



ZETA TAU ALPHA

— Seek the Noblest —

My Sister, My Responsibility

Sisterhood, Safety & Support

Social Essentials Guide

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About this Book

Greater knowledge gives you greater power. We want to equip you with the knowledge that can help you optimize your social life and personal relationships in college and beyond. In addition to navigating the waters of your own life, you have a powerful role to play in the lives of those around you.

Some chapters and sections of this book will be very meaningful for you now, and others will be more relevant to your life in the future. This book was written to be a resource that you can not only learn from now, but also refer back to at any point that it might be helpful for you.

Special Comments

Applies to All People

The principles discussed in this book are applicable for any gender identification or sexuality. You will, at times, see gender pronouns of *he* and *she* used, and you will also frequently see *they* and *them* used in place of the singular gender pronoun such as *he*. This is intended to reinforce the message that the issues

discussed, and the principles of healthy and ethical interactions, apply to all people.

Not Legal Advice or a Legal Framework

This content is not written by a legal expert and is not intended to serve as legal advice or as a comment on the legality or illegality of certain behaviors discussed. Questions of a legal matter should be discussed with local law enforcement or campus authorities. Acting or failing to act based on the information in this material is discouraged without properly consulting legal counsel. The approach taken in this content is to discuss topics in terms of what is ethical and healthy for positive social interactions.

Not Intended to Substitute Professional Assistance

The content in this publication is not intended to be a substitute for professional assistance. Anyone who has experienced a traumatic life event, which may include learning of a friend or loved one who has experienced a traumatic event, is encouraged to establish a relationship with a trained counselor, therapist, or psychiatrist.

Relationships

Relationships can be complicated, but all healthy relationships have a number of things in common. Whether a couple has been together for years, or is just starting to spend time together, the principles are the same. Healthy relationships are characterized by certain ways of two people treating each other, and a number of positive things that are present within the relationship.

The following section does not contain a complete list of what is part of a healthy relationship, but it helps to paint a picture of what one looks like. Being clear on what a healthy relationship looks like equips you to recognize both positive signs, and potential warning signs, so that you are better able to navigate your own personal relationships and be a supportive sister for others.

Seven Characteristics of a Healthy Relationship

1. Friendship

Each person likes who the other is as a whole person and respects many qualities and character traits in that person. Beyond feelings of physical attraction and love, they have fun and enjoy spending time together aside from the physical aspect.

2. Respect During Conflict

It is important to think about what a healthy relationship would look like even during challenging times. Differences and disagreements will eventually arise, even in the best relationships. In a healthy relationship, each person handles conflict in a productive way. Each person treats the other with at least a basic level of respect and consideration for their thoughts and feelings, even when they disagree or are angry with each other.

3. Equal Rights

In a healthy relationship, each person treats the other as an equal. Even though two people are different, each person has the same basic rights in the relationship and as an individual with a life outside of the relationship. Neither person believes in controlling the other. When they have differences and disagreements, they discuss them. Each person has the same rights to share their opinions and to have wishes heard without being belittled or demeaned.

4. Mutual Support

In a healthy relationship, couples support each other and encourage each other's pursuit of goals and healthy aspirations. Neither person works to limit the other from pursuing healthy activities or goals.

It can be difficult, for example, to fully support a partner who wants to pursue a goal such as studying abroad or going to graduate school in another state, but healthy discussion of the challenges these endeavors might cause is important. A mature partner supports growth and openly addresses change in the relationship.

5. Free of Fear

Neither person is afraid of the other, even during arguments or times of conflict. Beyond not engaging in acts that would evoke fear or intimidate, neither person would *want* the other to be fearful of physical harm or verbal cruelty.

6. Healthy Independence

Neither person tries to control the other, and both have the right to express their feelings and be heard if they ever feel they are being controlled or manipulated by the other. Healthy independence is respected, and when one person questions the other's interest in activities outside the relationship, it is expressed openly and respectfully. Technology is used only to connect, not to control.

7. Physical Intimacy is Healthy & Mutual

Both people have concern for the other's comfort, emotional enjoyment, and health in the physical aspect of the relationship. Both are above pressuring the other to engage in unwanted acts.

In summary, each person is confident in their own basic rights and the reality of those rights is respected by the other.

Personal Reflection:

It is important to think about what a healthy relationship looks like because —

The characteristic in this section that made me think the most was —

Healthy Physical Intimacy

Healthy physical intimacy is not just about sex; it's about the entire spectrum of physical and sexual contact. This includes the personal space, boundaries, and basic rights of each person.

This section is not about judgment of an individual's personal choices, it's about what's healthy, and what kind of expectations a woman should have for her partner's attitude and behaviors when it comes to her body.

Make Personal Standards Personal to You

What are your boundaries and your limits? How do you make decisions about what *you* are physically comfortable with in your social life and relationships? You might have noticed by this point in your life that you do not always agree with what others think your choices should be. However, have you truly taken ownership in making sure that your choices are completely your own?

As an adult, your personal standards and choices should be *personal to you*. That means they might not be the same as some of those around you, and that it is also not up to your partner to decide your standards. When it comes to anything that has to do with your body, it is up to you to decide what you feel 100% comfortable with happening.

The early physical and sexual experiences people have can range from loving, healthy and wonderful, to awkward, to very negative and even disturbing. Sometimes it is obvious that the way another person has acted was wrong, or even criminal. Other times, since early experiences with flirting, kissing and other physical interaction might have occurred with individuals who were very immature and acting in inappropriate ways, (such as being selfish rather than having an equal concern for the other person's comfort), people can get the impression that these immature behaviors are normal. Unfortunately, some early partners are too immature and ignorant to act in healthy ways in a relationship, but we develop strong feelings for them anyway, and it can shape our thinking about what we should accept as normal in a relationship.

Key Concept: If a person was in an unhealthy relationship in high school, or is in one now, it should not be a source of shame. Shame doesn't help. Knowledge helps. Support from friends helps. Realizing that every person always deserves to be treated with basic respect helps.

When it is clear what healthy physical intimacy is, it becomes easier to expect that from any partner. Furthermore, it becomes easier to encourage all sisters and other women around you to feel emboldened to expect and demand appropriate respect as well.

About Consent, Boundaries & Ethics

A simple definition of consent:

An agreement to engage in a certain physical or sexual act that is freely expressed without any fear or threat, and at a time when one is capable of making that decision freely (meaning not incapacitated in any way, such as from alcohol or another drug, sleeping, etc.).

