TITLE: Critical Friendship for Librarians: Striving Together for Scholarly Advancement

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Abstract

Critical friendship is a form of non-hierarchical developmental relationship in which there is no mentor or protégé. In critical friendship, individuals with similar aims and differing experiences and knowledge aid each other in achieving goals by critically observing each other's performance and progress. Bonded with trust, critical friends serve as sworn friends who strive and struggle side by side and share joy and pain throughout their journey. Originating from within the field of higher education, the critical friendship methodology has primarily been used by educators to improve their teaching skills, but has been found to be a powerful resource for librarians. While the literature on critical friendship demonstrates its effectiveness when applied to educators' pedagogical strategies, it has not been studied as a means to promote scholarly advancement in higher education nor for its positive impact on professional development for librarians. Especially for those who are tenure-track librarians, having a tool to aid with publication, service, and academic contribution for tenure and promotion is incredibly useful. This chapter reports on the action research project conducted by us, two junior faculty librarians at an urban university, who have converted the critical friendship methodology to a framework accessible to non-teaching, tenure-track faculty librarians. For two years, we have implemented a practice of critical friendship as a way to assist each other to survive, strive, and succeed during our long journey to tenure while fostering each other's advancement as librarians. The authors have found that a diversity of experience aids in the strength of a critical friendship. The expression of unique cultural understandings, in our case our disparate upbringings in Midwest America and Tokyo, Japan, has aided to strengthening and empowering each critical friend. The chapter will not only discuss the definition, the history, the methodology, the benefits, and challenges of critical friendship, but also will provide a summary, an outline, tools, and advice for librarians seeking a new non-hierarchical model of mentorship.

Introduction

Critical friendship is a non-hierarchical developmental relationship in which neither of the participants is mentor or protégé, but rather offers each other insight and advice as peers to assist and enrich the other. The origin of the theory of critical friendship is from the discipline of education. It is a form of a developmental relationship that has been predominantly studied in the field of education, but is accessible in practice much more broadly. We believe any two people who can invest in helping one another succeed and can regularly meet can practice critical friendship.

The importance of mentoring has been recognized and widely discussed in academia. Academic institutions often incorporate a mentoring system in their curriculum and program by

offering students academic advisors, peer-mentors, mentoring programs and activities to assist and guide them to achieve academic success and excellence. Similarly, many institutions assist faculty members by offering institutional and departmental mentoring programs and workshops to aid individuals in developing their scholarship and pedagogical skills. Mentorship is often defined by the hierarchical structure in which one person with more experience and knowledge mentors the other who has less experience and knowledge (Oxford English Dictionary, 2001). In conjunction with traditional mentorship we propose that critical friendship can aid librarians in achieving their objectives.

We the authors, Yoko Inagi Ferguson and Helena Marvin, have applied and developed our practice of critical friendship to aid each other in our scholarly advancement. As tenure-track librarians at the City College of New York, City University of New York, we have implemented a critical friendship methodology into our colleagueship to together strive for tenure. To better develop the three pillars of academia as expressed by our institution--peer-reviewed scholarship, teaching, service to the academic communities--we chose each other to serve as critical friends, who would assist one another to survive, strive, and succeed during our long journey towards tenure.

Yoko Inagi Ferguson is the head of Cataloging and Materials Processing and Conservation Division. Helena Marvin is the chief of Government Documents division. We were both hired in 2010 at the instructor level, proceeding to professor after completing a second master's degree. It was in June 2013 when we formally began our practice of critical friendship. It was born of our shared struggle in completing the second master's degree, Ferguson's in Literature, and Marvin's in History, that we began keeping a written record of our upcoming objectives, recent accomplishments, and our scholarship projects to help keep ourselves and each other on track. It was with this written record that we inaugurated our formalized practice of critical friendship.

Our interest in critical friendship originates in our desire to further ourselves. Neither of us is mentor or protégé, but rather we each offers the other insight and advice as peers, each enriching the other. Our aim in this chapter is to share with other librarians an adaptable and potentially powerful framework for professional and personal development.

History, Definitions, and the Components of Critical Friendship

Critical friendship as an instrument for professional growth was developed and exercised initially amongst educators (Thorgersen, 2014, p. 60). The term, "critical friend" was born out of self-appraisal activity in the 1970s and attributed to Desmond Nuttall (1944-1993), a British education researcher (Heller, 1988, p. 123). Teachers mainly applied the critical friend methodology to improve their teaching skills by giving each other critical feedback on teaching performance, as well as the responsiveness and engagement of the teacher and the students in the classrooms.

