

Modeling Emotional Boundaries for Students: Strategies for Healthy Academics

Presented on Friday, April 23, 1 - 2 p.m.

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Let's begin with an acknowledgement: There are forces at work (*i.e.*; *the pandemic, being in a leadership position, and how we are perceived by others*) that make setting and keeping boundaries very difficult, and is even frowned upon. BIPOC and female academics, especially in non-tenured positions, tend to get the majority of requests for service, and do the majority of emotional work. Creating ways to recognize and share the burdens must be a priority for our institution.

Healthy boundaries allow us to:

* acknowledge the challenges, demonstrate empathy and care for another, confidently share available resources; and maintain health and longevity.

NOTE: Boundaries are not barriers! Barriers keep us separated while boundaries allow us to confidently navigate relationships, tasks, goals, etc.

Types of boundaries to consider might include:

Physical, Emotional, Digital, Mental, Time & Effort, even specific Topics

>> If we can engage one area, it might be easier to add a second and so forth. It is a practice, a skill that can be learned and strengthened over time.

Long-range vision vs. fear reaction

Fear driven decisions = short-term reactions

Keep the big picture in mind for yourself, your colleagues and your students

- What do we each need for long-term success?
- What do you need from me?
- What am I able to give?
- How can I support a larger solution?

Help me find the words...

- Reflect and validate : the power of presence and being seen
 - “Sounds like (resource) might be helpful right now. Could we reach out together?”
 - “This is not my specialty, but I know who can help.”
 - “Let’s think together of people you can reach out to in your life.”
 - “What I can offer is.... “(to be an ally, to encourage you, to check back soon, etc.)
 - “I want to help you be successful in X, while you work out solutions in area Z.”

Compassion Satisfaction “...the pleasure and satisfying feeling that comes from helping others. Compassion satisfaction is coming home from work feeling good about the work we did, and spreading the positivity and encouragement of ongoing work life.”

Louis A. Faillace, MD, University of Texas, Health Sciences Center at Houston,
Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences, Oct 29, 2020

Compassion Fatigue

Feeling depleted and unable to give any more energy, quality time and assistance to those around you. You are “fatigued” by giving out more (love, hope, compassion, etc.) than you take in.

Burn Out

Physical and mental exhaustion, a sense of dread about work, and frequent feelings of cynicism, anger or irritability are key signs of burnout. Those in helping professions may notice a dwindling compassion toward those in their care. Feeling like you can no longer do your job effectively may also signal burnout.

[Burnout | Psychology Today](#)

Shared resource >> The free Professional Quality of Life Scale (ProQOL-5, English version)

https://proqol.org/uploads/ProQOL_5_English_Self-Score_3-2012.pdf

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