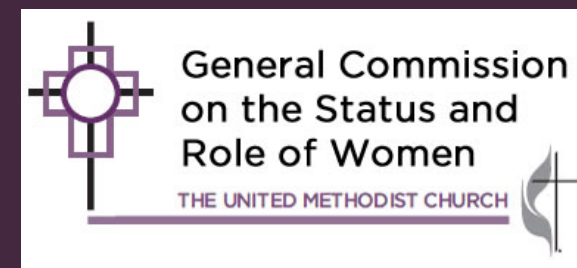


CLERGY ETHICS: Maintaining INTEGRITY in Ministry

Eight-Year Assessment Training
February 19-21, 2018



Presented by: Becky Posey Williams
Senior Director for Sexual Ethics and Advocacy

In ministry, how do we:

- Maintain the integrity of the ministerial relationship?
- Always recognize the reality of power and vulnerability present?
- Make choices that sustain healthy boundaries AND honor our deep, human need to be in intimate friendship relationships.

The Nature of True Apostleship

1 Corinthians 4: 1-2 (NIV)

This, then, is how you ought to regard us: as servants of Christ and as those entrusted with the mysteries God has revealed. ² Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful.

A COMPREHENSIVE PLAN:

POLICY

BOUNDARIES/INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY

SELF-CARE

SEXUAL ETHICS POLICY:

<http://umsexualethics.org/policy/>

SAMPLES, CHECKLISTS (INCLUDES INTERNET)

How is it disclosed?

Charge Conference agenda, pulpit, SS/small groups, leadership trainings, staff meetings, flyers, etc.

BOUNDARIES/INTEGRITY IN MINISTRY

- SOCIAL PRINCIPLES-----¶161 *BOOK OF DISCIPLINE*
- DEEPLY ROOTED ATTITUDES/BELIEFS ABOUT GENDER AND POWER
- POWER AND VULNERABILITY
- SELF-CARE
- SELF ASSESSMENT OF PERSONAL BEHAVIOR IN RELATIONSHIPS INCLUDING ONLINE RELATIONSHIPS.
- SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS
- INVITE SPRC CHAIR AND/OR COMMITTEE MEMBERS

UMC SOCIAL PRINCIPLES

¶161 THE NURTURING COMMUNITY

2016 *“Book of Discipline”*

- (F) “We reject the erroneous notion that one gender is superior to another.....”
- (I) Exploitation of power through Sexual Abuse
- (J) “Sexual harassment must be understood as an exploitation of a power relationship....”
- (P) “Sexual assault is wrong. It does not matter what the person is wearing.....”
- (Q) “We oppose all forms of pornography and consider its use a form of sexual misconduct.

Sexual Misconduct

“within ministerial relationships is a betrayal of **sacred trust**.

It is a continuum of **sexual or gender-directed behaviors**
by either a **lay** or **clergy** person

Within a ministerial relationship (paid or unpaid).

It can include child abuse, adult sexual abuse, harassment, rape or sexual assault, sexualized verbal comments or visuals, unwelcome touching and advances, use of sexualized materials including pornography, stalking, sexual abuse of youth or those without capacity to consent, or misuse of the pastoral or ministerial position using sexualized conduct to take advantage of the vulnerability of another.”

(Book of Resolutions 2016, #2044, p. 776)

**The Judicial Council asserts that
dating, romantic or sexual
relationships between clergy and their
parishioners “are never appropriate
because of imbalance
of power”
(Decision 1228, 2012).**

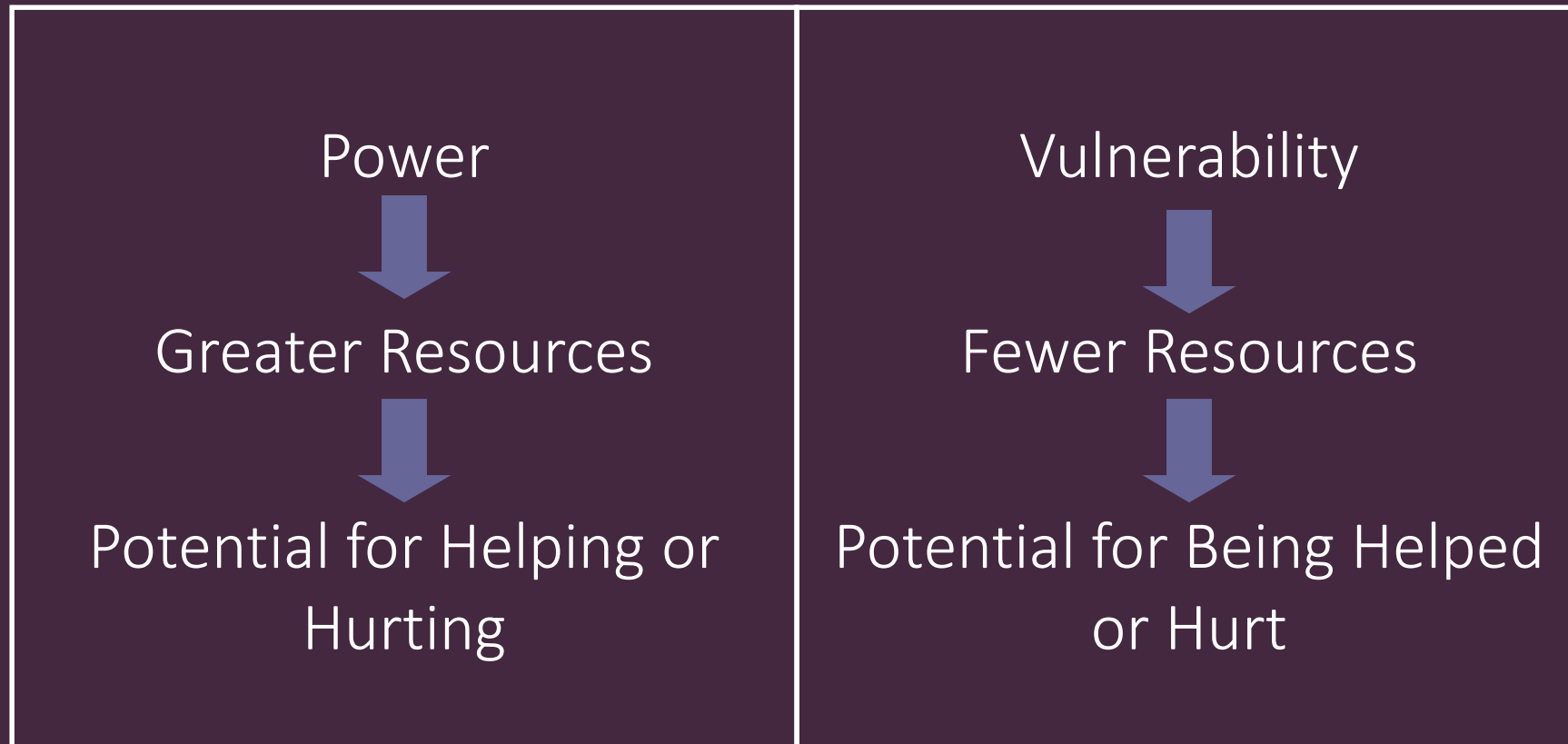
Meaningful Consent

- Meaningful Consent is impossible when
 - An imbalance of power and authority
 - Person is in a period of vulnerability or impaired judgment
 - Person is responding to special attention given by a powerful person
- If cannot say “No” then “Yes” is meaningless
- Notice subtle ways power makes a “No” meaningless

THEOLOGICAL GROUNDING

- The boy David confronts Goliath
- David, the Young Shepherd
- David, the friend of Jonathan
- Victorious in military battles; reigns secure and popular over his people;
- Established/settled in luxury and plentitude in the palace (things are sweet for David!)
- His gaze falls upon Bathsheba
The beginning of the “shift” for David?

Concepts of Power and Vulnerability



SETTING BOUNDARIES

- How would my actions be perceived if they were made public?
- How might my behavior be misperceived?
- Whose needs are being met?
- Am I attempting to have my own personal needs met through this action?
- How does my supervisor and/or colleagues respond when I HONESTLY report my behavior?

BOUNDARY CROSSING VS. BOUNDARY VIOLATION

- Boundary crossings happen daily. It is a necessity of ministry and teaching. We reach out to one another, we inform, we meet, we preach, we write, etc.
- The issue is for what purpose and in whose interest?
- Boundary violations occur when the boundary crossing is not in the best interest of the other and results in harm.

It is **ALWAYS**
the minister's
obligation
and
responsibility

We know the
inappropriateness,
danger, and hurt even
if the other person
does not

We know the ethical
standards even if the
other does not

We know our role and
its boundaries, even if
the other does not

Cell Phones – best practices

Ministry Leaders

- Communicate with parents before (or instead of) texting/calling children
- When texting – mass messaging to several is preferable to individual messages
- **Know that phone records are available even if they have been deleted from your phone!**

Parents

- Expect ministry leaders to communicate with you first
- Let children know you have access to their phones/devices
- Teach safety features (such as call blocking)



Responsible Social Media

- What do you see as the potential boundary issues, and how do you respond?
- <http://socialmedia.policytool.net/>



FYI - SOCIAL MEDIA

- From Pew Internet Research Project we find:
 - 71% surveyed use Facebook
 - 26% surveyed use Instagram
 - 23% use Twitter
 - 56% of Seniors are on Facebook
 - 100+ hours of video are uploaded to YouTube every minute
 - We also know there are more than 75 million daily Instagram



Pornography

- Child pornography is a crime. The production, distribution, reception, and possession of an image of child pornography is a federal offense. A “child” is anyone under the age of eighteen. (justice.gov)
- “The Porn Phenomenon,” Barna Group, Feb. 2016: 432 pastors, 338 youth pastors
 - 57% pastors and 64% youth pastors say they have struggled with porn, currently or in the past.
 - 64% pastors and 75% youth pastors currently using porn say it negatively impacts their ministry.
 - 87% of pastors said they felt shame about their habits and 53% live in constant fear that others will discover their porn use.

QUESTION

How does your online presence through social networking, blogs, etc. reflect your professional role as minister?

YOUR MINISTRY IS NOT ABOUT YOU....and IT IS ALL ABOUT YOU

- **POWER:** You have power by virtue of your role. You have more resources. You have choice in how you will use your power.
- **ADORATION:** You will have people who adore you and will follow you anywhere. Don't let them! It's not good for them or for you.
- **FIDUCIARY:** The fact of unequal power does require a responsibility to act in the best interests on the part of the minister.

IMPORTANT
QUESTIONS TO ASK
OFTEN:

YOUR VISION

- **What is your vision for yourself in terms of being the best minister you can be?**
- **What is blocking your implementation of that vision?**
- **What steps do you need to take to set boundaries in order to live out your vision?**

QUESTION

- What is your plan for handling a sexual advance by a supervisor or by a member of your congregation?

QUESTION

- What will your response be if you see and/or hear a colleague violating a boundary with someone?
- How will you hold one another accountable to integrity in ministry?