In an article by van Swet, Smit, Corvers, & van Dijk (2009), they discuss critical friendship used in an international master's program and provide a translation of Petra Ponte's *Onderwijs en onderzoek van eigen makelij* (2002) or *Education and research of his own making*. There the five functions of critical friendship are defined as follows:

    1. *Exploration:* questioning each other critically in order to clarify themes, contributing to critical analysis and interpretation.

2. *Informing each other:* giving tips, advice and suggestions.
3. *Encouraging:* putting fresh heart into people to continue, giving them recognition and showing appreciation.
4. *Exchanging ideas*: talking about experiences in a neutral way.
5. *Modelling:* learning from each other how things can be done. (as cited in van Swet et al., p. 342)

In their article, critical friendship is presented as a methodology to aid educators in scholarship, and specifically writing, instead of focusing on improving pedagogical techniques as initially intended.

As the use of critical friendship diversified over the years, the definitions expanded. The scholars Baskerville and Goldblatt (2009) define critical friends as those who can be "a capable reflective practitioner … who establishes safe ways of working and negotiates shared understandings to support and challenge a colleague in the de-privatizing of their practice" (p. 218). Costa & Kallick (1993) define critical friend as "a trusted person who asks provocative questions, provides data to be examined through another lens, and offers a critique of a person's work as a friend," (p. 50). Özek, Edgren, & Jandér (2012) define friends as having a relationship with central characteristics including mutuality, awareness of care, engagement, and trust (p. 72).

While we happened to be friends when we started implementing our critical friendship, neither of us believes participants must be friends before practicing critical friendship, but there must be a foundation of mutual respect and concern for one another. We do not believe an established friendship is necessary to begin critical friendship, but, if respect, care, and trust do not develop within the relationship, it may be best to discontinue the practice. Defining friendship is difficult, but defining the practice of critical friendship is not. Eventual friendship is likely to result from the practice of critical friendship, but not necessary, so long as a relationship of respect, care, and trust is formed. We have found that the activity of critical friendship, regularly occurring within a defined space, has helped our communication, our trust, and our friendship to grow.

The Practice of Critical Friendship

We refer to our practice of critical friendship as Academic Progress Reviews in official documentation, and more colloquially as Academic Happy Hour (no alcohol involved). We began our practice of meeting together and discussing our aspirations and to-dos before we knew of critical friendship. It was in conversation with an education scholar that parallels were found between our evolving practice and critical friendship. The framework we use has been developed through trial and error over the past two years, and has been informed by our study of critical friendship. Our recommendations originate in what we have found works for us, but it certainly not the only way to engage in critical friendship.

Our practice of critical friendship is one-on-one. We meet weekly and each meeting has a duration of between twenty and forty minutes. We create a summarized written record of our verbal exchange, and we have found both to be vital to the practice. Our discussion and the documentation we generate are divided into four parts: "done," "in progress," "to-do," and "scholarship" (Figure 1).

- #1 June 20th 2013
- ...
- #77 September 17th, 2015
  - in Yoko office - 12:10 -
    - Yoko
      - done
        - started replacing ethesis URL
        - no to french intern
      - in progress
        - conquer springer ebooks
        - CV to turn in
      - todo
        - get location for CDs flipped
        - hire a work study
    - Lena
      - done
        - Nora started Brai
        - CJ - bepress
      - in progress
        - emailed QC about the ELE items
        - reveiwing CV
      - todo
        - I've got to turn in the allocation for Andrew
        - email John about RAM
    - Scholarship
      - Yoko
        - in oven
          - IRB status
            - consent form 80% done
        - back burner
          - teaching portfolio
      - Lena
        - in oven
          - legislative history
            - wrestling bibliography

Figure 1. Meeting notes of a typical critical friendship meeting (documented with *workflowy.com*)

"Scholarship" is for us a separate category from our day to day work. For non-academic tenure-track librarians, however, this section may be expressed differently. It could simply be a discussion of what continuing education opportunities or articles which have been sought out, or it may be another category of activity which does not neatly fit into the discussion of actionable weekly goals which the first part of the discussion should be.

