

# Empowering You: Thriving Beyond Workplace Bullying

Practical Strategies for Personal & Professional Growth

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Mountain Plains (HHS Region 8)

**MHTTC**

Mental Health Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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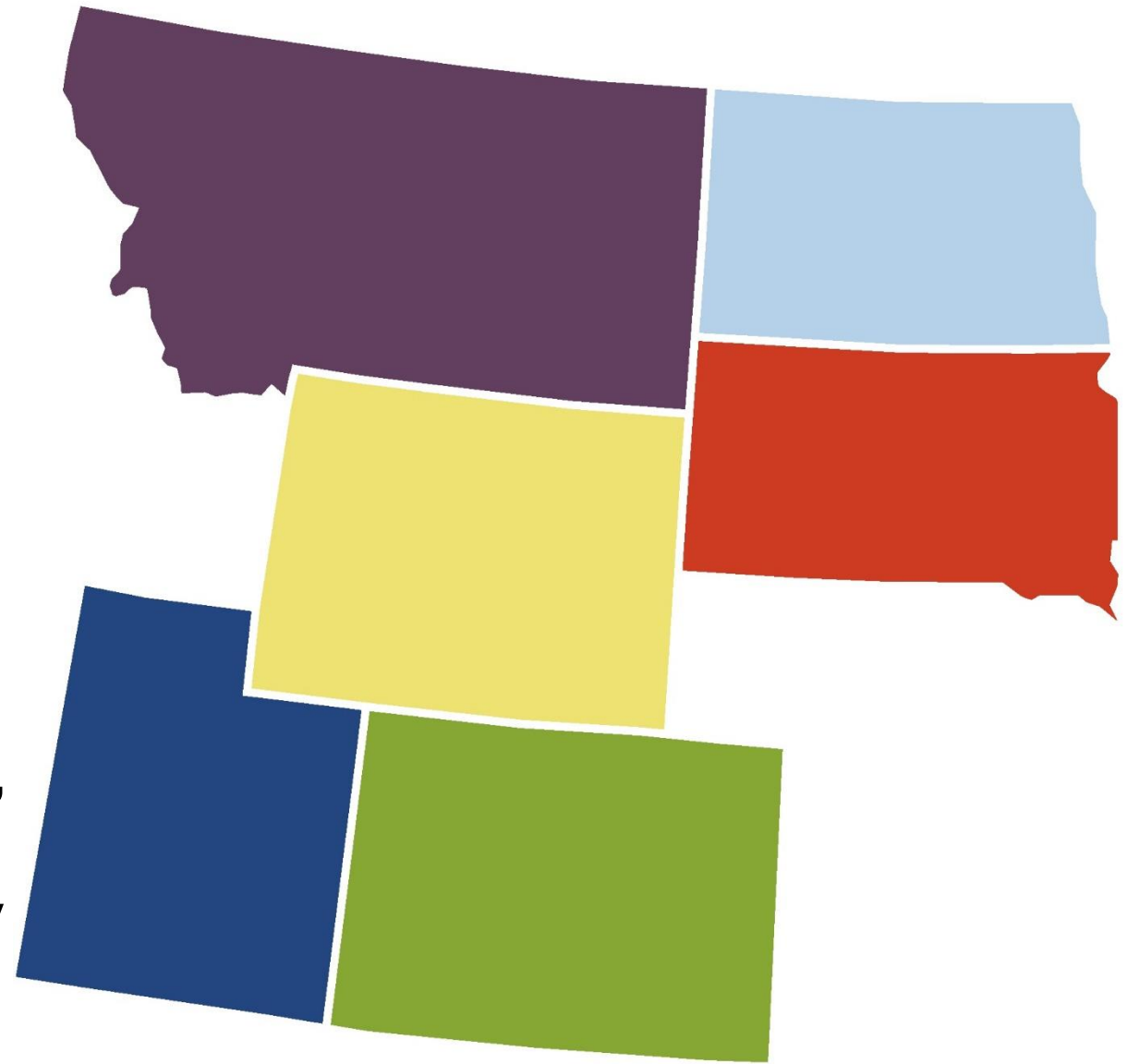
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# The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center

