

Balancing Compassionate Kindness with Limit Setting

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Plan

- presentation (IW)
- breakout room discussions
- whole group discussion

- break (5 minutes)

- presentation (SF)
- breakout room discussions
- whole group discussion

- All of us need encouragement, appreciation and positive comments/affirmations. This is especially true for people with mental illness.
- Sometimes, instead of dealing with problems after they arise, it is more effective to **create a positive, supportive environment** that can prevent problems.

- Identify and **deal with any anger or fears** you may have.
- Anger indicates that something needs to change. What?
- Reframe: Remember that his difficult behavior is often a symptom of his mental illness rather than unkind or manipulative behavior that he could stop if he would only try.
- Talk with a trusted friend, support groups, physical activity, meditating, etc.

- A **compassionate boundary** is a boundary or limit that is compassionate both to myself and to my loved one.
- Compassionate to myself means:
 - recognizing my own limits, needs and wants
 - asking for what I need to feel safe and maintain my own well-being.
- Compassionate to my loved one means:
 - expressing the boundary with kindness
 - a willingness to compromise with their needs and desires
 - in their long-term best interest.

Breakout Room Discussion (20 minutes)

- How can you apply what you've just learned to your situation?
- How could you set a compassionate boundary?

Setting limits

First and Foremost: Self Care!

- *On the airplane- put your own mask on before assisting others*
- *Safety is paramount in self-care*

What prevents us from setting limits and expectations?

- Guilt
- Fear of what might happen to our loved one
- Fear of how they may react to our limit/expectation

What mindset do we need to have to override these fears?

- Acknowledge your fears, own them
- Ask yourself: what will happen if you DON'T set this limit/expectation?

Ready to Set a Limit or Expectation

-be prepared to negotiate or differentiate your expectations, taking into consideration:

- 1) Making reachable goals
- 2) Setting your loved ones up for success
- 3) Meeting them where they are

Baby Steps

-Limit setting is most successful when done slowly and in increments

-again: small, reachable goals

Who's in Charge?

-You ARE the authority of the limit, expectation, and outcome

-You are NOT the authority of the conversation

(Why not?)

Listening and Understanding

-“Compassion”- the roots of the word mean to literally “suffer with.”

-Compassion turns sympathy into empathy

-Empathy is understanding

-You cannot understand if you don't listen

Why Listening is Key

-feeling ***heard*** leads to feeling ***safe***

-feeling ***safe*** leads to feeling ***trust***

-feeling ***trust*** leads to your loved one knowing that your limit-setting is ***in their best interest***

Team Mentality

-there should be no “my side/your side.”

-establish common goals at start of conversation

Active Listening

1) mirror what you heard them say, regardless of whether or not you agree with it

2) ask follow up questions so that:

a. they know you heard them

b. they know you are interested in what they said/feel

Don't listen in order to respond...

...listen in order to understand.

WOW, right?!

Breakout Room Discussion (20 minutes)

- What is a limit that you want to set, but you haven't succeeded in setting yet?
- What is getting in the way of setting this limit?
- What is a new approach you could try?

Additional Resources

- You can contact us at
 - Ingrid Waldron – iwaldron@upenn.edu
 - Sarah Freudberg – ammacherry786@gmail.com
- We encourage you to take advantage of Family-to-Family, support groups and other help offered by NAMI – <https://namimainlinepa.org/>.

Please provide
feedback in the chat.