**Your state's law and your campus's policies regarding sexual misconduct should be well understood and discussed in your chapter, in addition to the content in this book.*

The word consent is often used in other parts of our culture to suggest a type of minimum acceptance of what will occur, such as signing a consent form for medical treatment, but that is not necessarily the meaning that consent should have in physical and sexual contact. Ethical and healthy physical intimacy is not about getting a person to relent, to give in, or to stop resisting. It is about both people freely choosing to engage in an act of their own free will.

Five Key Concepts about Personal Boundaries & Consent

1. It is each person's most basic right that nothing should happen with her or his body that is not wanted at the time. Every person, regardless of who they are, their sexual history, or their social status on campus has the inherent human right of bodily sovereignty, meaning they have the absolute right of control over their body.
2. Each person has the right to change their mind at any time, and to have their decisions respected. Consent, or the agreement and desire to engage in a certain act, is moment to moment, because a person's feelings and comfort level can change.
3. Agreeing to, engaging in or wanting one act is not necessarily agreeing to another. Just because a person feels 100% comfortable engaging in one type of sexual contact, they should not feel obligated to engage in any other act that they do not desire.
4. There is no point in a relationship when one partner has the right to engage in an act that is not wanted by the other at the time. If a couple has been together for a certain period of time that does not mean that one person's most basic rights are reduced in any way. The principles of ethical behavior and consent are the same, even if a couple has had sex before or engaged

in a sexual act before. Additionally, special events such as a formal or a birthday should not create automatic expectations or guarantees of sexual activity.

5. It is completely appropriate for either person in any sexual situation to simply state, "I don't want to do that" or "No, I don't want to" or any other way of communicating that they do not want to do something, and to fully expect their partner to be 100% accepting of their wishes.

It is important to understand that although men are disproportionately responsible for acts of sexual violence and harassment, it is also possible for a female to be responsible for both sexual harassment and sexual assault. If a woman neglects to confirm mutual desire for a certain act, she could be responsible for violating the most basic rights of a man or another woman. We must build a culture in which all people respect the same concepts of consent, boundaries and basic rights.

In her book *Coping with Date Rape and Acquaintance Rape*, Andrea Parrot tells the story of Eric, who was violated sexually by a woman, and experienced serious emotional harm from her actions. The story takes place during a study session.

"Eric was nervous because he had never been very good with women, but he stayed anyway. After a while she started nuzzling up to him, which made him very uncomfortable, but he didn't know how to make her stop. He decided the best thing to do was to leave, but Maria began to fondle him and kiss him when he said he had to go. She asked, "What's the matter, don't you like me?" He said he did but he had homework to do. He was very uncomfortable because he was a virgin. He didn't know what to do sexually, nor did he want to have sex with someone he didn't care about. Maria started to tease him and said there had been rumors in class that he was gay. If he didn't have sex with her she would know they were true.

Eric was in a panic. He was afraid that if he left she would tell everyone he was gay. Then he would be rejected by his peers or perhaps beaten up. He was also embarrassed to tell Maria that he was a virgin. He had sex with her unwillingly and felt devastated afterwards. He felt used and dirty, but he did not know whom to talk to, or even what to say." (p. 107)

In this story, Maria used coercion and neglected to confirm that Eric was freely agreeing to sex when it finally occurred. It may be likely that she did not intend to cause emotional harm to Eric, but that is what occurred because of her actions. A person of any gender identification or sexuality can be responsible for violating another person sexually if they neglect to confirm mutual interest in that act.

When people practice two essentials of healthy physical intimacy, it ensures that if any sexual activity occurs it is a positive experience for them both.

Two Essentials of Healthy Physical Intimacy

Healthy physical intimacy is something that includes two people being mutually respectful and highly concerned about the other's comfort level and enjoyment at all times. Any person who wants to be in your physical space and engage in any physical or sexual act, regardless of how long you have been in a relationship, should be on board with basic minimum standards of ethical and healthy physical intimacy.

1. Above Pressure of Any Kind

One basic standard is that each person refrains from pressuring the other to do anything physically or sexually that is not wanted at the time. Whining, begging, guilt trips and trying again and again to do something the other person is not 100% comfortable with is unhealthy and unethical.

It is completely appropriate to expect anyone who wants to be with you to be above pressure of any kind.

2. Having a Confirming Mentality

Healthy physical intimacy is not only pressure-free, but also includes the mentality of wanting to confirm that the other person is comfortable with and enjoying that act at that time.

The most effective way to make certain the other person is 100% comfortable and wants to engage in that particular act, whether it's kissing or anything else, is by simply asking. For some people, that seems obvious, and for others, it seems unrealistic. They might wonder, "How are you supposed to ask, or how is my partner supposed to ask without it being awkward?" For a couple who has been together for a while, it might seem impractical or even silly to suggest that each should always ask the other if they want to do a certain thing, and then ask again, and then ask again for another act. But it is also true that no person should always assume that they know exactly what the other person thinks or wants.

The larger point is about the mentality and the intentions of both people. If you ever feel like your partner (or a person you just met) is more focused on their own desires than they are on you and your mutual enjoyment and comfort, it is important to take that impression seriously. You are probably right. And, it is completely appropriate to fully expect anyone who wants to be with you to be as concerned about your comfort level, enjoyment, and excitement as they are about their own.

Whether it's kissing or any other sexual act, mutual enjoyment is a fundamental component of healthy physical intimacy. It is not a high standard to expect both people to confirm the other's comfort and enjoyment at all times—this should actually be a minimum expectation.

Personal Reflection:

It can be healthy to think through what I am comfortable with in terms of my own personal standards and expectations because —

The key concept(s) in the Five Key Concepts section that made me think the most was —

Red Flag Attitudes & Behaviors

“When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.”

—Maya Angelou

When you are able to recognize the attitudes and actions that could be signs of trouble ahead, you increase the odds of avoiding someone who might be toxic in your own life, and you are better able to help a friend as well.

Ownership Attitudes

In our culture we often use language such as, “This is *my* boyfriend. This is *my* girlfriend.” Or, “This is *my* partner.” is natural for people to feel some level of possessiveness, or a strong desire to keep that person as a partner and not see them end up with anyone else. Some people, however, have an ownership attitude that is more literal, and this attitude can lead them to engage in some unhealthy or abusive behaviors.

