**Tips for Dealing with Difficult Behavior**

*If you are the target of, or witness behavior that is offensive, hostile, or interferes with your ability to learn or work, the following strategies may be helpful to you.*

**Take a Stand Now**
It is easier to address problematic behaviors at the beginning of a relationship, before patterns are well established.

**Reframe**
Do not blame yourself or take responsibility for the inappropriate behavior of others.

**Set Limits**
Set appropriate boundaries to minimize your exposure to inappropriate or abusive behavior.

**Look for Small "Wins"**
Clarify and focus on the things you can control.

**Let Go of Expectations of Perfection**
Both for yourself and others. Everyone makes mistakes and can have an “off day.”

**Build Pockets of Safety and Support**
Complaining about others' behavior is rarely productive. Talk privately with those who can help you achieve your goals. Be open to receiving feedback about how you can improve your situation.

**Remain Optimistic**
Focus your efforts on setting and achieving realistic goals. Your internal beliefs and commitment to your goals are central to your success.

**Focus on the "Big Picture"**
Do not let a small setback derail you. Remember that your time as a graduate student is temporary and that your ultimate goal is finishing your degree.

**Don't Go it Alone**
Ask for and accept help if you need it.

Further information on this topic can be found on Stanford University Professor Robert Sutton’s blog, including information on his best-selling book, *The No Asshole Rule.*

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**Resources**

**Student Conflict Resolution Center**
www.sos.umn.edu
612.626.0689, 254 Appleby Hall
Contact: Jan Morse

**Office for Conflict Resolution**
www.oecr.umn.edu
612.624.1030, 662 Heller Hall
Contact: Tamar Gronvall

**Boynton Mental Health**
www.boynton.umn.edu
612.624.1444, 410 Church St SE
Contact: Matt Hanson

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