At the beginning of each meeting we record the date, review each "done" from the previous meeting, and review and record each "in progress" and "to-do" and its status for each other. These are most often simple actions achievable within the week before our next meetings, or something which we suspect we can make progress on before the next meeting. If a short term goal doesn't make sense to both friends, exploring the broader long-term goal the short term goal is to a larger narrative is incredibly empowering. It can help identify the importance or unimportance of a task.

We first take turns discussing and compiling a list of recently completed actions, actions in progress, and then actions to be done (our "dones," "in progress," and "to-dos" respectively) related to our librarianship (see Appendix A for a sample script). By first compiling and discussing what has been completed, we are better able to recognize our accomplishments, and relate them to broader goals. While compiling our "dones," "in progress," and "to-dos," we often question and comment on each other's trajectory, helping each other clarify intentions. We are quick to question the practicality of what is being attempted given the limited nature of time, attention, and resources available in libraries. The verbal discussion is often more nuanced than the written record, as there is more opportunity to express our feelings and frustrations, while the written record tends to contain more practical short notes. The documentation not only summarizes our accomplishments and progresses but also serves as a friendly reminder for our ongoing and upcoming projects and tasks.

After reviewing the "dones," "in progress," and "to-dos" related to our librarianship, we devote the final portion of our conversation to our scholarship. As tenure-track librarians it can be hard to stay focused on our scholarship, as it is not easy to find time away from our library responsibilities. To keep our scholarship in mind we discuss where we are. We share in what stage our different projects are--be it research, writing, or review--and what our next actions are. During this time we will share the challenges that have arisen, brainstorm solutions, and identify steps that can or should be taken. We use a cooking analogy to describe our current focus: research that is "in the oven" takes priority while other projects may be "on the back burner," being thought about, considered, or researched, but not receiving dedicated, immediate attention. By understanding what needs to be done concerning both our day-to-day goals and our goals in scholarship, the broader context of our workflow is addressed. Critical friendship has helped us better evaluate our work/life balance and strategically direct our energies and attention.

If the critical friends are not pursuing any scholarly projects, the scholarship portion of critical friendship is not required, though as mentioned before, it may be a good arena to discuss continuing education the participants are seeking (see Appendix B for a sample script). For us, the authors of this article, scholarship is an easily delineated portion of our work. Other types of librarians may have a different category which would be more useful in their practice of critical friendship. Depending on the nature of the friendship within the critical friendship, it may be useful to define *work* projects as separate from *home* projects, if the friends find themselves frequently discussing their goals beyond the scope of their responsibilities as librarians.