No one says at the very beginning of a relationship that they will tell their partner what she can and cannot do, nor do they come right out and admit that they will manipulate her to gain more control, but some reveal their attitude in their language. Comments like, “I would never allow my girlfriend to do that” or “I would let my wife do that if she wanted to, as long as our kids were in school” are warning signs of a controlling mentality. The key words here are “allow” and “let” because they imply that the person saying them is in control, and has the right to say what does or does not happen. Some people will use the word “obey,” which clearly suggests authority over the other.

Mistreating or Speaking Harshly about Others

Most people are very careful how they act toward a potential partner when they first meet, but they might reveal things about themselves by how they treat or talk about others. For example, if a guy is polite to you but is demeaning to a server at a restaurant, or cruel to a younger guy in his fraternity,

that is an expression of his maturity level and character. If a guy speaks in demeaning ways about other women, such as referring to a woman as a “slut” or other derogatory term, that is a red flag.

Controlling Behaviors

Each partner should rise above attempts to control the other. One of the top things to expect any partner to be above is the act of telling you what you can and cannot do.

Most people who try to control their partner do so in ways that are not as obvious as explicitly telling their partner what they can and cannot do. Instead, they use emotional manipulation, such as guilt trips, pouting or the silent treatment. They might belittle and demean their partner to reduce their self-worth so they are easier to control. Some will start a fight or will resort to a guilt trip any time their partner considers doing anything they don’t want them to do.

Controlling behaviors are often not violent at first, and they may be exhibited by a person who would never be physically violent, but if they limit your freedom in unnecessary ways, then they are wrong and not part of a healthy relationship.

Isolating Behaviors

It can seem like a sign of strong interest for a partner to “want to have you all to himself.” It could feel flattering for a person to only want you to be with them. There is a difference, however, between having a strong interest in being with you, and having a strong interest in *controlling* you and keeping you from your other relationships.

If you do not feel totally comfortable with your level of freedom and your ability to do what is important to you beyond the relationship, it is important to recognize that and talk about it with your partner. A partner who respects you and is committed to a healthy relationship will take your feelings seriously, and will respect reasonable requests for changes.

Wanting to spend time with family and friends is a normal, healthy thing. Anything that is good and healthy for you should be accepted, respected, and encouraged by your partner, even if your partner would miss you when you’re not there.

Invasion of Privacy

Just as you have physical boundaries that should never be violated, you also have a basic right to privacy as well. A partner should not demand open access to your personal items. Going through messages on your phone, looking through your personal things, such as your backpack, purse, or drawers in your room is an intrusion that is not part of a relationship in which healthy space is provided.

You should not feel obligated to share your passwords to your e-mail, phone, social media accounts, or any other personal space that has to do with technology. If it feels like a violation of your privacy then it probably is. Jealousy and insecurity are common feelings, but those feelings do not mean a person can deal with them by disregarding the other person's basic boundaries.

Verbal Cruelty

Some people who would never use physical violence will feel totally fine saying things that are unacceptable. Too often, people excuse their behavior by labeling it as "normal," or by contrasting it with more extreme abusive behaviors to make it seem less wrong. But just because saying cruel words, such as name-calling, is not the same as hitting or shoving, that does not make it right or acceptable.

In addition to the fact that verbal abuse is wrong and hurtful, it is important to recognize how serious it is because sometimes verbal abuse precedes physical abuse. Even if verbal cruelty would not precede physical violence, verbal cruelty is not okay. No person is justified in demeaning, belittling or criticizing another in ways that can be personally hurtful.

Verbal cruelty is not part of a loving relationship. You deserve to be with a person who treats you with respect at all times, so verbal cruelty can be a clear sign to move on. **See section on Ending an Unhealthy or Abusive Relationship.*

Emotional Abuse

It could be said that all types of abuse are emotional abuse because any kind of threat or violation is felt emotionally. Physical abuse certainly has an emotional impact. However, emotional abuse is most commonly defined as using your emotions against you, such as playing mind games or using your emotions to manipulate and control you. Emotional abuse can be far more serious than just saying something hurtful. As the authors of *When Dating Becomes Dangerous* say, "Emotional abuse also causes wounds such as self-doubt, self-hatred, shame, feelings of going crazy, or feeling unable to survive without the abuser." (p.4)

Examples of emotional abuse include verbal cruelty in the form of comments suggesting no one else would want you, and then pointing to a supposed imperfection as the reasons for that, or playing on insecurities and being critical about your body. Mixed signals that mess with a person's mind, such as saying something mean while professing love at the same time is also an example of emotional abuse. Criticizing appearance, calling a person fat or constantly suggesting that they are crazy are all hurtful and unacceptable ways of treating a partner.

Using Technology to Control, Limit or Abuse

In a healthy relationship, smart phones can be fantastic tools to stay connected and increase intimacy. In an unhealthy or abusive relationship, however, technology is often used to monitor, track, and control what the other person does.

Technology should be used to connect, not to control.

Technology should not be used as a tool to restrict or limit the other person's basic freedoms. Verbal and emotional abuse can also be done through technology. A partner in a healthy relationship will never use technology in a way that makes you feel controlled or mistreated in any way.

The potential for technology to be used for retaliation or blackmail is very high, and it should be taken seriously. It would be wrong for a person to post or share a private picture or video that their partner wouldn't want shared. With the potential for negative consequences, it may be wise to remove the possibility by not providing a partner with digital photos that you wouldn't want others to see. Everyone should strongly consider the digital photos they take, especially if they may be of a compromising nature. Recognize that pressure to do anything in which you are not 100% comfortable is not right.

Pressure to take and send a picture or video of a sexual nature might seem somewhat common, but that doesn't mean it is okay. Just as no one should be pressured, coerced, or threatened into doing anything sexually that she does not feel comfortable doing, no one should be pressured to take and send sexual pictures or videos, even on an app such as Snapchat, where the messages "disappear."

Threats

Physical force is obviously an example of very serious and abusive behavior, but so is the *threat* of any force. Like most of the behaviors we are discussing, use of threats is not a warning sign of an abusive relationship, it is *already* abusive.

Even if a person cannot picture her partner ever hitting her, any threat, intimidation, or implication that physical harm is even a possibility expresses behavior that is wrong, and reveals a way of thinking that is dangerous.

