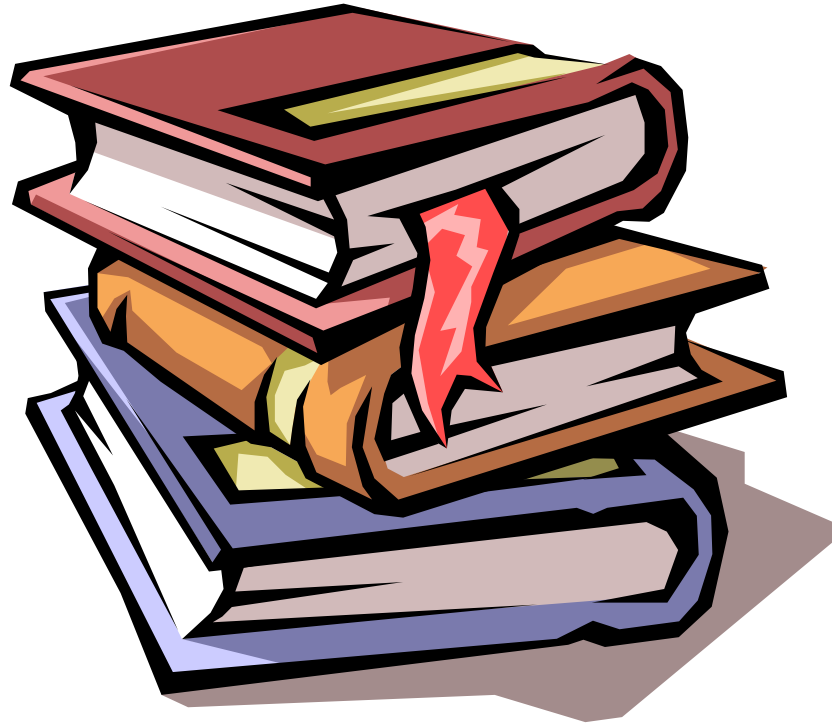


# BOUNDARIES

Karen Ahola MSW,RSW

???????



# DEFINITION

- Boundaries are lines that we draw to help define our roles and interactions in relationships. Established professional boundaries provide a means to protect the space between our power, gained from our professional position, and access to private information about the patients' vulnerability. When you exploit your position of power in the therapeutic relationship to meet your needs rather than a patient's, you have violated those boundaries. (Renal Link, Summer 2002)

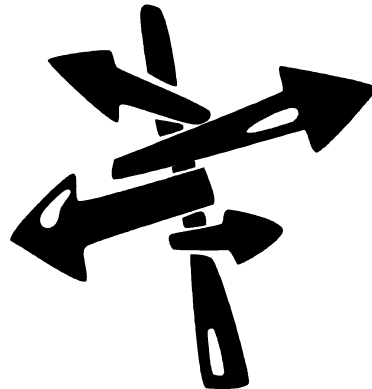
# Position

A Social Worker shall not engage in a professional relationship where the social worker and the client also have a present or previous familial, social, sexual, emotional, financial, supervisory, administrative or legal relationship. (ACSW Standards of Practice)

# POSITION

- *Professional boundaries* separate therapeutic behavior of the registered nurse from any behavior which, well intentioned or not, could lessen the benefit of care to patients, clients families, and communities. (AARN Discussion Paper)

CROSSINGS  
VS  
VIOLATIONS



# CROSSINGS

- brief excursions
- return to established boundaries
- may be inadvertent, thoughtless or purposeful

# VIOLATIONS

- generally result when needs of staff get confused with needs of patient
- violations can occur as a result of over involvement or under involvement



# CROSSING EXAMPLES :

- **PURPOSEFUL** - selective limited self disclosure, attendance at Kidney Foundation events
- **INADVERTENT**- giving a ride, lending money
- **THOUGHTLESS** - giving a lot of detail about your vacation, family event

# VIOLATION EXAMPLES:

- Abuse
- Sexual Misconduct
- Financial Dealings
- **DO CROSSINGS LEAD TO VIOLATIONS ???**

# *WARNING SIGNS*



# SELF DISCLOSURE

- You talk about your life, and your family in depth.
- You give your home phone number.
- You talk about your aches and pains.
- You keep secrets with a patient.
- You talk about your work concerns.

# SPECIAL TREATMENT

- You swap assignments, or you bend the rules,
- You talk to them more than any other patient.
- You get very concerned about what they think of you.
- You begin to act or feel possessive.

# FLIRTATIONS

- Jokes begin to contain sexual innuendo,
- You start to think other staff are envious of your great relationship skills.
- Either the patient or you starts to dress specially.
- Others start to think you are openly flirting.

# SUPER PROFESSIONAL

- No one understands PT X as well as you.
- You start to selectively give information in report.
- You feel very obligated to ‘fix their problems’
- You get defensive when someone questions your interactions with a patient.

# TIPS

- Promote a ‘good catch’ atmosphere with your colleagues.
- Remember the imbalance of power.
- Remember the risks e.g. breach of trust, legal
- Keep conversation superficial when anyone asks about your family, vacation or any aspect of your personal life
- If you don’t know what to say . . . *LISTEN*



# TIPS cont.

- Try turning the conversation back.
- Watch the jokes. Jokes about yourself are generally the ‘safest.’
- Develop a standby list of ‘social topic's such as the news, weather, sports, traffic.
- Consider what gifts are appropriate e.g. donations to the unit or to charity or gifts of food to be shared.
- **CONSULT! CONSULT! CONSULT!**

# GOLDEN RULES

- Do or say nothing in private or public that cannot be documented on the public record.
- IF you feel you are not helping the patient enough..... CONSULT, CONSULT, CONSULT.
- If you think you have 'crossed' or 'violated' or if you think you are in danger of doing so ... CONSULT, CONSULT, CONSULT.
- Understand you have a responsibility to report either yourself or your co-worker