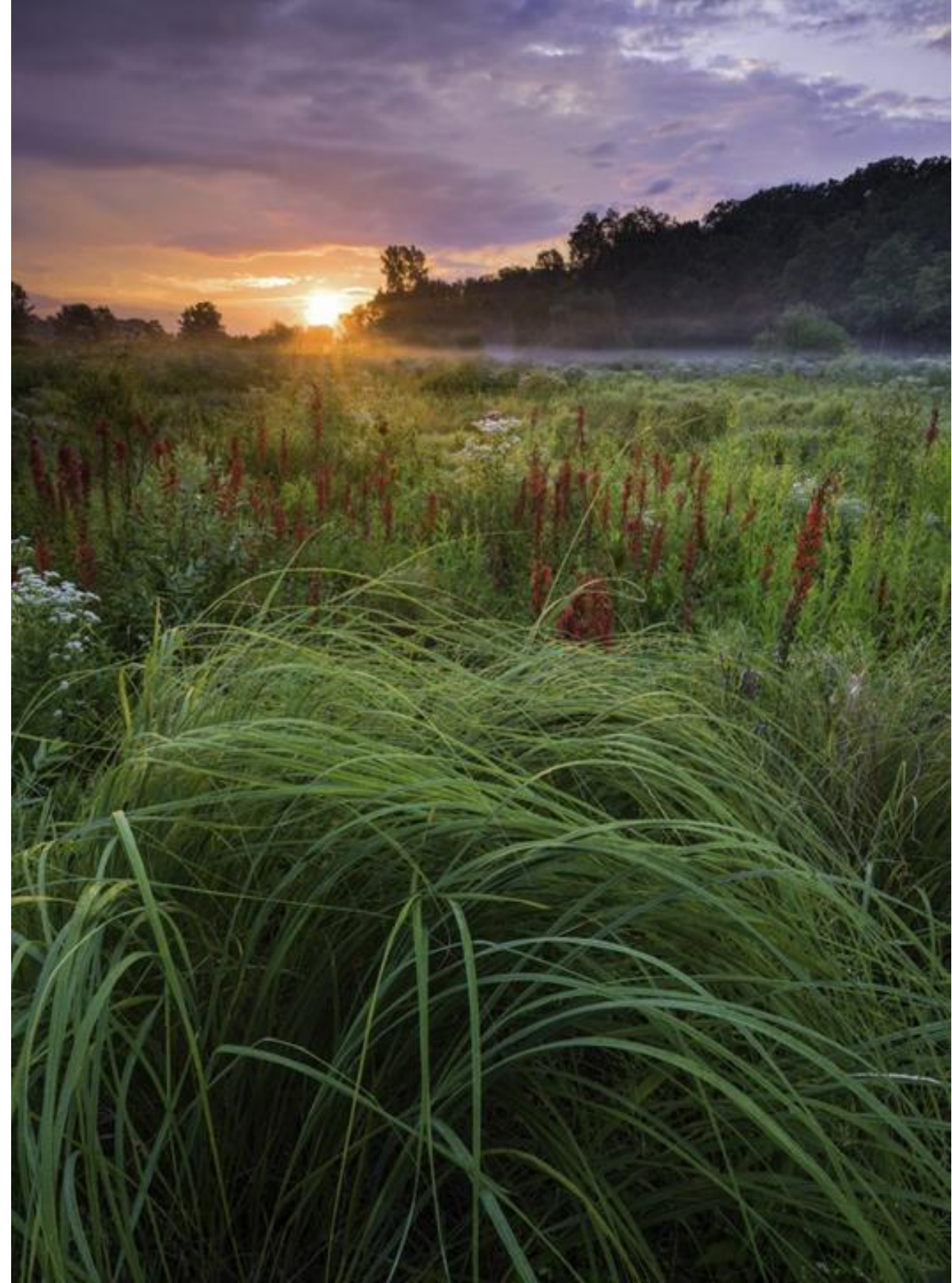
The Mountain Plains Mental Health Technology Transfer Center (Mountain Plains MHTTC) provides training and technical assistance to individuals who serve persons with mental health concerns throughout Region 8 (Colorado, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming).

We belong to the Technology Transfer Center (TTC) Network, a national network of training and technical assistance centers serving the needs of mental health, substance use and prevention providers. The work of the TTC Network is under a cooperative agreement by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration (SAMHSA).



# Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota. We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.