Furthermore, if the participants wish to devote the practice to specific goals and projects, they can easily do so by discussing the "dones" and "to-dos" only under those entries (Figure 2).
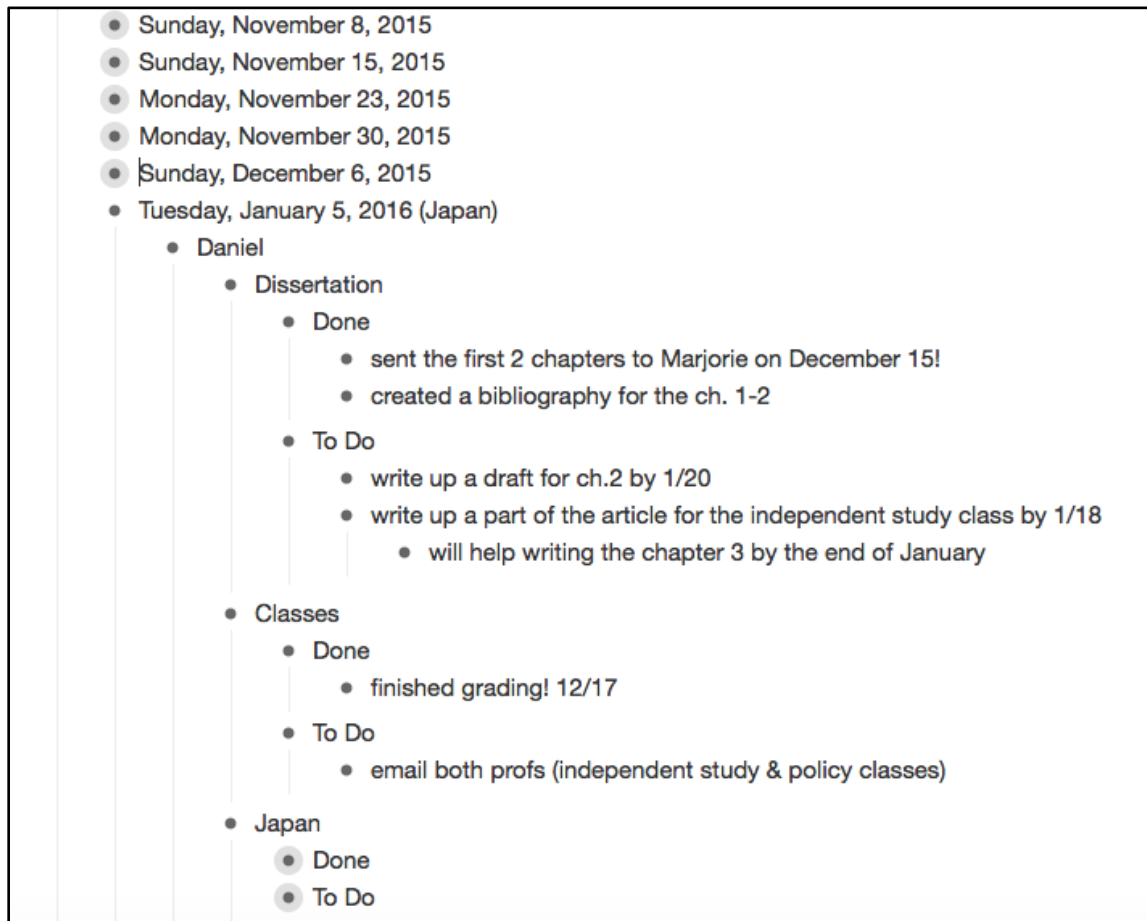

Figure 2. Meeting notes of the project focused critical friendship meeting (documented with *workflowy.com*).

Critical friends can and should adapt the practice to best fit their needs. The ability to adapt the critical friendship framework to fit the participants' needs empowers it to be a more useful force in the lives of the participants.

We have chosen to use a collection of digital technologies in our critical friendship, but they are not necessary for the practice. We have found that it is easy for us to use digital tools to help each critical friend retain a copy of the documentation we generate at our meetings, so that we can easily refer to it as the week goes on. If the participants prefer keeping notes on paper, each participant can either keep duplicate notes, or use a copier to to retain the identical copies. Whether it is created and stored in digital or paper format, the practice needs to be recorded for the documentation is key in critical friendship. The record has proven itself invaluable to our practice. The documentation of our meetings helps us not only easily review how we are progressing week to week, but also assess our accomplishments since our practice began. The documentation also allows us to to wear a critical friend's hat and stay focused during our weekly meetings.

Since we began our critical friendship in 2013, we have been using *workflowy.com* to record and review our meeting notes. *Workflowy* is a site for creating and organizing a nested bullet point list. We have found it very easy to use and are particularly happy with its features that allow us to download and receive our notes via email. *Workflowy* automatically sends us meeting notes a day after the meeting and those have been useful as friendly reminders of actions we need to take and items we need to handle until the next meeting.

Additionally we have found that using and sharing our virtual calendars (we both happen to use *Google Calendar*) let us keep abreast of our schedules. Knowing each other's schedules and deadlines, we have been able to not only discuss and create strategies to best meet them, but also remain attentive and understanding. We have been also utilizing *Google Docs* to collaboratively write and edit each other's works, including this chapter. On the few occasions when we are not able to meet in person, we have used web conference technology, such as *Skype* and *Google Hangout,* to meet virtually, while editing our shared *workflowy* list. All of these digital technologies introduced here are currently available freely.

Why Be Critical Friends? : Benefits of Critical Friendship for Scholarly Advancement

Incorporating critical friendship into our relationship as colleagues has brought a series of positive outcomes in both our scholarship and our service to the university. The City College of New York is a large urban university, in which we as tenure-track librarians are expected to wear multiple hats within the library to better serve our faculty and students while simultaneously producing scholarly works to achieve tenure. Working in a fast-paced work environment, one can easily get overwhelmed by the pressure to produce notable scholarship and service within a period of 7 years. Our practice of critical friendship has become pivotal in our journey towards tenure, because unlike a traditional hierarchical mentorship in which the more experienced mentors the inexperienced, we serve each other as sworn friends and allies striving and struggling together.