Personal Reflection:

The Red Flag Behavior that stuck out to me most was —

Technology is often misused in relationships by —

The things I want to be more conscious of looking out for in my own or a friend's relationship are —

When to Seek Guidance

The above examples are not a complete list of abusive behaviors or warning signs. If you are concerned about your relationship or that of a sister or friend, talk with a professional on campus, online or both for guidance on what steps to take next.

As soon as you start to question a partner's behavior, or as soon as you start to become concerned about the relationship of someone you know, it is important to seek guidance from resources online and on campus. You do not have to know all of the answers, and you do not have to handle everything on your own. You might, however, need to be the one who starts the process of learning more about what to do next.

The Label is Not the Point

Some behaviors might not seem like something that should be called "abusive," but they are unfair and they could be a sign of an underlying mentality that is not conducive to a healthy, great relationship. If you ever find yourself debating about whether or not a certain behavior would be considered abusive, that it at least a warning sign that something is wrong.

If it is unacceptable and wrong behavior, it does not always matter what it is labeled. Most people who are in an unhealthy relationship know that something is not right. It does not feel like a happy relationship, despite the fact that there are some good times. And most will, at least sometimes, think to themselves that certain ways of being treated were wrong.

Healthy

In a healthy relationship, people might have different opinions and different wants, but those differences would result in a discussion about how they might come to an agreeable solution.

Unhealthy

In an unhealthy relationship, one person would take control and make decisions without giving the wants and wishes of the other equal value.

Abusive

In an abusive relationship, one person makes demands and uses physical, verbal, emotional or other types of mistreatment to get what they want.

Ending an Unhealthy or Abusive Relationship

Ending any relationship can be stressful, but getting out of a relationship in which the other person has behaved in troubling ways can be even more complicated. The first thing to remember is this simple truth: You have a basic right to leave any relationship.

You are not obligated to make accommodations for a person who has mistreated you.

The following tips and suggestions can be good food for thought, even for ending a relationship that is *not abusive* or especially unhealthy.

CAUTION: **Helping a friend get out of a relationship that is violent, or could be violent, should include talking with a professional. Talk with a counselor, call a hotline, go to loveisrespect.org, and GET PROFESSIONAL ADVICE SOMEWHERE to get out of the relationship safely.**

When ending any relationship, but especially an unhealthy relationship, it is helpful to be emotionally prepared for the following:

- Promises to change
- Apologies
- Tears
- Signs of sincere remorsefulness
- Threats of self-harm
- Guilt trips
- Anger
- Criticism and claims that you will never find anyone better, or anyone who cares about you like he/she does
- Refusal to accept the break up
- Attempts to get you to feel sorry for him/her
- Working through your friends or family to pressure you to get back together

The following considerations were inspired by the work of Patti Occhiuzzo Giggans and Barrie Levy in *When Dating Becomes Dangerous*:

- It may seem cruel to break up over the phone, by text or by e-mail, but it may be the safest way. If it doesn't feel 100% safe, and if you don't feel comfortable doing it in person, then you absolutely have the right to break up without meeting in person.
- You do not owe it to a partner who has been abusive, or has ever threatened you, to meet in private to end the relationship.
- If you feel 100% safe and choose to do end the relationship in person, there is no need to be alone with this person in a private place. It should be done in a public place, and it would be wise to have a friend or sister close by waiting for you to leave together.
- You do not have to keep explaining your reasons for ending the relationship. It is your absolute right to end a relationship at any time that you feel it is not right for you. It is every person's right to do so. You may say why you are breaking up, but your partner might twist all of those reasons and want to focus either on why they are not good reasons, or will promise to change those things.
- It is important to remain firm and clear in your decision to end the relationship, and to avoid getting into talking about "What if...?" A person who can be charming and persuasive might not be threatening at the time, but will likely try to "turn you around" on your decision and get you to give the relationship another chance, probably in a very emotional way. It can be emotionally difficult to end a relationship, but you decided to do it when you were thinking clearly. You probably came to the decision after thinking about it for a while, so it is appropriate to stick with your decision that you made while thinking clearly, rather than let your emotions change your mind again in the moment.
- If an ex who has ever been physically violent or has threatened to be violent comes to your house trying to see you, sisters and friends should not open the door to let him in. It is important to inform your friends, roommates, co-workers and manager at work that you are getting out of this relationship and that they should not accommodate for your ex trying to see you. It is completely fair to call the police if he will not go away. If that sounds drastic, remember that no one is supposed to live in fear of another person, and that it is *his* actions that are bringing this about. He

must learn to accept your wishes and your most basic rights of personal space. He might not realize how serious his actions are, and for some men, the authority of the police or the university is the only thing that they will listen to.

- If you, or any of your friends, feel afraid of your ex, there is probably a good reason. Do not talk yourself out of taking extra precautions. Talk with a professional on campus about your concerns so you can receive guidance and know your options.

It is usually healthy to break off contact with an ex, even from a relatively healthy relationship, but it is very important to break off contact with an ex from a bad relationship. After ending an abusive relationship, it is appropriate to break off contact, either for an extended period of time or forever. It is your right to do so, and it is better for both people.

The Right to be Free from Fear

You have the right to not be texted and called at all hours of the day and night by your ex. You have the right to not have your ex show up outside of your classes, your work or your home, or to do anything else that violates your wishes to end the relationship. It might be difficult to completely avoid running into your ex, especially if you are part of the same social group or are on a small campus, but your ex should not be actively engaging in pursuing you if you do not want that.

The words “harassment” and “stalking” might sound a bit strong when applied to this person you loved and still might care about, but certain behaviors do qualify as harassment or stalking. If you are not sure about whether or not your ex is actually crossing a line, then honor your concerns and talk with someone on campus about it. Go to the counseling center, the Dean of Students, your Women’s Center, or any trusted adult for advice on your options. Go with a friend and find someone who will help you learn about options and see the situation more clearly. Your campus should have many great resources and be willing to help you and support you.

Help is Available: Call an abuse hotline (1-800-799-SAFE), chat live online at [LovelsRespect.org](https://www.LovelsRespect.org), speak with a professional on campus who is trained to understand relational violence, and do whatever is necessary to ensure your or your friend’s safety.

If you do not feel that your college or university is responding to help support your safety, contact your campus’s Title IX coordinator. Also consider talking with college counseling services and local police. Both can be great resources and are familiar with stalking and harassment situations.