The MHTTC Network uses affirming, respectful and recovery-oriented language in all activities. That language is:

STRENGTHS-BASED  
AND HOPEFUL

INCLUSIVE AND  
ACCEPTING OF  
DIVERSE CULTURES,  
GENDERS,  
PERSPECTIVES,  
AND EXPERIENCES

HEALING-CENTERED AND  
TRAUMA-RESPONSIVE

INVITING TO INDIVIDUALS  
PARTICIPATING IN THEIR  
OWN JOURNEYS

PERSON-FIRST AND  
FREE OF LABELS

NON-JUDGMENTAL AND  
AVOIDING ASSUMPTIONS

RESPECTFUL, CLEAR  
AND UNDERSTANDABLE

CONSISTENT WITH  
OUR ACTIONS,  
POLICIES, AND PRODUCTS

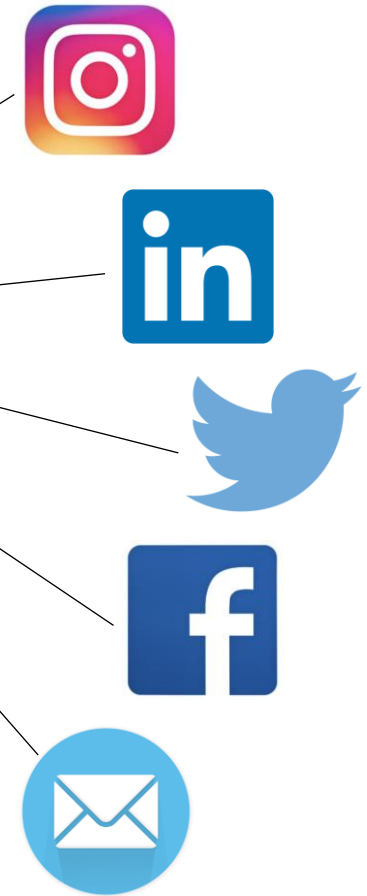
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# Empowering You: Thriving Beyond Workplace Bullying

## Practical Strategies for Personal & Professional Growth

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Date: 07.17.2024



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# Welcome

## Objectives:

- Build personal resilience and navigate workplace challenges constructively.
- Recognize and address bullying behaviors
- Create a positive impact within your sphere of influence
- Develop skills to protect and strengthen yourself
- Enhance personal resilience



A group of business professionals in a meeting, looking at a tablet. The text "What is a Positive Work Environment/Company Culture?" is overlaid in white. The background shows people in business attire, some holding coffee cups, and a tablet displaying a document with charts and text.

What is a Positive Work Environment/Company Culture?

# Importance of a Positive Work Environment

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- Increased Productivity
- Improved Mental Health
- Enhanced Collaboration
- Lower Turnover Rates
- Better Conflict Resolution
- Attracts Top Talent
- Innovation and Creativity
- Customer Satisfaction



# Signs of a Healthy Company Culture

- Open & transparent communication
- Employee recognition & appreciation
- Work-life balance
- Strong sense of purpose & values
- Inclusivity & Diversity
- Collaboration & Teamwork
- Professional Growth & development
- Positive work environment
- Employee empowerment & autonomy
- Health & wellness programs.
- Clear expectations & fair policies
- Employee engagement & satisfaction
- Effective conflict resolution
- Strong leadership

# Phrases You Hear in a Healthy Work Culture

- I trust you.
- Thank you!
- You've got this.
- I'm here for you.
- Great job!
- Let's find a way through it.
- Your honesty is appreciated.
- How can I help you with this?
- That's okay. We can fix it.
- Your ideas are valuable.
- What's your perspective?
- I see potential in you.
- We all have off days.
- Everyone's perspective is important.

# What are Bullying Behaviors & Workplace Challenges?



# What moves Healthy Culture to Unhealthy?

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- Subtle Changes in Leadership Behavior
- Deterioration of Communication
- Policy & Practice Shifts
- Decrease in Recognition & Appreciation
- Workload imbalance
- Emergence of Toxic Behaviors.
- Deterioration of Work-Life Balance
- Resistance to Change
- Neglect of Professional Development
- Rising Turnover
- Ineffective Conflict Resolution
- Erosion of Inclusivity & Diversity.

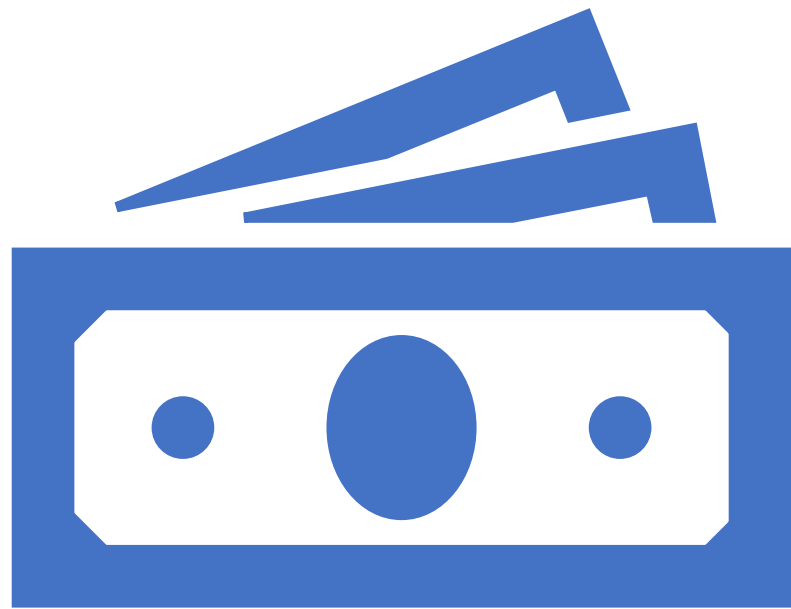
# 8 Signs of a Toxic Workplace

- Lack of Boundaries
- Lack of Trust
- No Room for Mistakes
- No Growth Trajectory
- Poor Communication
- Tolerating Toxic Behavior
- Favoritism
- Physical Symptoms of Stress
- High Turnover
- Toxic Personality
- Ignoring Employee Feedback
- Blocking Venues for Employee Feedback

# Subtle & Common Bullying Behaviors

- Exclusion & Isolation
- Undermining Work
- Overloading with Work
- Inappropriate Comments
- Gaslighting
- Microaggressions
- Withholding Resources or Support
- Spreading Rumors or Gossip
- Excessive Monitoring or Micromanagement
- Public Humiliation
- Non-Verbal Bullying





# Financial Implications of Workplace Bullying

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# Direct Costs

- Employee Turnover
  - Example: For a mid-sized company with 1,000 employees and an average salary of \$50,000, if 10% of employees leave due to bullying, the cost could be up to \$3 million (using the SHRM's turnover cost estimate of 6 to 9 months' salary).
- Absenteeism
  - Example: If bullied employees take an average of 5 additional sick days per year, and each day costs the company \$200 in lost productivity and temporary staffing, a company with 25 bullied employees could lose \$25,000 annually.
- Legal Costs
  - Companies may face legal fees and settlement costs if bullying leads to lawsuits.

# Indirect Costs

- **Reduced Productivity:** can lead to decreased morale resulting in lower productivity. It hinders collaboration and efficiency, negatively impacting any organizations bottom line.
- **Health Costs:** it contributes to stress-related health issues such as anxiety, depression, and cardiovascular problems. This can increase healthcare costs for employers who provide health insurance.
- **Reputation Damage:** Negative publicity from bullying incidents can harm an organizations reputation, affecting customer loyalty, investor confidence, and the ability to attract top talent.

# Indirect Costs Continued

- According to a study by the Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI), workplace bullying costs U.S. companies an estimated \$17.3 billion annually in turnover and lost productivity alone.
- Another report by the American Psychological Association (APA) suggests that workplace stress, including stress from bullying, costs U.S. businesses up to \$300 billion a year in absenteeism, turnover, diminished productivity, and medical, legal, and insurance costs.
- The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) highlights that bullying-related health issues can lead to increased health insurance claims and higher premiums for employers.

# My Connection to the Workplace Bullying



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Constructive  
Responses/Approaches to  
Bullying using Strength-Based  
Approaches: Creating a  
Positive Impact Within Your  
Sphere of Influence



# Practical Examples of Strength-Based Approaches

- Identify & Leverage Strengths
  - Self Assessment
  - Strengths Spotting
- Positive Communication
  - Encouragement & Praise
  - Constructive Feedback
- Foster Collaboration
  - Team Building
  - Mutual Support

# Practical Examples of Strength-Based Approaches

- Positive Reinforcement
  - Using positive language & reinforcement to contribute to an uplifting atmosphere.
- Gratitude Practice
  - Gratitude Board to post notes of appreciation for colleagues
- Continuous Learning & Development
  - Skill Sharing – mentoring
  - Growth Mindset – Set personal development goals & celebrate progress



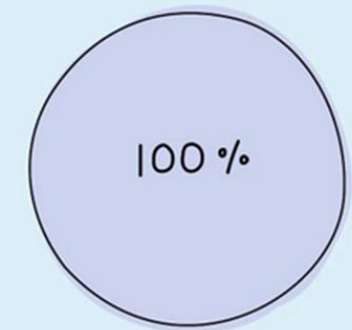
# Practical Examples of Strength-Based Approaches

- Empathy & Understanding
  - Practice active listening
  - Show empathy & support when colleagues face challenges
- Encourage Innovation & Creativity
  - Create opportunities to share and develop new ideas.
  - Support calculated risk taking & learning from failures.
- Promote Work Life Balance
  - Avoid sending non-urgent emails outside of work.
  - Organize a walk group during lunch breaks.

# Enhancing Personal Resilience

- It is beneficial for each of us to strengthen our resilience, realizing it cannot single-handedly combat the detrimental effects of a toxic work culture, but it can help you with:
  - Stress Management
  - Maintaining Mental & Physical Health
  - Improved Problem-Solving Skills
  - Professional Growth & Development
  - Personal Empowerment & Confidence
  - Positive Relationships & Support Networks
  - Long Term Career Benefits

PERCENTAGE OF YOUR WORST  
DAYS YOU'VE MADE IT THROUGH



LIZ FOSSLIE

# Enhancing Personal Resilience

- Build Strong Relationships
  - Seek support
  - Build a network
- Enhance Emotional Intelligence
  - Reflect on your emotions & how they affect your behavior & decision-making
- Prioritize Self Care
  - Neglecting it undermines your resilience
- Improve Stress Management
  - Mindfulness & meditation
  - Relaxation techniques
- Set Realistic Goals
  - SMART goals to maintain focus & motivation
- Foster Adaptability
  - Embrace Change
  - Stay flexible to new ideas

# Enhancing Personal Resilience

- Maintain Physical Health
  - Regular exercise, healthy diet & sleep
- Seek Professional Help When Needed
  - Don't hesitate to seek professional help if you are struggling with stress, anxiety or other mental health issues.
- Practice Self-Compassion
  - Be kind to yourself by treating yourself with the same kindness & understanding as you would a friend.
  - Recognize your efforts & skills.

# 3 Ways to Protect Yourself Against Toxic / Traumatic Workplaces

Piper Marts - Elpha



## Document and Gather Evidence

- Create a folder (digital or physical) outside of your work computer.
- Link your documentation to your identity as a protected class.
- Formal HR complaints (if safe)
- Therapy notes, text messages about your work to friends and family, slack messages from colleagues who witnessed you being abused.



## Review Your Contract / Handbook

- When it's not safe to go to HR, your employee handbook may tell you the specific person, team, or department that can help.
- Look for: Legal support or anonymous hotlines
- If you decide quit - review "notice clauses" to make sure you're not accidentally penalized.



## Seek Community. Be an Ally

- There is safety in numbers - Speaking up will invite others to support you.
- Be the ally you wish you had - Speak up call out bad behavior when you see it to let your colleague escape their aggressor.
- **You are experiencing trauma. Trauma is relational and the way to heal it is through positive relationships.**

# D.E.E.P. TECHNIQUE

## A Communication Technique used for Interacting with Narcissists & Toxic Individuals

|          |                          |  |
|----------|--------------------------|--|
| <b>D</b> | <b>Don't Defend</b>      | Do not defend your truth & perspective. Do not spend your efforts trying to convince someone who does not want to understand you                                     |
| <b>E</b> | <b>Don't Engage</b>      | Do not engage in narcissist manipulation. Be brief when sharing information and state facts.   |
| <b>E</b> | <b>Don't Explain</b>     | Do not explain yourself. Protect your peace by not going into heavy discussions with someone who does not have the willingness to see a world outside of themselves. |
| <b>P</b> | <b>Don't Personalize</b> | Do not personalize the behaviors. Their responses and behaviors are all about them. Since it is their issue, leave it with them.                                     |

Technique created by Dr. Ramani Durvasula & adapted by Angel M. Hoodye with Flourishing Hope Counseling.

