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Calling in and boundary setting: Alternatives to avoiding and calling out harmful behaviour

Have you ever wondered how you can respond when someone does something harmful? Has ignoring their behaviour or calling them out made things worse? This resource provides an overview of calling in and boundary setting, two strategies we can use to respectfully and assertively address our concerns with others.

Calling in

Calling in is essentially calling out, but done with care. It allows us to share our concerns in a non-confrontational way. In doing so, we do our best to avoid escalating the conflict and damaging our relationship with the other person¹. The easiest way to further develop an understanding of calling in is to differentiate it from

At the Student Conduct Office, we encourage folks to call in rather than call out whenever possible. That said, there are some situations where it might be more appropriate to call out. For instance, if the situation is urgent and could result in a significant amount of harm, like a physical altercation, calling out would likely be a better fit. You also need to consider your capacity and self-care, and recognize it's not always your responsibility to educate.

Bibliography

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