Moving Forward

You ended the relationship for good reasons, and there will come a time in your future when you are completely over it and are very glad that you moved on. You already gave it many chances to work. It wasn't a healthy relationship, and you deserve a great, healthy relationship.

Focus on moving forward and becoming the best version of yourself. Focus on school. Focus on your friendships and your sisters. Focus on your own physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health. This is *your* life.

When to Say Something to a Friend or Sister

You are needed. Part of your role as a sister is to help those around you in a number of ways, not just in the most extreme and obvious emergency situations when almost any person would choose to help another, but in other times as well.

It is likely that, at some point in your life, a close friend will deal with an unhealthy relationship. Help create a culture of women who are able to help those around them, both in college and throughout life.

When it comes to helping a friend who is in an unhealthy or abusive relationship, it is common for people to have thoughts such as:

At what point should I say something? Is my friend really in an "abusive" relationship, or is it just normal drama? I don't think he would physically abuse her. I don't know how to bring it up. It's her business anyway. I guess if it was really bad she would just get out of it.

The time to say something is whenever you wonder if something is not respectful, healthy and loving. It is always the right time to build up your friend's self-worth and belief that she deserves to be in a great relationship and to be treated with respect.

When looking for signs to determine whether or not your friend is in an unhealthy relationship, consider these factors:

- You've observed disrespectful behaviors yourself.
- She has told you about instances of mistreatment.
- You've heard stories about her partner's behavior that fit into the categories listed in the section on Red Flags.

Other signs to watch for:

- Noticing that she seems to be afraid of her partner.
- She tries to laugh off or joke about things that her partner does that sound wrong to you.
- She says they fight a lot, but tries to take the blame for it. Even if it might be true that she sometimes starts conflicts, verbal, physical, or emotional cruelty is never an acceptable response.
- She seems to have changed, and not as happy as she used to be.
- She seems to be controlled by her partner, even if she would not label it as that.

Tips for Supporting a Friend

People often wonder what to say to a friend in an unhealthy relationship because they don't want to offend them or make them defensive. It can be difficult to find the perfect words, but the good news is you don't need to be perfect. Just expressing that you care, are concerned, and are there to help is a powerful thing to do as a friend.

- **Avoid:** Try not to make broad critical statements about her partner like, "He's such a jerk. I don't know why you stay with him."
- **Do:** Keep the focus on your friend rather than on criticizing her partner. If you attack her partner, the natural response is for her to defend her partner and her choice to stay in the relationship. Even though she may have seen even worse behavior that no one knows about, it is also true that she will have seen her partner's best qualities. It is those positive qualities that a person might think of if she feels her partner, and her decisions, are being "attacked."

It is also natural for a person to have feelings of embarrassment about being in a relationship with someone who has mistreated her, and she might actually fear the judgment of her friends. It can help to let her know that, though you are concerned, you do not judge her and you understand the situation is complicated. Share what your concerns are about her happiness, and about anything you've observed that make you have those concerns.

- **Avoid:** Do not confront her partner directly, even if she has talked with you about specific abusive behaviors that her partner has engaged in. It could end up making things worse for your friend.

- **Do:** Seek assistance. Supporting a friend in an unhealthy relationship can be stressful, and it can be difficult to know what to do. You do not have to do it alone. Talk with a counselor or other professional on campus for support and guidance. Go to loveisrespect.org to seek answers. From there you can also call or chat with an expert online for advice.

Personal Reflection:

Some reasons why a relationship wouldn't necessarily need to qualify as "abusive" in order for it to be time to end it are —

The tips from the authors of *When Dating Becomes Dangerous* that stuck out to me most were —

Suggestions from the Tips for Supporting a Friend section that made sense to me were —

Other ideas for how I could talk with a friend if I have concerns about her or his relationship include —



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Sisterhood & Safety

Whether you are driving a car in traffic or walking through a city, you naturally think about ways to increase your safety. By practicing those safer ways to drive or to walk through a city, you have a more enjoyable experience. It works the same way in the social world on campus. Although nothing absolutely guarantees safety, sticking to certain practices can increase the likelihood of having the great, safe social experiences that we all want, and helping your sisters do the same.

Reality-Based Safety

Beyond Dark Alleys and Scary-Looking People

In order to optimize your safety in college and beyond, and in order to help your sisters and others be as safe as possible, it is important to have a clear picture of reality. The unfortunate truth is that most harm is not actually committed by psychotic strangers, but by “regular” people who simply think in a way that justifies taking advantage of their size or situation.

This means that we must *expand* our basic safety precautions beyond typical practices such as avoiding the “bad” parts of town or not walking alone at night on campus. We must consider the precautions that make sense in the social world around us, like at parties and social events when we are among friends and acquaintances. It is natural to want to assume we are safe when around classmates, but the unfortunate reality is we just do not know whether or not that is true.

Below are some uncomfortable truths about the reality of the social world we live in, and unfortunately these truths are the same in every type of city, town and campus. It is natural to assume that seriously bad things happen “somewhere else.” We have a tendency to think, “This place is different.” But there is no campus where you can say, “That would never happen *here*.”

Reality: Some people think it’s fair game to try to get a person as intoxicated as possible, until she is passed out or incapacitated, and then engage in acts with her body when she is “out of it” and incapable of resisting.

Reality: Sometimes, an aggressor’s peers do not realize how wrong and harmful it is to take advantage of a person who is incapacitated, and do not intervene or call them out on their behaviors. This results in them continuing to act in harmful ways.

Reality: Some people do not care who they hurt, and it can be very difficult to tell who thinks this way. Sometimes those people are good at hiding who they are.

As we mention at many points in this book, it is not fair that women (or any person) have to constantly think about how to stay safe. We cannot, however, know who may have the potential to be dangerous, so certain safety precautions are essential practices in our lives. The following is not necessarily a complete list, but includes some of the basic safety precautions that are used by women (and men) on campuses throughout the country:

- Make an agreement with friends ahead of time that you will keep track of one another and make sure everyone is safe before leaving a party, bar, or other social situation. Agree ahead of time with each other that if a person seems too intoxicated or is “out of it,” she will need to go home with one of her sisters, even if she would like to stay or go home with someone she met.
- Make sure your cell phone is fully charged before going out.
- Always have enough cash for a cab ride (just in case one doesn’t take credit cards) or use a campus safe ride. Stick to plans of going home with specific friends rather than by yourself.
- Utilize “Text me tomorrow,” and “Text her tomorrow,” when meeting new people, especially if you are removing a friend from a potentially unsafe situation. A person you meet at a party or at a bar can text you the next day if they are truly interested in getting to know you. Ending the night with friends, talking about things, and waking up in your own bed is safer, and it can also be a great way to end the night. It can also help to weed out anyone who is not serious about getting to know you as a person.

****Caution: The fact that a person texts you the next day or continues to show signs of interest after meeting for the first time does not automatically mean that person is 100% trustworthy. Trust takes time to be earned. It only makes sense that people should prove their trustworthiness over time.***

- If a friend (or even a person you don’t know) has had too much to drink and needs to go home, it is not enough to put her in a cab or get her an Uber. The right thing to do is for one or more friends to go with her to make

sure she gets home and into bed safely. This includes making sure she is not at risk of alcohol poisoning, or of vomiting in her sleep and choking on her own vomit. If there is any doubt at all, call an ambulance for help.

In our social lives, it's easy to let down your guard so that a new person you meet can very quickly seem like a friend, and even a potential partner when, in reality, they were technically an adult stranger. We must consider the fact that even when we are surrounded by fellow students in a fun and friendly environment, we really do not know how each person thinks. Some people who seem to be non-threatening may have a mentality that would make them unsafe to others under certain circumstances.

It does not take a psychotic stranger to violate another person; all it takes is for a regular person to think in a way that would justify certain behaviors. Even regular people can rationalize their behavior and tell themselves that something is "manly," "fair game" or "harmless" when, in reality, it is none of those things.

Understanding Alcohol & Sexual Assault

Alcohol is not responsible for sexual assault. The person who violates another's most basic rights is responsible for sexual assault.

Alcohol is so closely associated with sexual assault on college campuses that it is very important to understand how it is and is not related. Sometimes you might hear people say things like "Alcohol is involved in the majority of sexual assaults." It is important to clarify that alcohol is not responsible for sexual assault; the person who violates another person is responsible.

Three Realities Regarding Sexual Assault & Alcohol

#1 A Clear Conscience "Weapon" - A Tool Used to Increase Vulnerability

Alcohol can be used by those who do not care who they hurt as a way to make the other person incapacitated. Alcohol is a much easier tool to use than a date rape drug, because it is seen by most people as a normal part of our culture.

Some who would never use a weapon or a date rape drug will think incapacitation due to alcohol is somehow different and that it is okay to take advantage of a person who is passed out or "out of it" from alcohol. Some people rationalize that they are not doing anything wrong because in their mind they are different from what they imagine to be a "rapist."

Alcohol is a drug. The fact that it is a part of the American culture and college culture does not mean that it should not be taken seriously. Even if alcohol consumption is a common part of a campus social environment, that does not mean that drinking, or drinking too much, needs to be part of your experience.

#2 The Critical Shift

One simple way of increasing safety practices for all people on campus is simply to heighten our awareness of anyone who has had too much to drink. The most common way a person might be more vulnerable to harm of some kind on a college campus is being highly intoxicated or incapacitated from alcohol. Rather than focusing on trying to figure out who might be a dangerous person, it can be easier to just elevate your level of concern for *anyone* who is highly intoxicated.

The bad news is that it is pretty easy for a person to become highly intoxicated. The good news is that we can often recognize when someone seems to have had too much to drink.

Our concern should be recognizing when a woman (or a man) is highly intoxicated. It is important, however, to focus not only on a woman's level of intoxication, but also on anyone she might want to be alone with. A person who is highly intoxicated may disregard the basic boundaries and wishes of the other person when they are together in private.

If you find that a guy is highly intoxicated, encourage his friends to take care of him and make sure he gets home. A range of negative things could be avoided (even if nothing like a sexual violation would occur) by pointing out the situation to friends of a highly intoxicated person.

#3 Being in Control Increases a Person's Ability to Remain Safe

Nothing absolutely guarantees safety. Some perpetrators commit their crimes when neither person is intoxicated. Instead, they use fear, intimidation, threats, their size advantage or physical force to violate someone. Some use charm and social skills to gain a person's trust and attraction. Then they become coercive, highly pressuring, or use force to do what they want in a hookup situation. It is possible that a person who seems to be completely trustworthy will actually end up being dangerous.

Just as being in control and clear in our thinking increases our ability to do anything else, it also increases the likelihood of remaining safe. Remaining sharp can help you pick up on cues and signs of risk, whether for your own safety or for those around you.

Most people do not want to drink *too* much, but it can be difficult to gauge how much they can drink without it being "too much." Even older adults who are experienced drinkers often find it difficult to drink just the right amount that would not cause them to be "out of it" at some point in the night. When a person drinks mixed drinks, gets into a drinking game or does shots, it is even more difficult to moderate their level of drinking and know exactly how it will affect them that night.

Key Concept: It is critical to always be clear that any person who violates another is the one responsible for that violating act —the person who harms another is responsible for his/her actions. But since we do not want anything negative to happen to anyone, we look for all ways that we can to increase safety.

How to Speak Up — Tips on Effective Intervention

Intervening is not only about taking action in an emergency situation. The world changes and our culture evolves because of many small things people do. Most social change is led by young adults who recognize there is a better way of thinking, and they help educate those around them in simple ways.

Women have the power to influence those around them. When a woman comments on irresponsible attitudes and behaviors exhibited by her male friends it makes a difference. Women also make a difference when they help their female friends understand why certain attitudes and behaviors are a bigger deal than they might realize.

Two Categories that Call for Intervention:

Not an Emergency, but Important

Comments and attitudes revealed:

- ◆ Victim-blaming attitude
- ◆ Insensitive comment
- ◆ Sexist comments
- ◆ Mocking the importance of talking about serious issues as a chapter
- ◆ Defending the actions of an abusive person
- ◆ Belittling or saying a demeaning or mean thing about a sister, or other individual

Ideas and plans that sound like they're not wise:

- ◆ Social plans that sound unsafe
- ◆ An activity that sounds like it could be emotionally difficult for some members

Potential Emergency, or Emergency

- It appears someone is being hurt, physically or emotionally
- Someone could be seriously hurt, physically or emotionally

Taking Action in Real-World Situations

There will likely come a time when you recognize that there is at least the potential for something negative to happen. It is at those times when you are needed to do *something* that will make a difference in the situation.