Our scheduled weekly meetings provide us with an opportunity to set a time aside to review and, if necessary, make adjustments to the course of our work and academic performance. Weekly meetings allow us to remain practical and focused. By setting and concentrating on small, executable goals, we move towards achieving our larger objectives. Knowing we will meet and review each other's goals encourages us to make progress if only to remove the "to-dos" from the conversation.

Being colleagues as well as critical friends gives us the benefit of shared experience. As we come from different backgrounds and have different temperaments, expressing our perspectives of shared events often gives us greater insight and understanding into the experience, each other, and ourselves. When updating curriculum vitae and preparing documentations for annual performance evaluation for reappointment, we as critical friends can not only closely review, but also help enhancing each other's documentation as we have a keen grasp of each other's accomplishment and progress.

A study by Özek et al. (2012) lists the "opportunity to see things from a new perspective" and "the realization of both their own strengths and those of the colleagues they were paired with" as positive outcomes of critical friendship (p. 75). Being able to share different perspectives of shared events not only enriches our critical friendship, but also helps us realize, be open-minded, and be appreciative of different perspectives. In our case, our disparate

upbringings in mid-western America and Tokyo, Japan, have provided us with different perspectives on a number of occasions, from interpersonal interactions between colleagues to strategies in replying to calls for papers. There are a couple of specific instances in which the differing cultural background of the authors has been helpful in communicating ideas to integrate into work.

The American concept of "quittin' time," the recognition that at the end of the day, there is a withdrawal from the workplace so that the next day can be faced with greater fortitude, was not one which Yoko Ferguson came to easily. In addition to coming from the culture in which working overtime is often seen as a sign of dedication and rather encouraged, her passion for cataloging occasionally eclipsed her willingness to leave at the end of the day. With the trust built in the framework of critical friendship, Helena Marvin was able to communicate the importance of leaving at the end of the day, regardless of the work that could be done in the moment, encouraging and teaching Ferguson a better work-life balance.

Ferguson's Japanese philosophy in which respect for other people can be communicated by strict adherence to decorum was an idea that Marvin, as both a millennial and an American, had a hard time understanding at first. Since before the establishment of the critical friendship Marvin held the belief that if a departmental meeting had moved onto a topic that did not directly concern her, that surreptitiously using her smartphone was an acceptable action. It was with the help of critical friendship, open and on-going communication, and the safe space it fosters, that the inappropriateness of this action, and the lack of surreptitiousness of the action were broached. With practice and help, Marvin has been able to mostly break this bad habit.

While it is not easy to address the above issues that are related to work habit and attitudes, we can make critical remarks without worrying about awkwardness or consequences because our critical friendship is founded upon trust, respect and care for each other. It is this foundation that allows us to discuss even difficult issues for the other's sake without risking the relationship. In addition to our different upbringings the authors also have very different specialties and interests. Ferguson is an expert cataloger, and Marvin a computer wiz. These talents and understanding of each other's talents together resulted in the creation of a series of macros and wiki pages for instructions, which significantly streamlined the workflow and decreased the workload in the Technical Services division. The macros and shared instructions made it easier for the librarians and support staff in the Cataloging, Serials, Government Document and other branch libraries to copycatalog items in various formats and fix bibliographic records by automation and train others. It is our differences and our respect for each other's differences that strengthen and empower critical friendship and our librarianship. It has helped us grow both personally and professionally, to better serve our culturally and socioeconomically diverse group of students and faculty.

At our institution we are fortunate to be provided with both an annual evaluation and a formal mentoring program in the library department. These provide us with helpful feedback, advice, and recognition on completed and on-going projects. Due to the nature of these formal meetings, however, a mentor usually can only review a summary of accomplishments communicated through verbal or written reports. A critical friend, on the other hand, has a clear understanding of what the other has done and is trying to do. Because the critical friend is there when the other goes through a series of discrete challenges and progresses toward successful outcomes, the participants can give each other timely encouragement, criticism, and acknowledgement of accomplishments both small and large. Weekly meetings also give the

participants a chance to self-reflect on their own work and actions. The anticipation of reporting to a critical friend can encourage one to act in a timely fashion on the small projects that could otherwise be pushed aside.

In a traditional hierarchical mentorship, a protégé may not always find it comfortable or appropriate to disclose failure or fear of failure, but in critical friendship with its non-hierarchical structure and its foundation of trust, respect, and care, the participants can feel free to share not only joy and excitement, but also frustration and fear. A journey to tenure is generally long and lonesome. A junior faculty member can be easily overwhelmed by the sense of loneliness and insecurity during the process. The existence of a critical friend can help reduce the feeling of going through this process alone (Özek et al., 2012, p. 75). The safety found within an allied critical friendship can be used to foster a healthy rivalry. The success of one friend can be positive fuel for the other to strive further. Having frequent opportunities to review and discuss challenges while expressing and reflecting our accomplishments, we have an easier time staying on track and motivated as we progress our long journey to tenure.

Another benefit for tenure-track faculty is that critical friends are well aware of each other's research interests. This knowledge helps us to alert each other about opportunities of scholarship as they arise. We can keep up with calls for proposals and presentations posted through listservs and websites and let each other know at weekly meetings or via email. Because our research interests are different, we can provide each other with new insights on each other's works and suggest new avenues for publication.

Since beginning our critical friendship in June 2013, we have had over 80 meetings, usually occurring in the afternoon towards the end of the week and taking between 15 and 30 minutes to complete. While it is not always easy to keep a scheduled meeting, we managed to meet nearly weekly because of our commitment to each other and the tangible benefits we have experienced as a result of the practice. Librarians at the City University of New York are on a 12-month contract and are considered non-teaching faculty. Our 5 day-a-week work schedule makes it easier for us to schedule a meeting and to know what the other does through departmental projects, events, and day-to-day interactions. For teaching faculty on an 8 month contract, it may be more challenging to develop and maintain an allied developmental relationship. Many professors are only on campus a few days a week, meeting with students and teaching individually, and are often on leave during intersessions. However against these difficulties, we believe teaching faculty pursuing tenure could benefit greatly from critical friendship.

Critical friendship is not a procedure but a flexible and powerful framework. Any two people can practice it if they are willing to invest in helping one another succeed and commit to each other's struggle and success. Critical friendship can also exist along with other relationships. For example, in addition to critical friendship with Marvin, Ferguson has begun critical friendship with her husband who is currently working on his Ph.D. dissertation. He has academic advisors whom he meets occasionally as his formal mentors, but needed a critical friend who can assist him in meeting smaller writing and reading goals. The authors believe that librarians who wear multiple hats within the library and juggle with several projects and deadlines may find critical friendship particularly useful and beneficial. Weekly meetings with critical friend, understanding and appreciation for the other's differences, strengths, and interest can help librarians strategically achieve goals and lead to their professional and personal development.

Overcoming Challenges in Critical Friendship

There are potential challenges and difficulties for which practitioners should be prepared when beginning a critical friendship. Studies by Achinstein & Meyer (1997) and Özek et al. (2012) discuss some of the difficulties faced by those in critical friendship. Critical friendship is, by nature a complex developmental relationship, as one is required to be "an advocate for the success of the work [and] the critique from the deep questioning" (Achinstein & Meyer, 1997, p. 1). How critical a friend should be and how friendly a critique should be are common questions among practitioners of critical friendship who wish to make the relationship most effective without damaging it.

Also, it is not uncommon for tensions to arise between critical friends (Özek et al., 2012, p. 71). Even when necessary, it is not always easy to receive and give criticism. In academia the process of review is a tradition that occurs in many forms, most prominently during the peer-review process for publication, and reappointment and promotion. Scheduled weekly meetings with critical friends can help the participants get accustomed to being reviewed and critiqued, and evaluating each other.

There can be uncertainty and concern which may remain unaddressed about whether one is progressing in the right direction because neither of the participants has more experience and knowledge than the other. Critical friends are comrades who may feel like they are fumbling around in the dark. In such a case, it is best to seek advice and suggestions from traditional mentors and other colleagues with more experience. In fact, we are both fortunate to have different tenured librarians as our formal mentors with whom we meet monthly. Hierarchical and non-hierarchical relationships serve us differently. In a traditional mentorship, the experienced tenured librarians can advise us and show us ways; in critical friendship, together we figure out our ways by trial and error. Both are important relations and we have been able to bring experiences from each to the other.

