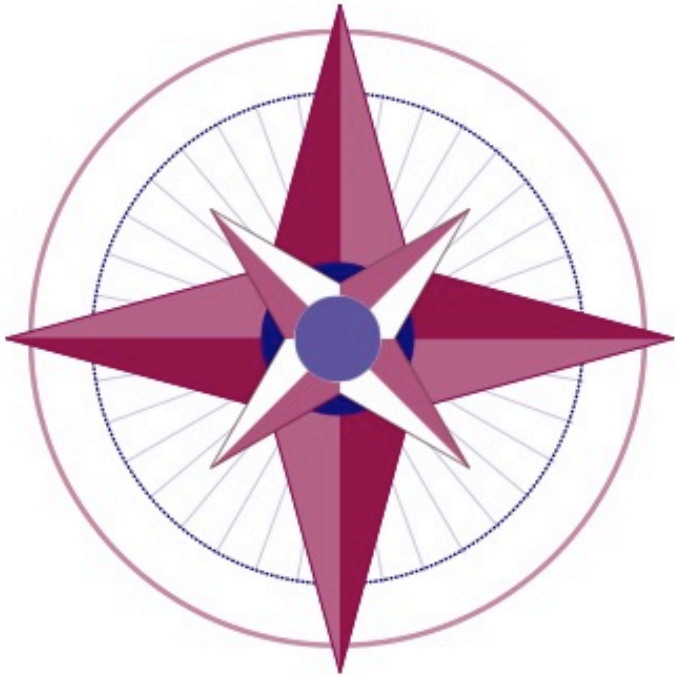# Practical Skills for Emerging Scholars II:
Navigating Interpersonal Boundaries to Support Excellence in Science

Abstract:
Scientific research demands us to be resilient, creative, effective communicators, and skilled at establishing and navigating boundaries with our colleagues and with ourselves. The most important of these skills is boundary setting, which is the art of clearly articulating what is acceptable in interpersonal interactions, learning when to say yes and when to say no, and distinguishing between your own versus others' values. Mastering boundaries helps scientists create professional environments that foster resiliency, creativity, and effective communication.

In this practical workshop, you will practice applying the boundary-setting skills that you developed in Setting Personal Boundaries to the art of maintaining healthy interpersonal and working relationships. You will learn how to set your teams up for success by proactively prevent conflicts and collaboratively resolve existing ones.

About the speaker:
Dr. Melodie Kao is a radio astronomer who studies substellar magnetism, including the magnetic dynamos operating in brown dwarfs and exoplanets as well as the physics of extrasolar aurorae.   Dr. Kao received her SB in physics at MIT, her PhD in astrophysics at Caltech, and she currently holds a NASA Hubble Postdoctoral Fellowship at Arizona State University. As a graduate student, Dr. Kao identified a set of key personal skills for every emerging scholar to hone that helped her and her peers thrive scientifically. She nicknamed these skills the "Scientist's Personal Toolkit" and aims to integrate the intentional development of the Toolkit skills into formal scientific training programs for all emerging scholars.

Worksheets from workshop will be available at: www.melodiekao.com
Please feel free to add to, make use of, and distribute these tools for yourself and your mentees.
If you have any feedback, I would love to hear it at: mkao@asu.edu

How well do we cultivate our team?

This is a non-exhaustive list of common situations that we can encounter when working on a team.

1. Circle the statements that you are tolerating right now or have in the past when working with other teams. Note how that situation makes you feel.

2. Then, reflect on what your <u>team</u> would be saying yes to if the <u>team as a whole</u> decided to say no to this toleration.

| What am I currently tolerating?	How do I feel?			If I stop tolerating this, then my team will be available to …
1. Emotionally appeasing/supporting my teammate.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
2. Getting pulled in many directions by my teammate's needs.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
3. Something that my teammate does that really annoys me.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
4. Struggling to speak up or be heard on my team.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
5. Not getting enough space (physical, mental, emotional, or working).	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
6. Feeling overwhelmed by my responsibilities for the team.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
7. Worrying about what my teammate thinks about me.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
8. Fearing that I will let down my team.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
9. Jokes / banter / team culture that I am uncomfortable with or that don't include me.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
10. Scheduling group work time that doesn't work well for me.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
11. Not getting enough support or responsiveness from my teammate.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	
12. Struggling to get visibility and acknowledgement for my role on the team.	Great	Neutral	Crappy	

