A Sacred Trust

Boundaries in Professional Relationships
Workshop Outline

- Introduction
- Why Here?
- Setting Agenda
- What is Involved?
- Educating the Congregation
Facilitator Introduction
This Training is:

A discussion of the places the various threads of our lives **intersect** individually and collectively, and how we deal with the intersections in **life-giving ways**. --Frank Stalfia
This Training is:

Exploring how one maintains a sense of self-individuation while not damaging or encroaching on another’s sense of self.--

*Frank Stalfa*
Session Boundaries

Confidentiality: what happens here, stays here

Listening for understanding

Share (as comfortable) with awareness of time

Please hold comments/questions until opportunity is given
Session Boundaries

Small Group “once and wait”

Cell phone off (unless known in advance)

Other?
Session Boundaries = Behavioral Covenant
Why establish a Behavioral Covenant?
Why a Behavioral Covenant?

- Helps to create a safe environment
- Helps to create common expectations
- Creates a way to self-monitor
- Helps to create space for everyone
- Promotes life-giving interaction
Why are We Here?
Why are We Here?

- Legal Concerns
- Judicatory Requirements
- Liability
- Insurance
Why are We Here?

Necessary part of living into ministry and baptismal calling

Boundaries provide the context in which we give life
Heads Up

Personal Issues: “Hidden” in topic

• Take care of yourself
• You are not be expected to share anything you do not wish to share
• Recognize issues around vulnerability inside a system and with peers
What would make your investment in time worthwhile?
The Broad Context

This is NOT a clergy issue; it is our collective issue; it is each congregation’s issue
The Broad Context

How issues related to boundaries are handled provides a significant window into the life of a congregation.
Group Activity

What are Boundaries?
Group Discussion

Why is it important to understand the issues involved with boundaries?
Group Discussion

From Whence do Boundaries Come?
## Group Discussion

### Boundaries come from:

- Systemic rules (layers of systems)
- Scripture
- Morality
- Personal /Self Awareness
- Best Practices
Your Agenda

What issues or questions do you have around boundaries?
Necessary Policies

This Afternoon
Dynamics in Religious Organizations—What Is Involved
“It is a dangerous attitude when we as clergy persons feel immune to boundary violations because we would never engage in gross misconduct.”

L. Ronald Brushwyler, D. Min., The Midwest Ministry Development Service
“The more we are aware of the subtleties of professional boundaries that we all violate at times in our ministries, the more we can responsibly direct our professional behaviors toward positive servant ministries to others.”

L. Ronald Brushwyler, D. Min., The Midwest Ministry Development Service
9 Areas to Explore
What is Involved?

1. Boundary Crossing
2. Lack of Self Awareness
3. Expectation of Over-functioning clergy
What is Involved?

4. Self Differentiation/Self Care Issues

5. Issues related to the function of leadership

6. Family of Origin Issues
What is Involved?

7. Perception of Who is Responsible

8. Relationship pulls and tugs

9. The Characteristics of religious groups
What is Involved?

1. Boundary Crossing

• What is Boundary Crossing?
• Examples?
• When might this be be an issue?
What is Involved?

What does it take to navigate Boundary Crossing

- Good Internal Boundaries
- Self-Awareness
- Sound Practices
What is Involved?

2. Lack of Self Awareness

- Clergy
- Congregants
What is Involved?

3. Expectation of Over-functioning clergy

• Examples?
• “Always be available”
What is Involved?

4. Self Differentiation/Self Care Issues

• CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED
• CANNOT BE OVEREMPHASIZED
What is Involved?

What is Self Differentiation?

• Understanding self: God-given uniqueness
• Seeing self connected to yet distinct from others
What is Involved?

Why is Self Differentiation important?
What is Involved?

Why is Self Differentiation Important?

- Helps create the ability to self-monitor
- Helps create the ability to allow others to be
- Helps create the ability to remain empathetic/non-reactive
What is Involved?

Why is Self Care Important?

• Helps prevent inappropriate dependence on others
• Allows leader to function as leader
1. What have you heard so far?

2. What questions have been raised for you?
Table Groups

1. Review Scenarios, one at a time
2. Consider your responses to the questions and discuss
3. Up to 10 minutes for each Scenario
4. Debrief
What is Involved?

5. Issues related to the function of leadership:

• Understanding the role and function of leaders
What is Involved?

Issues related to the function of leadership:

• Perception of power/influence
• Temptation to use power
• Temptation to play up to “power”
What is Involved?

LEADERSHIP ACCOUNTABILITY/LIMITATIONS

• Increased and not sole responsibility
• Oversight brings responsibility & accountability
• Recognize Influence: group takes on character of those who exercise influence
• Always in the service of the other
What is Involved?

FOLLOWERSHIP
ACCOUNTABILITY/LIMITATIONS

• Tendency to “let her/him do it”
• Tendency to affix credit and blame
• Tendency to not recognize own responsibility
6. Family of Origin Issues

• What comes to mind when thinking of family of origin issues?
What is Involved?

Family of Origin Issues

• Transference
• Need to be needed/loved
Transference is a phenomenon characterized by unconscious redirection of feelings from one person to another. --From Wikipedia
Another definition is "a reproduction of emotions relating to repressed experiences, especially of childhood, and the substitution of another person ... for the original object of the repressed impulses." -- Webster's New World Dictionary of the American Language (2nd College Ed. 1970).
What is Involved?

7. Perception of Who is Responsible

• Who in a congregation is responsible for managing boundary issues?
What is Involved?

8. Relationship pulls and tugs

- Intimacy, Friendships, Dual Relationships
What is Involved?

What are “dual relationships”?
What is Involved?

9. Characteristics of religious groups: How religious groups are different than businesses.

- Volunteers
- Accountability based on relational dynamics
- “Untrained” members
- Voluntary “training”
Reminder

Boundary Violations Not Boundary Crossings

What is the difference?
Reminder

Violations

• Against the will
• Harmful
• Satisfying only your interest

Crossings

• Boundary is “removed”
• For the other’s benefit
Educating the Session

What ways have you found helpful in educating the Session about boundaries and its role in managing boundaries?
Educating the Session

Provide Education

• What boundaries are
• Why they are necessary
• How they apply to all relationships
### Educating the Session

#### Ways to Educate

- Modeling
- Developing Guidelines (the process more than the result)
- How they apply to all relationships
Educating the Session

Resources for Managing Boundaries

- Confession
- Forgiveness
- Reconciliation
- Recognize vulnerability
- Learn from experience
- Accept Grace
- Extend Grace
Resources

Handout: Boundaries in Prof Relationships
Resources

SafeChurch: Movement to end Child Sexual Abuse
Resources

Mindful Self-Compassion: Brochures
Resources

Patricia Beattie Jung and Darryl W. Stephens, Editors

PROFESSIONAL SEXUAL ETHICS

A Holistic Ministry Approach
Resources-Essay

Staying In Bounds: Professional Boundaries for Clergy
© 1996

L. Ronald Brushwyler, D.Min.

The Midwest Ministry Development Service
1840 Westchester Blvd., Westchester, IL 60154-4334
Chicago • Columbus • Kansas City

Closing

What will you take away from this workshop?
A Sacred Trust

David Miron

ForwardStance