A PRACTICAL HANDOUT FOR EDUCATORS AND FACILITATORS

Learning from Each Other: Communication, Time Management, and Productivity

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Care consistently without being constantly available.



Start with one draining moment

Use access, attunement and output to identify where your energy goes. Then choose one boundary, reusable response or protected work block to try.

Read at your own pace. The reflection prompts turn workshop discussion into individual action.

Small changes you can sustain

Make communication predictable, reduce repeated work and protect time for preparation and marking.

Care sustainably: balance three demands

Consistency in care does not require constant availability.

Use these three demands to name what is taking your energy. Balance means choosing a level of care you can maintain across a term.

Care sustainably

Access

How easily students reach you.

Make routes and reply windows clear.

Attunement

Noticing how students are doing.

Check deliberately rather than continuously.

Output

The feedback, replies and reminders you provide.

Choose useful, repeatable responses.

REFLECT

Which demand drains you most?

Where could you ease off without making support unclear?

Access: make communication predictable



Students should know where to look, how to reach you and what happens next.

A clear routine is easier to maintain than an open-ended promise to respond whenever a message arrives.

Set a realistic window

State when you usually reply. Offer predictable office hours, in person or on Teams.

Make the next step clear

Give one clear task and deadline. Keep replies kind and explain what the student should do next.

Use one reliable news channel

Tell students where class updates appear, including changes to plans.

REFLECT

What do you repeat most? How will you reach everyone when plans change?

Rewrite a message you can sustain

Warmth works best with a next step and a boundary you can keep.

Read for hidden promises

- Unlimited availability.
- Assumptions about the student.
- More follow-up or feedback than you can sustain.

An example to adapt

> “Hi Sam, I missed you in class. If you want to talk, you can message me or catch me after class. Here is where to find this week’s notes.”

The invitation leaves room for the student to choose. If you offer messaging, pair it with the reply window you have already communicated.

TRY IT

Rewrite one real message

Keep the warmth. Add a clear next step and a boundary you can keep. Remove any promise you would struggle to repeat.

Attunement: notice without watching constantly

Notice patterns at planned times. You do not need to monitor students all day.

Choose when to check

Set times to review engagement or assignment status rather than checking repeatedly throughout the day.

Separate noticing from guessing

It is OK not to know why a student is quiet. Avoid assumptions about what their silence means.

REFLECT

What signs prompt you to reach out?

- No show to class
- Not responding to messages
- Assignments not being turned in

Find the time leaks

Subtract rather than adding another strategy.

Preparation, messages and lengthy feedback can consume time. Set a limit for a task that regularly takes too long.

1 Name the task

Choose a recurring activity that expands beyond the time you intended to spend.

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2 Decide what to remove

Look for repetition, unnecessary detail or a step students could do independently.

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3 Make one simple rule

Set a stopping point you can recognise and follow when the task comes around again.

REFLECT

What could you stop doing or let students do independently? Choose one simple rule that protects your time.

Output: steady care, not maximum care

Long emotional replies and performing cheerfulness when tired can be draining.

Aim for grounded, authentic, consistent responses rather than doing the most every time.

Compare two openings

MORE EMOTIONALLY EXPRESSIVE

"Oh wow, I'm so sorry you're going through this. That sounds incredibly difficult..."

GROUNDED AND PRACTICAL

"Thank you for letting me know. Let's review the options available."

Consider when each is appropriate. The aim is a response that fits the person and the situation, without requiring you to perform an emotion you do not have.

REFLECT

What kind of response can you sustain across a term? Where could a shorter reply still communicate care?

Make reusable replies

Prepare a starting point for recurring situations. Adapt each response to the person and circumstances.

Start with the messages you repeat

- A student cannot attend class.
- A student requests an extension.
- A student wants to discuss a grade.

An extension reply to adapt

"Hi [Name], thanks for telling me. For an extension, please send me [what] by [when]. [Your name]"

Use in email, Teams, or a note shared or read in person. Before sending, replace every placeholder and check that the request and deadline fit the circumstances.

TRY IT

Draft one reusable reply

Choose a recurring situation. Include an acknowledgement, the information needed and one clear next step.

Protect a block of focus time

Productivity depends on energy and focus, not just speed.

Choose a protected block this week for preparation or marking, and decide what to switch off.



01	02	03
Choose	**Reserve**	**Protect**
One task	A work block	Fewer interruptions

Remove the interruptions you can

- Teams: silence notifications or set Do not disturb.
- Outlook: close the inbox and turn off alerts.
- Phone: put it away or face down.
- In person: close the office door or use a do-not-disturb sign.

PLAN YOUR BLOCK

What helps you focus, and what gets in the way? Has a tool such as Copilot helped with routine work?

My task: ___ My block: ___ Switch off: ___

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one change to try

Think of a recent draining moment. Was access, attunement or output overloaded?

Pick one thing to reduce or limit. Keep it small enough to try this week.

Access

Could you clarify when and where students can reach you?

Attunement

Could you check at planned times instead of all day?

Output

Could you shorten or reuse a recurring response?

COMPLETE YOUR COMMITMENT

“This week I will ___.”

Share one useful idea with a colleague in Teams or at your next meeting.

Based on the Learning from Each Other session by Angela Parsons, Counselling Therapist and Accessibility and Wellness Advisor, Centre of Excellence, Columbia College.