# Boundary Setting Tips

## Identify Your Limits

- **Self-Reflection:** Take time to reflect on what you need to feel comfortable and productive, both at work and in your personal life.
- **Recognize Stressors:** Identify situations or behaviors that cause you stress or discomfort.

## Be Clear & Specific

- **Communicate Clearly:** Clearly articulate your boundaries to others. Avoid vague language and be specific about what you need.
- **Use “I” Statements:** Frame your boundaries using “I” statements to avoid sounding accusatory or trigger defensiveness.

## Be Consistent

- **Stick to Your Boundaries:** Consistently enforce your boundaries to ensure they are respected.
- **Follow Through:** If a boundary is crossed, address it immediately and reiterate your expectations.

## Be Assertive, Not Aggressive

- **Calm and Confident:** Communicate your boundaries assertively but calmly, without aggression.
- **Respectful Tone:** Use a respectful tone to maintain positive relationships.

# Boundary Setting Tips

## Prioritize Self-Care

- **Personal Time:** Ensure you have time for self-care activities that help you relax and recharge.
- **Work-Life Balance:** Set boundaries to maintain a balance between work responsibilities and personal time.

## Address Boundary Crossings Immediately

- **Immediate Response:** Address any boundary violations as soon as they occur to prevent them from becoming recurring issues.
- **Reiterate Boundaries:** Calmly remind the person of your boundaries and why they are important.



# Additional Tips

- Maintain Professionalism
  - Perform you job duties to the best of your ability.
  - Avoid retaliation
- Lean on Coping Strategies
  - Stress management
  - Support networks

# Additional Tips Cont.

- Seek Mediation
  - Request mediation through HR or a third-party mediator
  - Use facilitated conversations
- Evaluate Your Options
  - Despite your efforts you may need to consider alternatives such as a transfer, looking for a new job or taking legal action.
  - Consult Legal Advice- in severe cases, consulting with a legal professional to understand your rights & possible actions.

You need 3 daily wins:

A physical win.

Walking, running, lifting,  
swimming..

A mental win.

Reading, writing, creating, learning..

A spiritual win.

Praying, meditating, studying,  
growing..

Be a complete winner!

I choose to focus on what I can  
control, and let go of what is  
beyond my reach





Thank you

# References & Resources

## Books and Articles

1. **"Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life"** by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend
  1. This book provides comprehensive guidance on setting personal and professional boundaries.
2. **"The Gifts of Imperfection"** by Brené Brown
  1. This book offers insights on embracing vulnerability, building resilience, and living a wholehearted life.
3. **"Dare to Lead"** by Brené Brown
  1. Focuses on leadership and the importance of setting boundaries, providing feedback, and fostering a culture of trust and respect.
4. **American Psychological Association (APA)**
  1. Provides resources and articles on workplace bullying, stress management, and building resilience. [APA Website](#)
5. **Harvard Business Review (HBR)**
  1. Offers articles on workplace dynamics, setting boundaries, and handling difficult work environments. [HBR Website](#)

# References & Resources

## Academic Journals

### 1. Journal of Occupational Health Psychology

- Publishes research on workplace bullying, stress, and strategies to build resilience.

### 2. Journal of Applied Psychology

- Includes studies on employee well-being, resilience, and effective communication in the workplace.

## Professional Organizations

### 1. International Coach Federation (ICF)

- Offers resources and guidelines on coaching, including setting boundaries and building resilience. [ICF Website](#)

### 2. National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH)

- Conducts research and provides guidelines on workplace health and safety, including bullying and stress management. [NIOSH Website](#)

# References & Resources

## Online Resources and Websites

### 1. Workplace Bullying Institute (WBI)

- Provides extensive information, research, and resources on workplace bullying. [WBI Website](#)

### 2. Mayo Clinic

- Offers advice on stress management, resilience, and maintaining work-life balance. [Mayo Clinic Website](#)

### 3. Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM)

- Features articles and resources on workplace policies, employee well-being, and creating positive work environments. [SHRM Website](#)

### 4. MindTools

- Provides practical advice and tools for setting boundaries, managing stress, and building resilience. [MindTools Website](#)