Our Team Garden

1. Label the main areas of your team garden that you and your teammate(s) would like to cultivate.
2. In an ideal world, what do these areas of your team look like? Discuss with your teammate and write down 2-3 specific things for each area.
3. Discuss: Why are the components of your team garden important to you? Why are they important to your team?
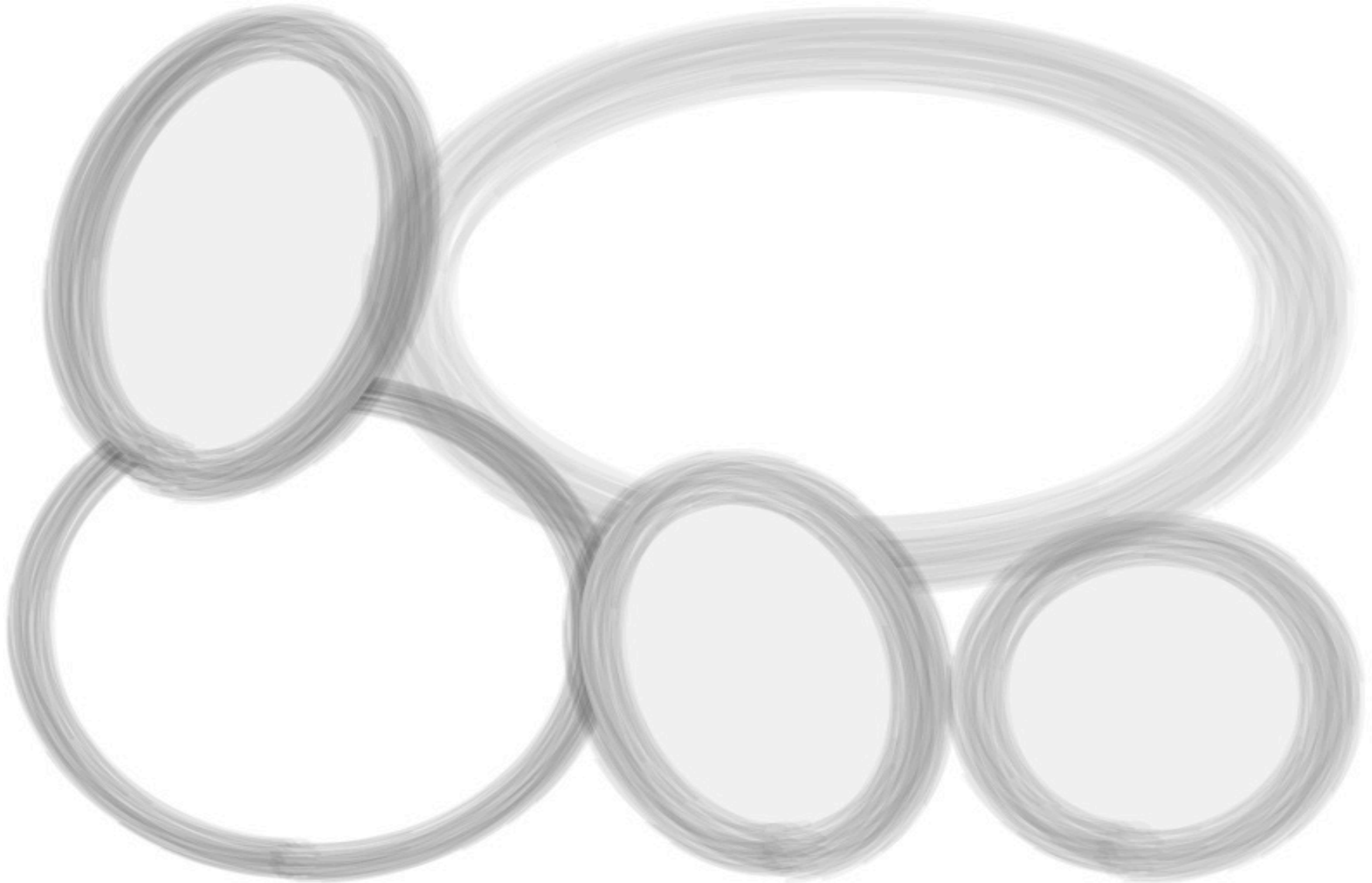
Our Team Values Compass

