

Starting **U**niversity **C**linical **C**areers **E**fficiently, **S**cholarly, and **S**uccessfully

Professionalism

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Professionalism

- UT Southwestern expect the highest standards of professionalism in its faculty.
- Your Professionalism matters for promotion.
 - Faculty being evaluated for academic promotion who have professionalism concerns have been commonly denied promotion.
- Interpersonal skills matter for your success every day regardless of promotion.
- You must address unprofessionalism in others.

Defining Unprofessional Conduct

Unprofessional conduct includes disruptive and intimidating behaviors that interrupt teamwork and undermine safe care.

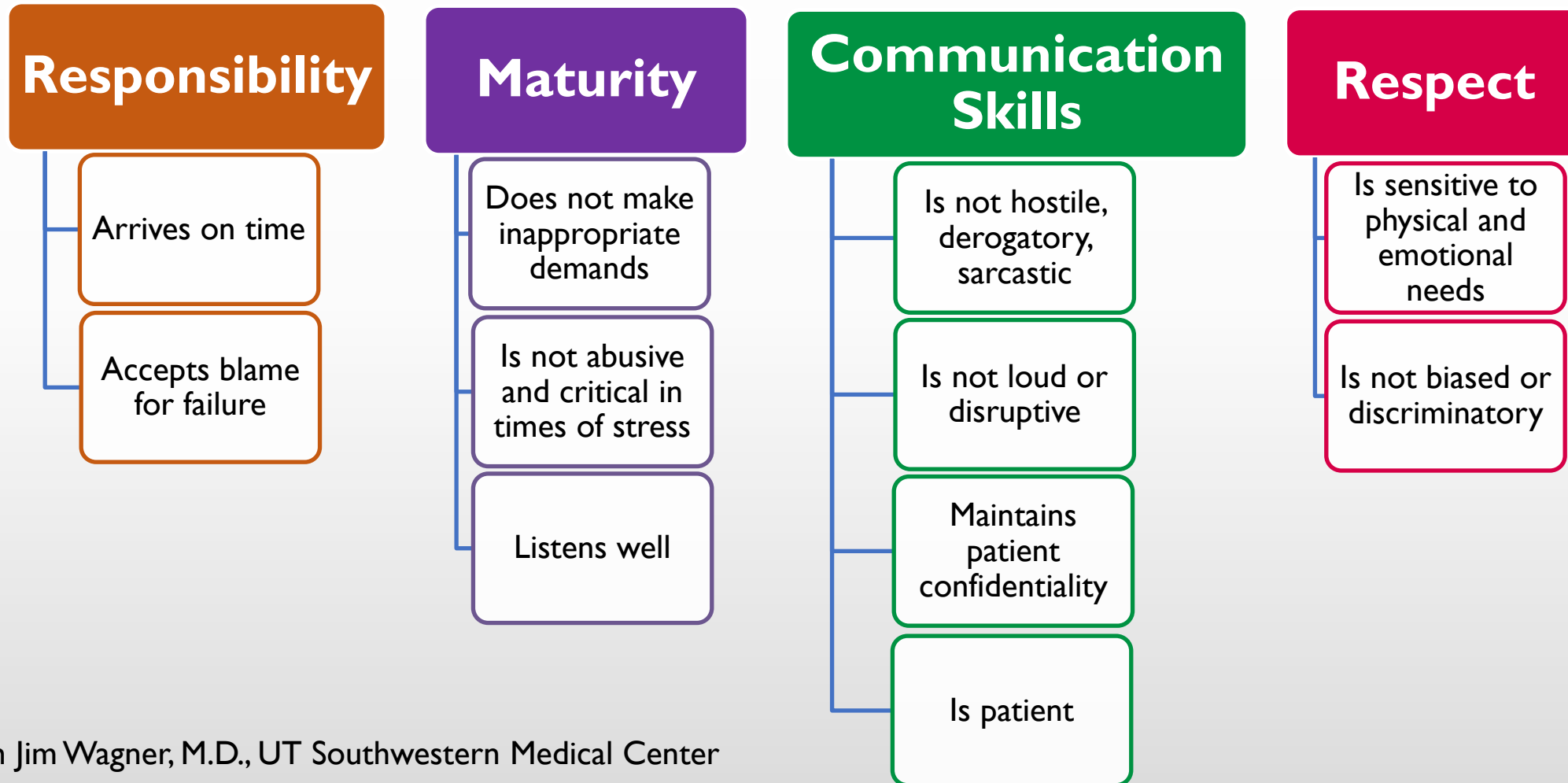
Overt behaviors:

- Verbal abuse
- Shaming in front of others
- Micro-aggressions
- Racial, ethnic or gender slurs
- Belittling, scapegoating
- Physical threats/ throwing objects

Passive behaviors:

- Refusing to answer questions or to return calls
- Backstabbing
- Withholding information
- Recruiting others to take a side
- Undermining
- Retaliation

Linking Professionalism Values to Specific Behaviors*



*From Jim Wagner, M.D., UT Southwestern Medical Center

Professionalism Goals

- Act as though someone is always observing (because they are)
 - UT Southwestern's promotion evaluation process involves conversations with multiple observers (including residents, students, nurses, staff, and peers)
- Recognize one's own limitations and know when to ask for help
- Actively work to reduce your own unconscious bias
- Attribute credit correctly
 - E.g., Respecting authorship agreements, saying the names of contributors to projects in meetings, acknowledgment slides at the end of presentations
- Don't assign personal tasks to employees or learners
 - E.g., Get you food, coffee, dry cleaning, other personal errands

Professionalism Goals

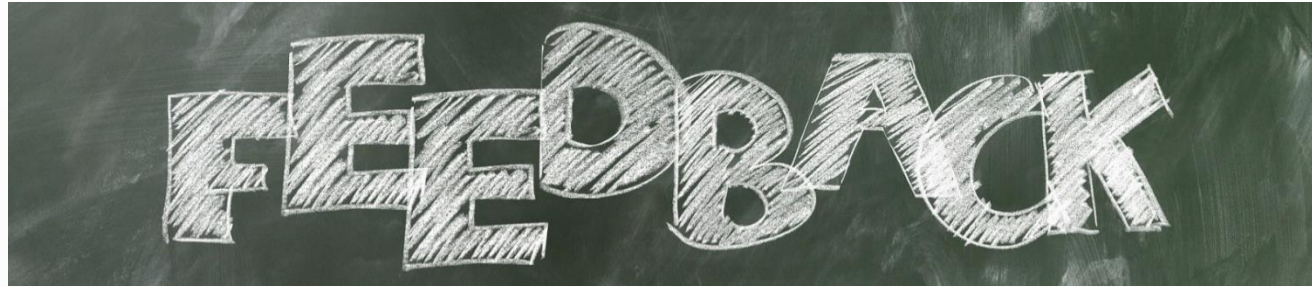
- Don't scream. Do not raise your voice. Do not throw anything EVER!
- Emotional intelligence: Commit to self-improvement and correct weaknesses once identified
- Speak to or email your direct reports, students, residents, nurses and other staff as you would your superiors or peers (tone; eye contact; conveying respect)
- Address unprofessional behavior of peers as well as learners or direct reports ASAP

Tiered Interventions



- Very often individuals are not aware of their behavior or the effect it is having on others.
- Receiving feedback from team members is a form of mutual support.
- Informal feedback from a trusted colleague is a good first-step.

Addressing Unprofessional Behavior of a Peer or “Boss”



1. Address the issue as soon as possible while keeping the patient safe. Wait until after the visit, procedure, surgery, etc.
2. Have a conversation first (be mindful of your tone):
 1. “How did you think that went?”
 2. “I observed...”
 3. “It’s not like to X. What is happening?”
 4. “Wow, that caught me off guard. What did you mean by that?”
 5. “I am concerned that...”

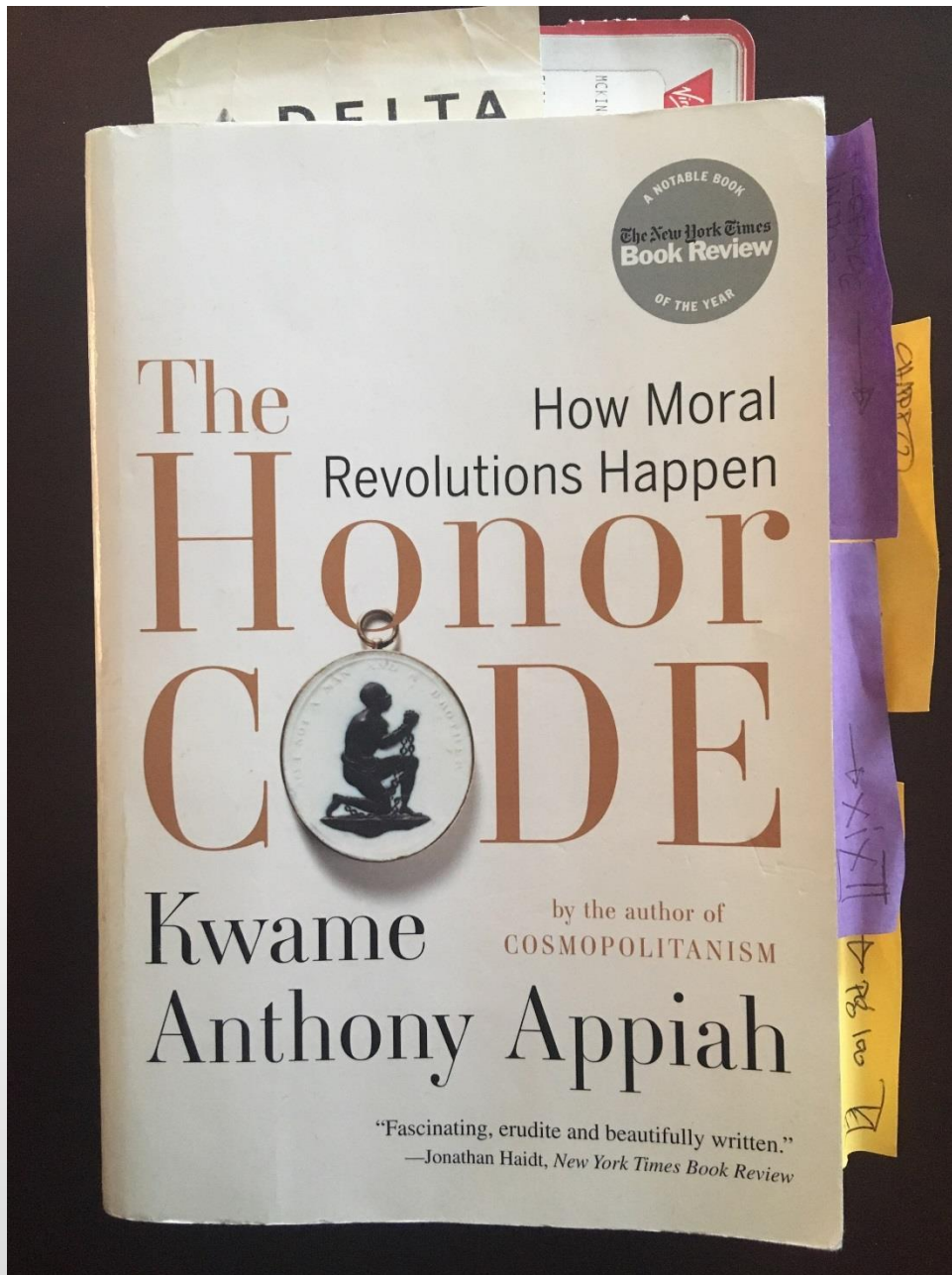
Other Sample Clarifying Questions

- Tell me—what would help you right now?
- Where would be a better place to have this conversation?
- What does respect look like to you?
- What is going on that has you so upset?
- What do you think is the impact of your behavior?
- What do you hope to accomplish by talking this way?
- How is this helping you get what you need?

Campus Reporting Mechanisms

If it is not possible to address unprofessional behavior yourself, there are reporting mechanisms.

