



Boundaries Training for Pastor Parish Relations Committees Conversation Guide

Facilitator's Notes

*This conversation guide is meant to help make the instruction led by Dr. David Olsen applicable and helpful for your ministry context. Video run time: 2:00 min. For more context see Chapter 3 "Setting Boundaries in Anxious Congregational Settings" in *Saying No to Say Yes: Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence* by David Olsen and Nancy G. Devor.*

Bonus Conversation: On Anxiety

1. Identify the issues that are contributing to anxiety in your congregation and community and whether the anxiety is acute or chronic.
2. Identify some of the (most likely) unconscious ways the congregation responds: who do they scapegoat? What obstacles are put up? What triangles are created to copy with the anxiety?
3. Identify the informal ways in which the congregation "processes" anxiety.
4. What can this committee do to prevent scapegoating our pastor?
5. What does anxiety look like and how can we prevent it from going underground?

Take Action:

- Policies and protocols are only as good as how they are communicated. Are the guidelines you have established ready to share with the broader church? Map out your communication plan for sharing healthy boundaries and expectations in your local church.
- A great next step would be to work through the following resource as a group: [*Healthy Churches, Faithful Pastors: Covenant Expectations for Thriving Together*](#) by David Keck. The author presents 50 expectation statements examples of what pastors and congregations can expect of one another; a vital resource to anyone who seeks to initiate a discussion of expectations in their own church.

Visit www.moumethodist.org/boundaryresources for additional resources for group and individual study.

About the Video Host

David Olsen, PhD is an ordained American Baptist minister and the current executive director of the Samaritan Counseling Center of the Capital Region and adjunct faculty member of the Sage Graduate School. Together with Dr. Nancy D. Devor of the Danielsen Institute in Boston, he has co-authored *Saying No to Say Yes: Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence*. He often consults with congregations and clergy around the integration of spirituality and psychotherapy.



More Boundaries Resources

- *Saying No to Say Yes: Everyday Boundaries and Pastoral Excellence* by David Olsen and Nancy G. Devor
- *Healthy Disclosure: Solving Communication Quandaries in Congregations* by Kibbie Simmons Ruth (Author), Karen A. McClintock
- *Sex in the Parish* by Karen Lebacqz and Ronald Barton
- *Caring Enough to Confront: How to Understand and Express Your Deepest Feelings Toward Others* by David Augsburger
- *Rising Strong* by Brené Brown
- *Healthy Churches, Faithful Pastors: Covenant Expectations for Thriving Together* by David Keck