Once you have identified your team's core values in this Values Compass, reflect on and write down why these values are important to you. Additionally, describe what upholding these values looks like to you. Then, share with your teammate(s) so that the whole team can learn what the same team values can look like to individual team members.
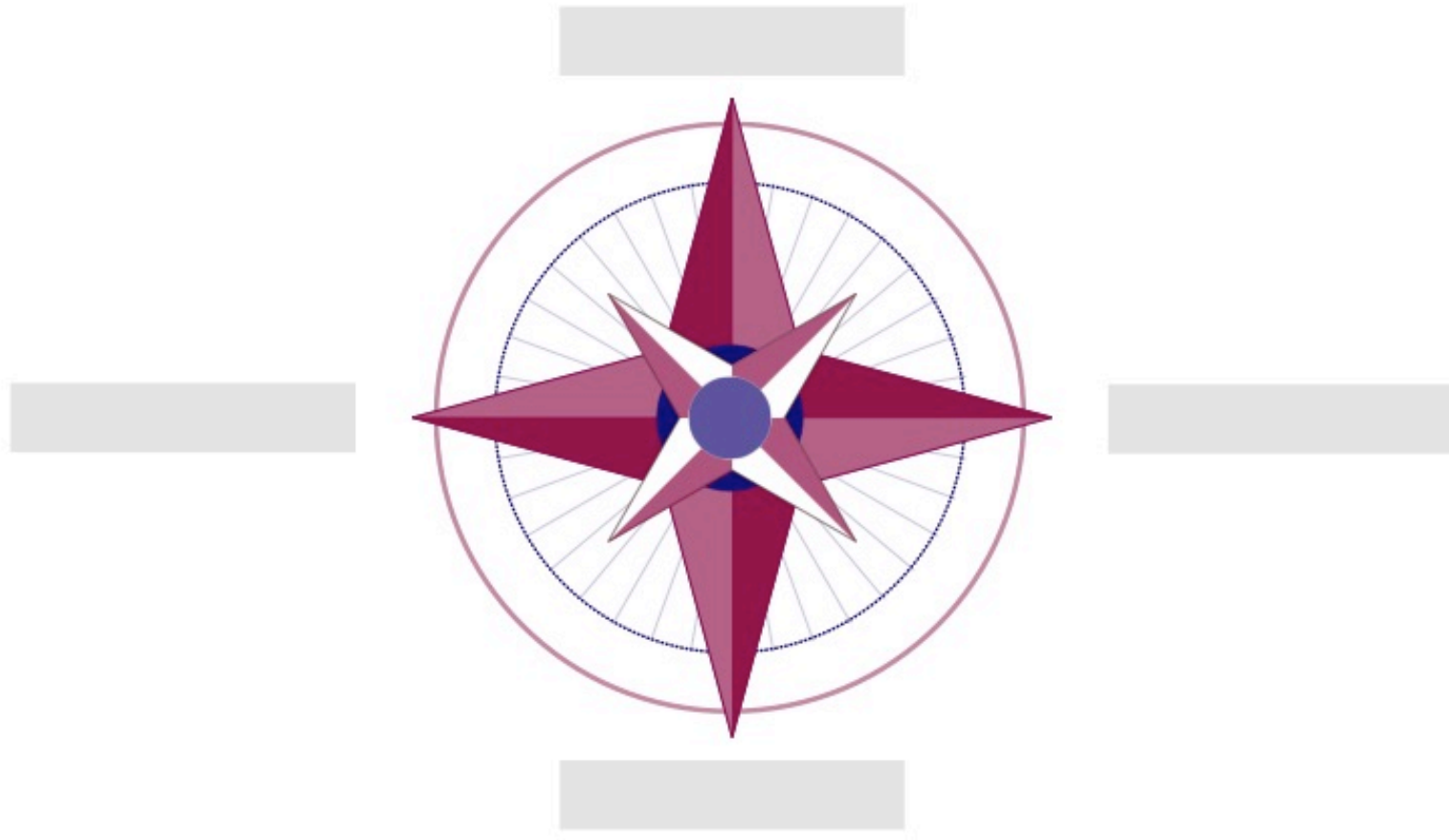
How well do we cultivate our team?

Which values are we not upholding?

What are we currently tolerating on this team?

1. Emotionally appeasing/supporting my teammate.				
2. Getting pulled in many directions by my teammate's needs.				
3. Something that my teammate does that really annoys me.				
4. Struggling to speak up or be heard on my team.				
5. Not getting enough space (physical, mental, emotional, or working).				
6. Feeling overwhelmed by my responsibilities for the team.				
7. Worrying about what my teammate thinks about me.				
8. Fearing that I will let down my team.				
9. Jokes / banter / team culture that I am uncomfortable with or that don't include me.				
10. Scheduling group work time that doesn't work well for me.				
11. Not getting enough support or responsiveness from my teammate				
12. Struggling to get visibility for my work.				

Collaboratively cultivating your team garden: Be firm with your intentions and flexible with your form.

5 min:
1. Select one situation that you are tolerating.
2. **Be firm with intention**: Identify which value (team/personal) you want to uphold while collaborating with your partner to improve the situation.
3. **Be flexible with the form of your expectations:** Brainstorm <u>at least 5 different ways</u> that you can uphold your intention while improving the situation that you are tolerating.
4. **Collaborate:** Ask your partner for suggestions for <u>at least 2 more</u> ways that you can uphold your intention while improving the situation.

I am tolerating:

My intention is to connect to this value:

Collaboratively cultivating your team garden: Be firm with your intentions and flexible with your form.

5 min:
1. Write down the situation that your partner is tolerating.
2. **Be firm with intention**: Identify which value (team/personal) <u>you</u> want to uphold while collaborating with your partner to improve the situation. The value that you select does not have to be the same as your partner's value.
3. **Be flexible with the form of your expectations:** Brainstorm <u>at least 5 different ways</u> that you can uphold your intention while improving the situation that your partner is tolerating.
4. **Collaborate:** Ask your partner for suggestions for <u>at least 2 more</u> ways that you can uphold your intention while improving the situation

My teammate is tolerating:

My intention is to connect to this value: