

# Foreword

## YOU'RE JUST NOT GOOD ENOUGH

As a learner who has enjoyed attending six different higher education institutions at the undergraduate and graduate levels of academic engagement, I have viewed bullying and academic mobbing from a close up and very personal viewpoint. I've heard and experienced the depth of cruelty and bullying behaviors that might shock those who have been less assertively engaged in the learning process, including statements such as:

*"Your only novices."*

*"Didn't you read the Chapter? Then you should have passed the test."*

*"I know the syllabus does not match the required textbook. Just look at my slides, that's all you need."*

*"[announcing publicly the student's name] is failing the course, they are not smart enough for this field."*

*"Sorry, can't help you, the faculty in question is tenured."*

*"This is going to be hard. Deal with it."*

The internal pandemonium that occurs in the mind of a vulnerable student, trying to propagate her or his own cognitive understandings around new subject matter, is negatively impacted through the trauma and dissonance achieved by the higher education personnel who consider the students as disposable. All the while, the student is progressively dealing with new information and perversely negative

comments that ultimately combust into trauma, distressing the student and damaging not only the student's higher education experience but also negatively impacting the cognitive ability of the student. The damage experienced is distracting from the learner's coursework and knowledge attainment while, the next moment, the student's self-efficacy and hope are incinerated. The student's internal messaging system defines one's own knowledge base and student efforts as *less than*, clearly articulating the sense that the student *does not belong* and somehow deserves the traumatically unprofessional and cruel treatment displayed by higher education faculty, administrative leadership and staff. This treatment of the student decreases the potential towards positive outcomes, establishing and reinforcing the student's slowly internalized message – "You're just not good enough."

The faculty and administrative leadership's subtle and unsubtle comments spread abusive bullying behaviors, negatively influencing the student population and the organization's collegial community. One might suggest some academic communities accept such practices by those faculty and administrative leadership who, perhaps privately, seek power and control over not only their professional equals but even the student body over whom they have ultimate callous control. These internal-to-the-organization bullying behaviors can develop to form an academic mobbing culture that directly impacts the students, with bullying and mobbing behaviors impacting the student through the faculty, the administrative leadership, the staff and even other students who have had these behaviors modeled as acceptable.

The organizational sickness, defined as bullying and academic mobbing, develops into an inherent organizational reality that slowly overtakes faculty, administration, staff and students. The modeled negative and traumatic behaviors result in an organizational sickness inside the higher education structure that is also upon full display within the profession as well as within the surrounding community. The reputation of the academic institution is forever tarnished.

The book chapters clearly outline the negative academic mobbing outcomes that have been achieved. The immoral compass eventually skews and overtakes positive diversity and inclusionary efforts, creativity, fiscal accountability, and ultimately shuns returning or academically strong students who are unwilling to attempt to survive within this type of organizational culture. Long-term, the development of a fear-based, bullying organizational culture will repress teaching, research and service strengths through the loss of stronger faculty and administrators, leaving the organization with lower quality faculty who achieved influence through bullying and academic mobbing, with the mantra clearly focused upon – "It's all about me".

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