The good news is that the best solution will often include getting someone else to help. In a potentially serious situation, getting other people's friends involved can be the most powerful way to make a difference. And if you ever feel like you need to say something to someone directly, the most effective approach is typically one in which you approach everyone as a friend, and make a very simple comment that helps to change the situation in a positive way.

The following are just a few examples of the possible scenarios you might encounter in which you could do something that might make a difference for another person:

SCENARIO: *It appears someone is trying to get a woman who is already "out of it" to do more shots.*

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

1. You could approach the person serving shots in a friendly way and say something like, "She's already messed up. I don't think you want to see her throw up all over the place."
2. You could talk with her friends who are with her (or find them) and, in a friendly way point out that it seems to you that she's pretty drunk. Express that you're concerned about her, and help them realize they should keep her from drinking more and make sure she is safe the rest of the night.
3. You could approach the vulnerable person and offer her a drink of water. Comment that she probably doesn't want to do any more shots because she'll want to feel okay tomorrow.

SCENARIO: *You notice a couple is arguing.*

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

Decide you are going to keep an eye on the situation from a respectable distance. Alert a friend around you to the fact that a couple is arguing and you're concerned it will escalate in to something more serious.

SCENARIO: *You wonder if certain behavior qualifies as stalking or harassment.*

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

Seek guidance online or on campus. If behavior makes you question whether or not it is harassment or stalking, then it is likely that something is not right. It is important to talk with a professional on campus about what your options are, and ask for guidance on how to handle it.

SCENARIO: *You see someone, or a group of people, start to take a potentially embarrassing picture or video of someone who is intoxicated.*

WHAT COULD YOU DO?

1. Point out that it's not cool. Assertively tell them to put their phone away. Get their friends to help if necessary. Help the person directly by taking them to the restroom or other room. If a person's clothes are revealing something or they are exposed in some way, cover them up like you would if it were your best friend.
2. Make sure the person is responsive. Alcohol poisoning can kill, and we usually do not know how much a person has had to drink or how much would cause it. It is always wise to call an ambulance if you are in doubt.

Personal Reflection:

Some of the reasons it is very important to look out for any person who seems to have had too much to drink, or who is "out of it" for any reason are —

Considering the fact that we do not know who might think in a way that would make them potentially dangerous, some of the things I think we could do in our sisterhood to expand safety precautions are —

It is important to remember that we are not only concerned about preventing harmful things from occurring, but also about speaking up to address hurtful comments because —

What to Do if a Sexual Assault Occurs

The following knowledge is information that we wish no person would need to know. The reality, however, is that you might be needed at some point to help a sister or friend, or to be a knowledgeable person when you hear that someone in your social circle has experienced an assault. Of course, we also want you to be knowledgeable in case this type of awful violation would happen to you. Part of empowering women includes building knowledge in all areas that could affect women or those they care about.

The following tips are adapted from womenshealth.gov and RAINN.org.

Get to a Safe Place

Call 911 if you need to, or do whatever you can to get to a place where you are away from the person who violated you.

What Happened was Not Your Fault

It is not okay that something happened with your body that you did not want to happen.

Get a Trusted Person to Help You

You do not have to go through this alone. In addition to help being available online and with local resources, it is also the time to rely on the support of a trusted friend.

Preserve Evidence

Even if you initially think you do not want to report the assault, it is recommended to preserve evidence as much as possible. This can be very difficult because it is very natural to want to do everything possible to shower and get rid of everything related to the event.

It is best to not wash, comb, or clean any part of your body. Do not change clothes if possible, so the hospital staff can collect evidence. It can be helpful, and is advised, to take another change of clothes to the hospital, as they will want to keep your clothes to preserve evidence.

Seek Medical Care

Go to your nearest hospital emergency room as soon as possible. Explain, or have your friend explain, to the hospital staff why you are there so they can realize the priority in seeing you.

In addition to preserving evidence, it is important to be screened for possible sexually transmitted infections and pregnancy, and to be treated for any injuries. In many hospitals, this will be done by a trained sexual assault nurse examiner.

You Have Options

When it comes to reporting, if you go to the hospital, their staff can help you understand your options. They can assist by contacting the police for you. In addition to filing a police report, you also have options for reporting the assault on campus.

There are trained professionals on campus who can help you understand your options. Your local women's center, rape crisis center, or campus health and counseling center can be wonderful resources to help you deal with the emotional impact of a sexual assault. They can also help you understand what your various options are regarding reporting and seeking additional help.

Talk with a Trained Professional

Although it can be natural to want to deal with it on your own, or to try to forget about it, it is highly recommended that you talk with a trained professional counselor or support professional.

Use Online & Other Resources

Call the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 800-656-HOPE (4673). You'll be connected with a trained staff member from a local sexual assault service provider in your area. They will direct you to the appropriate local facilities that can provide valuable help.

You can also chat anonymously at [RAINN.org](https://rainn.org).

Being a Supportive Sister

Sexual assault and relationship abuse can be very difficult to understand. We want to equip all of our members to know how to support a sister or friend in college, and in your life after college.

Recognizing & Rising Above Victim-Blaming

Victim-blaming is when people blame the person who was harmed, rather than the person who did the harming.

The person who harms is responsible for the harm. The person who hits, shoves, or belittles is responsible for their actions.

Why Victim-Blaming so Wrong:

- It can be very hurtful. It will add to the trauma of a person already harmed.
- It creates an environment that can make people afraid to report or afraid to share.
- It's inaccurate. It misplaces blame. Those who violate or abuse are responsible for violating or abusive actions.

Understanding the Behaviors of a Victim/Survivor

It is not fair to say how someone “should” act after an experience of being violated. Different people react in different ways to the same situation.

Almost any kind of reaction to a disturbing experience can be considered normal. One key error to avoid is assuming you know how a person who has experienced something very difficult should feel and behave. It is also incorrect to assume that you can determine how serious the harm was by how a person is acting on any given day. People respond differently to traumatic experiences over time. The feelings a person has may vary from week-to-week, day-to-day or minute-to-minute.

You may have a preconceived notion about the behaviors and feelings that a victim of sexual assault or abuse should exhibit. It is important to remember that even reactions that fall outside of those expectations can be normal responses to very difficult experiences.

For example, a victim/survivor of sexual assault could cry frequently or could be especially unemotional at times. Other behaviors could include being highly cautious and withdrawing socially, or partying in excess. They may avoid any sexual situation, or they may act promiscuously, even if they had not done so before the assault.