- Immediately report discrimination or harassment concerns to the **Office of Institutional Equity and Access (OIEA)**
 - 214-648-4343
 - <https://www.utsouthwestern.edu/about-us/administrative-offices/equity-access>
- **Compliance Hotline**
 - 877-507-7319
 - www.utsouthwestern.net/hotline



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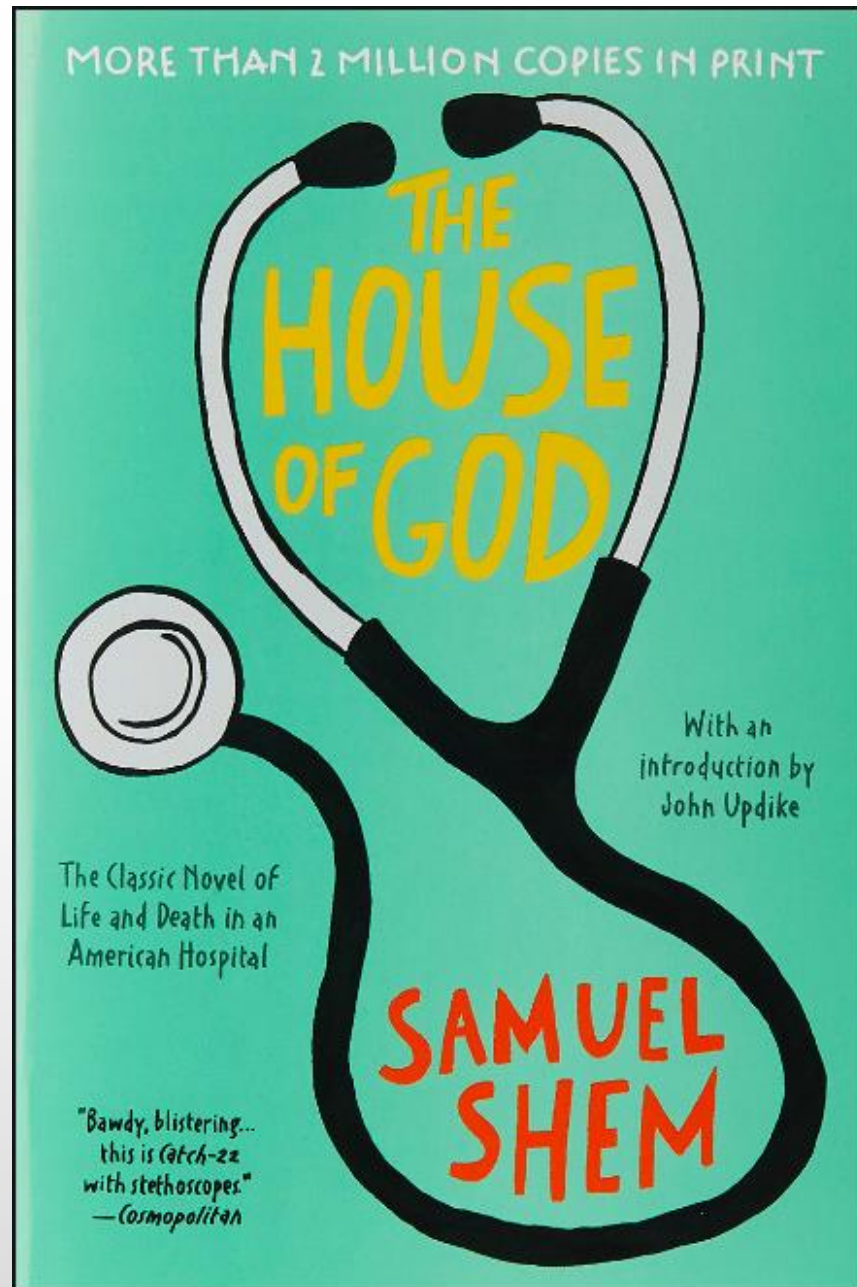
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Additional Information and Resources

1. [Professionalism in medicine: definitions and considerations for teaching](#) by Lynne M Kirk, M.D., ACGME Chief Accreditation Officer
2. [TeamSTEPPS[®] 2.0: Team Strategies & Tools to Enhance Performance and Patient Safety](#)
3. [Anti-Defamation League \(ADL\): Pyramid of Hate](#)
4. [UT Southwestern Office of Equity and Institutional Access](#)

Professionalism

Summary of Key Points



Professionalism is critical for career success

Remember that ALL of your interactions matter

Unprofessional conduct is likely to place your promotion at risk

When you see unprofessional behavior in others, address it ASAP

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Questions?



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