siskiyou County Behavioral Health

Yreka: 530-841-4100
Mt Shasta: 530-918-7200

Siskiyou County Crisis

*Mobile Crisis
800-842-8979

National Crisis Lifeline

Call or Text:
988 or 741741



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Boundaries...

- **Building trust while maintaining structure**
- **Defining space**
- **Small Campus = Tight Knit Community**
- **Manage relationships, don't avoid them**



BUILDING STRONG COMMUNITIES ONE CONNECTION AT A TIME

Safe. Authentic. Healthy..

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