



# BOUNDARIES

Promoting Balance in Rural Settings

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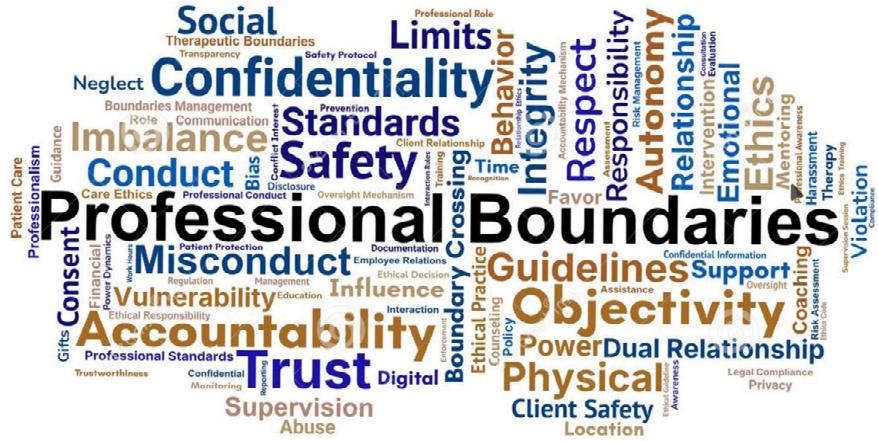
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# WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES? WHY THEY MATTER



The “Fishbowl” Effect: You will see students and colleagues at the store, cafe, gym, etc.



Where you end and I begin.  
Where this ends and that begins.

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

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



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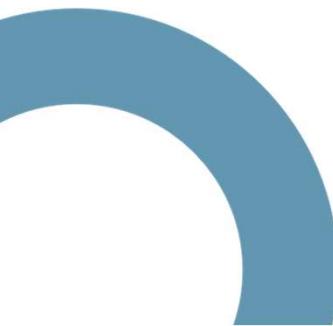
## **Navigating Professional Boundaries in a Rural College Context**

# **THIS IS A TOUGH TOPIC**

**Building Trust While Maintaining Structure**

**Small Campus - Tight-Knit Community**

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





# 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...





# 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.





# 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.





# 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.

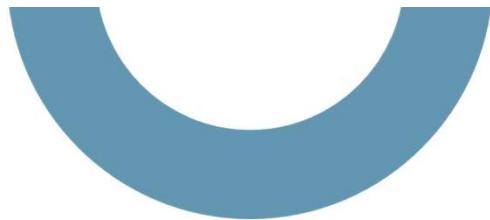
## Place of Employment

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.**



# 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?





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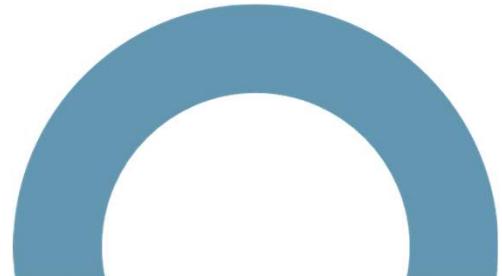
**What was one of the trickiest dual relationships you had to navigate in this community?**

**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.

## Trust

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

## You're the Student/Employee

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

## 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 BIS, 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





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# 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 hm, 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.



AVOID

Give

Explain

Commit

- Avoid promising an unachievable solution, which could make matters worse.

- Give a range of realistic choices so the person can select what they believe will help them with their situation.

- Explain what is happening, why it is happening, when it will be done and who will be involved.

- Commit to a realistic timeframe for an agreed upon course of action.

#### 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



# 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..

Email  
[ddeleon@siskiyou.edu](mailto:ddeleon@siskiyou.edu)

Phone:  
**530-423-5044**

Address:  
**1005 Ream Ave., Mt Shasta, CA 96067**



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