One danger in the practice of critical friendship is that of wallowing in negative emotions, or more colloquially stated, throwing a pity-party. Being able to share and understand the pain and difficulty of each other's experience is one of the benefits of critical friendship. It is a critical friend's responsibility to encourage and inspire one another, and to recognize with when one is wallowing during difficult times. Fostering an environment where healthy venting can occur is good, but too much can cause conflict. Jealousy, anxiety, impatience, competition, or shame can occur when there is uneven progress between critical friends as they approach their goals. It is best if such strong emotions can be used in a motivating way, such as in cultivating a healthy rivalry between the participants.

Although we, the authors are devoted supporters of the critical friendship practice, there is a danger, which was recognized by Swaffield's (2007) study, that "formalizing and regulating a critical friendship can have a negative impact if a 'critical friend' is used as a concept in official documents" (as cited in Özek et al., 2012, p. 71). This is a concern that once formalized, it could lose its flexibility and autonomy, which are one of the strengths and uniquenesses of the practice. As critical friendship is a non-traditional developmental relationship that can exist outside of institution and works great as a supplemental relation to formal traditional mentorship, it may be best not to institutionalize it.

One potential hurdle for establishing critical friendship from which these authors have been thankfully spared, are "institutional barriers" (Achinstein & Meyer, 1997, p. 3). In a workplace, the word, "critical," is often associated with positive outcomes or attitudes related to professionalism, professional growth, and productivity. "Friends" and "friendship" at work, on the other hand, are sometimes considered less than professional, and often disassociated from professional growth. Institutional barriers can be overcome by the commitment of the critical friends to each other, and the practice can be done outside of work. The average meeting only takes between 15 and 30 minutes, meaning it can be performed during a lunch break or outside of regular office hours.

One way to evade institutional barriers and avoid the possible negative connotations of "friendship" at work is to keep the practice and documentation of the practice strictly private. In our case, as our critical friendship was born autonomously and exists outside of work, the documentation of our practice is kept private and separate from work documentation. The record is only for us, and thus the language can be informal, expressive, simple, honest, and playful. The documentation can be easily accessible to the participants by hosting the material in the web tool such as *workflowy.com*. If the participants wish to inform their work and supervisors about their developmental relationship, they could consider renaming the practice just as we report our weekly meetings as Academic Progress Review in official documents.

Just like any other relationships there are a few obstacles in critical friendship. The authors, however, believe that there are ways to overcome or work around these challenges. In fact, we have managed to engage in critical friendship for over 2 years and it is worth trying because against some difficulties the benefits and experience resulted from the practice are invaluable. Critical friendship can be useful to people who are not having their developmental needs met through traditional avenues, and it can be used to augment other developmental programs and relations.

Conclusion

A number of benefits can be gleaned from a critical friendship. The interpersonal and professional skills developed are transferable to other relationships, such as a hierarchical mentorship, supervisory positions, and non-critical friendships. It takes time and effort to develop trust, but this time is well spent as it can lead to successful personal and professional development. While it began as a tool to help educators review each other's teaching techniques and then grew within the field of education to peers helping each other with writing assignments, we have found critical friendship is a powerful and applicable framework. We focus our critical friendship primarily on advancing our scholarship and librarianship, but we have found that it has enriched our lives far more broadly. Critical friendship encourages one to question and explore their goals, provide help and suggestions to each other, inspire and appreciate one another, exchange ideas, and talk about experiences in a neutral way, all while striving and overcoming challenges together.

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Appendix A

Sample Script #1: Weekly Critical Friendship Meeting with a Scholarship Focus

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CF1 (a designated note taker)
CF2