Not all survivors have clear images of the abuse or assault. Memories are stored differently during a traumatic emotional experience.

The point is that you should never assume that a person was not really sexually assaulted because their behavior does not match your expectations.

Things You Can Do to Support a Friend

If a friend shares that they were sexually assaulted or abused, it is natural to have concerns about your ability to help. While no amount of preparation may fully prepare you to feel confident in knowing how to support a friend, we want each of our sisters to feel like they have received a substantive education on things they can do and some errors to avoid.

Six Concepts on Supporting a Friend

- It is okay to not know how to handle things. Simply respond as a caring friend and **listen** without judgment.
- Offer to go with her for medical help, and to talk with a counselor or rape crisis advocate on campus. Support her in any way that she may need.
- Honest and simple statements like, “I’m glad you told me” or “Thank you for telling me” or “I believe you” can be very helpful.
- Understand that you cannot understand. It is best to avoid saying that you do understand what another person is going through. It is better to be there for emotional support, to be a friend who listens and who encourages her to see that this is not her fault.
- Do not pressure them to report, and do not pressure them to *not* report. It is important for them to feel supported in their decisions, not pressured. A person whose wishes have been disregarded in a very disturbing way does not need anyone else neglecting to respect their wishes.

- Encourage your friend to talk with a professional counselor if she is not already seeing one. And, if she is willing to do so but is not sure where to go, help her find a counselor. Your campus should have a well-trained, caring professional for them to speak with. The counselor should also know of additional resources on campus or near it that can be very helpful. If, however, the first people you speak to do not seem to be as helpful or sensitive as they should be, keep looking. Do not assume one unhelpful experience means counseling is not the right thing. Keep looking until find one who understands sexual assault and is good at working with survivors of it.

For additional content and an online forum go to Pandora’s Project at pandys.org.

Finding the Right Words

When we learn about a friend experiencing something very difficult, we want to say something but don’t want to say the wrong thing. Below are some suggested things to say and to not say if you learn of a friend or sister who is a victim/survivor of sexual assault.

What you could say:

“It wasn’t your fault.”

“Thank you for telling me.” Or “I’m glad you told me.”

“Any time you want to talk, I’m here for you.” Let her talk about it if she wants, and let her not talk about it if she does not want to.

“I believe you.”

“What can I do to help?” Offer to accompany her to her first counseling session, or to talk with an official on campus to report what occurred.

Some Things to Avoid

- Avoid asking questions that could be interpreted as skepticism. Survivors of sexual assault often fear that they won’t be believed, and almost any question can infer either judgment or skepticism, which can be very painful for a survivor who is confiding in a friend. It is helpful to reassure your friend that you believe her (or him).
- Do *not* suggest that a victim/survivor should “just get over it” or “just forget about it.” That kind of an approach might be an attempt to help and to be encouraging, but it is not helpful and can be very hurtful.

- Do not share your friend’s story with others without talking with them first and asking if they would like others to know. It might be that they don’t want anyone else to know. It might be that they would like others to know and would prefer that it is out in the open, but are too uncomfortable to envision sharing it themselves. If this is the case for a sister in your chapter, it could be a great help to her for you to be the one to share the information with chapter members or others, but that should never be done unless it is her wish for you to do so.
- If it seems evident that the person who assaulted her is a threat to the community and to other women, you might consider talking with her more about reporting it to the university or to authorities, but it still must be her decision to do so.
- Many survivors want to blame themselves, so it is important to make sure that you do not feed that by suggesting that she should have done something differently. (healthyplace.com)
- Along with not suggesting what she should have done differently, do not say what you would have done if you had been in the same situation. That can be insulting and hurtful. The reality is that you do not really know what you would have done in the exact same situation, with all of the same factors involved. Judging a victim/survivor’s actions or thinking of what she should have done in *hindsight* is completely unfair.

Personal Reflection:

Something I want to remember from the Understanding the Behaviors of a Victim/Survivor section are —

The things that stuck out most to me from the Six Concepts on Supporting a Friend were —

References & Resources

Online Resources

loveisrespect.org

loveisrespect.org offers great information on abuse and assault that is written in plain language. Highly-trained peer advocates offer support, information and advocacy to young people who have questions or concerns about their dating relationships. They also provide information and support to concerned friends and family members, teachers, counselors, service providers and members of law enforcement. Free and confidential phone, live chat, and texting services are available 24 hours, 365 days per year.

WomensLaw.org

WomensLaw.org is a project of the National Network to End Domestic Violence. They provide legal information and support to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.

pandys.org

Pandora's Project provides information, support and resources to survivors of rape and sexual abuse, as well as to their friends and family. They offer peer support to anyone who has been a victim/survivor of rape, sexual assault, or sexual abuse through their online support group, Pandora's Aquarium. They believe that connecting with other survivors is a valuable part of healing. Online support includes a message board, chat room, and blogs. It is free to join and is safely moderated by a diverse group of survivors.

healthyplace.com

HealthyPlace.com is the largest consumer mental health site, providing comprehensive information on a wide range of topics, including mental health concerns, psychological disorders, and psychiatric medications.

RAINN.org

RAINN stands for Rape, Abuse and Incest National Network. RAINN created and operates the National Sexual Assault Hotline (800.656.HOPE) in partnership with more than 1,100 local sexual assault service providers across the country.

If you or someone you know has been affected by sexual violence, it's not your fault. You are not alone. Help is available 24/7 through the National Sexual Assault Hotline at 1-800.656.HOPE, and online at online.rainn.org.

Online References

<https://rainn.org/get-information/sexual-assault-recovery/tips-for-after-an-attack>

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Zeta Tau Alpha

About the Author

Aaron Boe, M.S.Ed., is the Founder of Prevention Culture, a consulting firm that specializes in preventing interpersonal harm and equipping young people for healthier personal lives. He speaks regularly on college campuses, and is the leading consultant for national fraternal organizations on addressing sexual misconduct and abuse in relationships.

As the brother of a victim/survivor, Aaron spent over a decade studying the issue of non-stranger rape and sexual assault, seeking solutions for how we can prevent harm before it occurs. His work quickly expanded to addressing abuse in relationships and educating people on creating a more supportive culture for victims/survivors.

As a fraternity man, he sees the fraternity and sorority community as a natural place to empower women and men to optimize their social lives and personal relationships, and to make a difference in the world around them. Aaron Boe earned his bachelor's and master's degrees from Indiana University.

