

chosen, adored, celebrated

Healthy
BOUNDARIES
WORKBOOK
WEEK #5

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WEEK FIVE

Setting Personal Boundaries

Setting healthy boundaries will radically improve your life, but it's not all sunshine and rainbows at the beginning. Some people will not like the changes in you, and may push back, make fun, or be angry. When we change how we do things, others notice. And sometimes people celebrate, and sometimes they don't.

But, keep this in mind - if your new boundaries create push back or anger in your friends, it may be time to consider whether or not those relationships are healthy for you.

Ok here we go!

There are 3 Steps to Setting Boundaries.

STEP 1: SELF AWARENESS - this is essential, so don't skip this step. Notice situations or people in your life that drain you of energy, leave you feeling gross, or make you uncomfortable. This reflection will help you see the areas you need more space, or respect in your life.

Here's an exercise to help you notice yourself and identify areas for boundaries. Do at least 5 for each.

People may not _____
(eg. speak rudely to me; make fun of me; drop in without warning; etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

I have the right to ask for _____
(clarification if I don't understand; patience; help when I need it; etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

To protect my time and energy it is ok to _____
(eg. turn on my do not disturb earlier than others; say no; change my mind; etc.)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

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STEP 2: SET THE BOUNDARY - Simple and firm boundaries are a good start. This will feel uncomfortable at first, but as you practice, and find your new stride, it will get much easier.

Here are some suggestions:

1. Check in before and after. Have someone you trust available to chat if needed.
2. Practice saying the words beforehand, and let out any strong emotions that might interfere with assertive communication.
3. Practice simple, clear, and direct language. You will find your unique way of saying what you need, and putting boundaries in place. But here are a few ideas:
 - I am hoping to spend more time with my family, so I won't be taking work calls or messages in the evening anymore.
 - I know we had agreed to meet on Tuesday for coffee, but after looking through my calendar, I won't be able to make that.
 - I care about this company, but will no longer be available to help promote your annual fundraiser.
 - I'm sure you don't mean to hurt my feelings, but when you speak to me like that, I feel very disrespected. I need you to stop talking to me that way. If you can't, I will leave.
 - I can't answer that right now, I've decided to take a day before making any major decisions.
4. Be direct and respectful, even if there is pushback. There is no need to apologize, debate, or explain. Just own it, and be firm.
5. Back up your boundary with action. Do what you say you will do. This will help people learn to respect and understand you better.

STEP 3: STRENGTHEN YOUR INTERNAL BOUNDARIES

People with weak internal boundaries tend to take things very personally. They are easily offended and hurt because everything that is said to them lands hard.

Strong internal boundaries act as a filter. Nothing gets to land without first going through an assessment:

1. Is this comment true of me?
2. Is this comment coming from a source I trust, and respect?
3. How much of this is about them, and not me?
4. What do I need to do with it now? Do I need to stand up for myself?

To Help Enforce Your Boundaries, consider these tools in order:

1. Be sure you have clear agreements with people. Often communication breaks down and expectations are misunderstood.
2. Know yourself and what's important to you.
3. Focus on your goals, and stay committed to them.

4. Speak up when you need to.
5. Step away.
6. Let go if need be.

Boundaries will be easier to put in place and enforce if you are taking good care of yourself, getting good sleep, eating well, and engaging in healthy self talk.

And that's it! Congratulations!

As you practice, you will find that having boundaries makes life a lot easier. And over time, it will become second nature. It's like any new skill, at first it feels awkward, but soon you're a pro.

Wishing you all the very best as you continue to love yourself well through the use of assertive communication and healthy boundaries.

God Bless, and take care,

Love,
Nicole

RESOURCES

FOR SOME GREAT READING, CONSIDER PICKING UP THE FOLLOWING BOOKS:

Boundaries: When to say yes, when to say no - to take control of your life, by Henry Cloud, and John Townsend

Better Boundaries: Owning and Treasuring Your Life, by Jan Black, and Greg Enns

And special thanks to Self Help Alliance for the use of some of their resources!