[CF1 records the date (and place) and starts a new entry]
CF1: Last time we met on DATE, you completed… *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's list of "Dones" from the last meeting]*. You were working on… *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's "In Progress" from the the last meeting]* and were to do… *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's "To-Dos" from the last meeting]*. What have you completed since?
CF2: I've finished… *[CF1 adds CF2's accomplishments under "Dones"]*. I'm still working on… *[CF1 adds CF2's ongoing tasks under "In Progress"]*. I need to do… *[CF1 adds actions and tasks CF2 needs to take under "To-Dos"]*.
CF1: You also did… *[CF1 adds CF2's additional accomplishments if CF2 forgets to report]*. Anything else you want to add or discuss?
[The two discuss and brainstorm any issues or concerns that can be identified. CF1 acknowledges CF2's accomplishments and shares insight]
CF1: Moving on. Last time we met, I completed… *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's list of "Dones" from the last meeting]*. I was working on… *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's "In Progress" from the the last meeting]* and was to do… *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's "To-Dos" from the last meeting]*.
CF2: What have you completed since?
CF1: I've finished… *[CF1 adds CF1's accomplishments under "Dones"]*. I'm still working on… *[CF1 adds CF1's ongoing tasks under "In Progress"]*. I need to do… *[CF1 adds actions and tasks CF1 needs to take under "To-Dos"]*.
CF2: You also did… *[CF2 mentions CF1's additional accomplishments if CF1 forgets to report]*. Are there anything you want to add or discuss?
[The two discuss and brainstorm any issues or concerns that can be identified. CF2 acknowledges CF1's accomplishments and shares insight]
CF1: Now "Scholarship." Last time we met we've finished…and were to… [CF1 reads aloud "Joint" under "Scholarship"].
CF2: We've done…and need to… *[CF1 adds CF1 and CF2's joint accomplishments and tasks under "Joint" in "Scholarship"]*.
CF1: For your scholarship, you had....in your front burner *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's "front burner" under "Scholarship"]* and...in your back burner *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's "back burner" under "Scholarship"]*. Any changes?
CF2: I've done...but still need to… *[CF1 updates CF2's "front burner" and "back burner" in "Scholarship" accordingly]*.
CF1: Are there anything you want to add or discuss?
[The two discuss and brainstorm if any issues or concerns are identified. CF1 acknowledges CF2's accomplishments and shares insight]
CF1: As for me, I had had....in my front burner *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's "front burner" under "Scholarship"]* and...in my back burner *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's "back burner" under "Scholarship"]*.

CF2: How did it go?
CF1: I've done...but still need to… *[CF1 updates CF1's "front burner" and "back burner" in "Scholarship" accordingly]*.
CF2: Are there anything you want to add or discuss?
[The two discuss and brainstorm if any issues or concerns are identified. Participants acknowledges each other's accomplishments and shares insight]
[If one finds a call for papers or conferences that the other or both may be interested, discuss here]
[CF1 reviews the record "To-Dos" for CF1 and CF2. The end of the meeting.]

Appendix B

Sample Script #2: Weekly Critical friendship Meeting without the Scholarship Focus

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CF1 (a designated note taker)
CF2

[CF1 records the date (and place) and starts a new entry]
CF1: Last time we met on DATE, you completed… *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's list of "Dones" from the last meeting].* You were working on… *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's "In Progress" from the the last meeting]* and were to do… *[CF1 reads aloud CF2's "To-Dos" from the last meeting].* What have you completed since?
CF2: I've finished… *[CF1 adds CF2's accomplishments under "Dones"].* I'm still working on… *[CF1 adds CF2's ongoing tasks under "In Progress"].* I need to do… *[CF1 adds actions and tasks CF2 needs to take under "To-Dos"].*
CF1: You also did… *[CF1 adds CF2's additional accomplishments if CF2 forgets to report].* Anything else you want to add or discuss?
[The two discuss and brainstorm any issues or concerns that can be identified. CF1 acknowledges CF2's accomplishments and shares insight]
CF1: Moving on. Last time we met, I completed… *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's list of "Dones" from the last meeting].* I was working on… *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's "In Progress" from the the last meeting]* and was to do… *[CF1 reads aloud CF1's "To-Dos" from the last meeting].*
CF2: What have you completed since?
CF1: I've finished… *[CF1 adds CF1's accomplishments under "Dones"].* I'm still working on… *[CF1 adds CF1's ongoing tasks under "In Progress"].* I need to do… *[CF1 adds actions and tasks CF1 needs to take under "To-Dos"].*
CF2: You also did… *[CF2 mentions CF1's additional accomplishments if CF1 forgets to report].* Are there anything you want to add or discuss?
[The two discuss and brainstorm any issues or concerns that can be identified. CF2 acknowledges CF1's accomplishments and shares insight]
[If either CF1 or CF2 found an article or upcoming event that the other or both may be interested in, now is a good time to discuss such]
[CF1 reviews the record "To-Dos" for CF1 and CF2. The end of the meeting.]