QUESTION

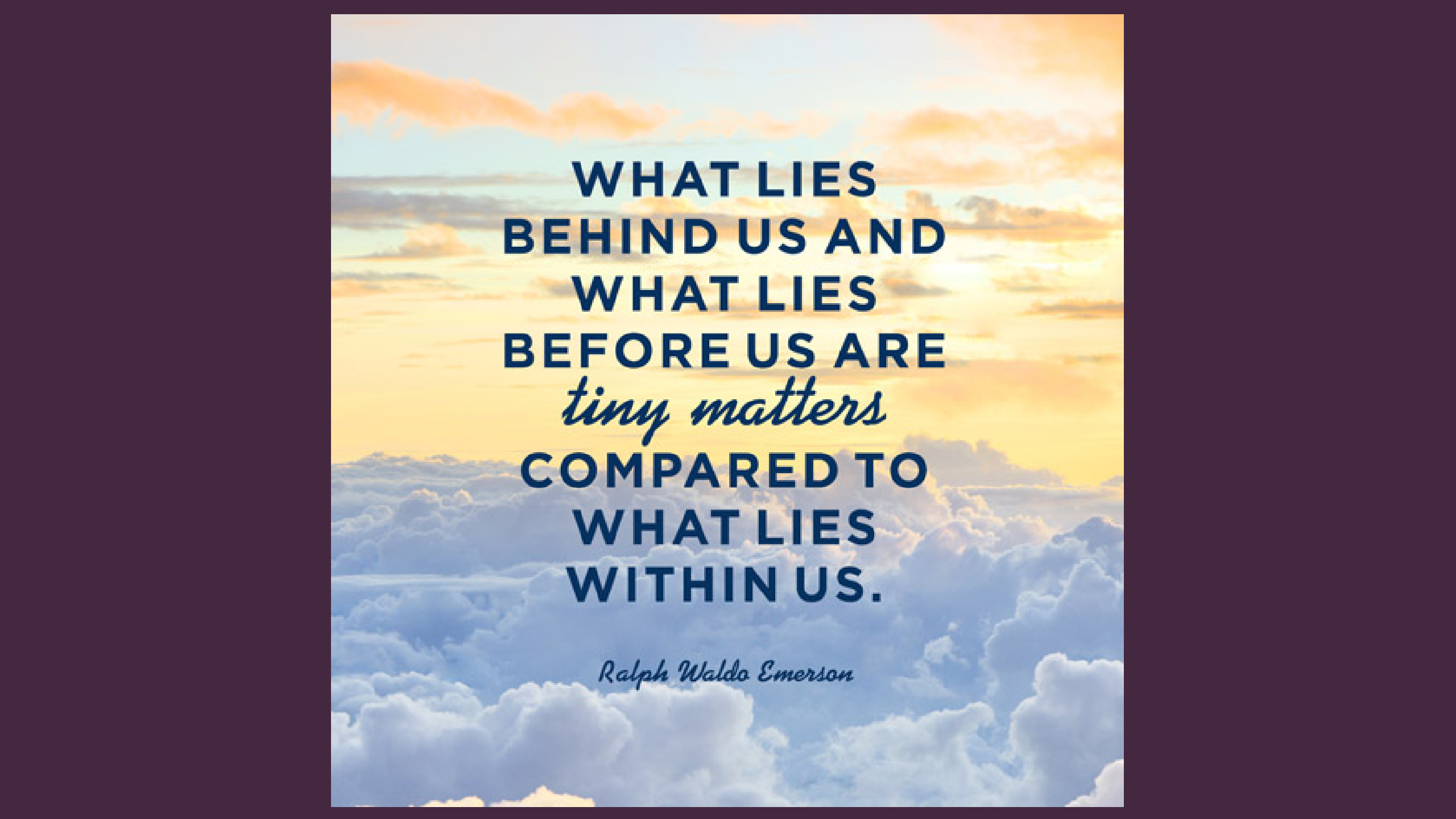
What are the limits of your abilities to provide counseling, and how do you communicate these limits to the members of your congregation(s)?

QUESTION

If a church member offers you a substantial gift (car, use of vacation home, large amount of money, etc.), how would you respond so as to maintain an appropriate ministerial relationship?

QUESTION

How do you plan to balance your need for a social life with the needs of the congregation(s) or other ministry to which you are appointed?



WHAT LIES
BEHIND US AND
WHAT LIES
BEFORE US ARE
tiny matters
COMPARED TO
WHAT LIES
WITHIN US.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO BE HEALTHY IN MINISTRY?

- Get a life! Who are your role models for physical, emotional, social, and spiritual life?
- What can you lose track of time doing because it brings you joy?
- Find colleagues for study and support. Consider inviting other denominations?
- Have a Spiritual Director
- Know thyself. Who are you? This is essential

PERSONAL NEEDS AND SELF-CARE

Identify the pressures ministry can place upon you.

Recognize places where self-care can be improved.

Identify barriers to self-care

Outline a self-care plan

CHECKLIST

- I PLAN AT LEAST ONE DAY OFF EVERY WEEK....AWAY FROM WORK.
- I HAVE AT LEAST ONE CLOSE FRIEND OUTSIDE WORK.
- I TAKE ALL MY VACATION TIME AND ENJOY IT.
- I HAVE AT LEAST ONE HOBBY/INTEREST OUTSIDE OF WORK
- MY FAMILY HAVE MY ATTENTION WHEN I AM WITH THEM.
- I ENJOY LEARNING AND AM CURRENTLY INVOLVED (READING, ATTENDING A CLASS, RESEARCHING, ETC.) NOT RELATED TO WORK.



UM Sexual Ethics

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RAISING AWARENESS, PREVENTING SEXUAL ABUSE, PROMOTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES, BRINGING ABOUT JUSTICE AND HEALING

UM SEXUAL ETHICS

A Ministry of the GENERAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS AND ROLE OF WOMEN of The United Methodist Church (UMC)

[THE COMPLAINT PROCESS](#)

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Contact us:

www.gcsr.org

www.umsexualethics.org

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General Commission on the Status and Role of Women in The United
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