

Healthy Boundaries

-Week 3-



If you continue to blame other people for “making” you feel guilty, they still have power over you, and you are saying that you will only feel good when they stop doing that. You are giving them control over your life. Stop blaming other people.

— Henry Cloud, *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No*

1 SET BOUNDARIES FOR YOURSELF

It's important to know that your boundaries are not what you require from others, but rather what you expect for yourself. Think about these questions:

- What are your values?
- How are your values reflected in your actions?
- What actions do you do occasionally that don't reflect your values?
- What are the most important priorities in your life?
- How would someone know by your actions that they are a priority in your life?
- What actions do you do that don't support your priorities?
- How can you begin to change those actions? What boundaries would you need to put in place?
- What actions, situations, language or events are you not willing to expose yourself to? What *are* you willing to expose yourself to?
- What will make you feel good *and* allow you to be happy and productive?
- What behaviors do you refuse to be around or to exhibit yourself?

Answering these questions will help you begin to create your own boundaries around your time, health, and emotional and mental needs. Here are some examples.

- *I value my time. Therefore, I will give some away freely, but I will not exceed _____. I will set aside time each week for self-care, which will allow me to be the best version of myself. I will also set some time aside to help others, and I will find days and times that work for me to do this. I will share that time as an offering; if it doesn't work (for example, someone is late to an event or crosses over the time limit I set), I will _____.*
- *I value my physical health. Therefore, I will never leave my nutritional needs up to someone else. I will always have plenty of food with me. I will eat regular meals on my own timeline and work other eating situations around my schedule to the best of my ability. I will stop waiting for others to pick a restaurant, letting others tell me when we will eat and letting others use guilt to get me to eat things that don't support my health goals.*

- *I value my emotional health. I will no longer worry about what others are feeling because I will never really know that. I will become wildly curious about my own emotional needs and start caring for them. I will allow others to deal with their own emotions as they see fit. I realize I can't tend to my emotional house if I'm busy meddling in others' emotional homes.*
- *I value my thoughts. I will be intentional about who I share my deep thoughts with. I will stop sharing my thoughts and feelings with people who try to convince me or sway me to their views. I want people in my life who have healthy boundaries around thoughts and beliefs. We are allowed to have different views and still have a relationship. I won't discuss _____ around _____ because those thoughts are very personal to me.*

1.1 CREATE YOUR OWN BOUNDARIES.

Consider the questions and examples we provided and start to create your own boundaries.

I value my _____, therefore I will...

I value my _____, therefore I will...

I value my _____, therefore I will...

1.2 SET BOUNDARIES IN EACH AREA OF YOUR LIFE.

Think about all of the areas of your life where you can begin to set personal boundaries.



Food

How can I create loving limits with food? What would I change on my plate before I gave it to a loved one or a child? Why would I make those changes?



Delayed Gratification with Food

What are my guidelines for when and what I will eat? Would I let a child I cared for eat whatever he or she wanted at any point in the day? Do I set those boundaries for myself? Why or why not?



Communication

What are acceptable topics for discussion? What topics are personal, that I want to protect? How do I show others the proper way to communicate with me?



Sleep

What is my nighttime sleep protocol? What times are reserved for sleeping? How do I honor my sleep boundaries? How do I communicate them to others? When invited to events that will interfere with my sleep boundaries, how do I set and honor those boundaries?



Work

How much time am I willing to devote to work in and outside of my job? In what way will I tolerate being spoken to at work? What topics will I not discuss at work? How will I allow others to treat me? What is my personal code of conduct for work? What do I not want to be exposed to (language, actions, topics of discussion, etc.)?



Time

How do I show others that I value my time? What time is sacred or off-limits? How do I honor this? How will others know that this is special time and I don't want to be interrupted? If someone pushes over my boundaries, what is the consequence? What time do I spend volunteering, helping and caring for others? How do I set boundaries on social media and phone calls? What are my boundaries on using business devices when I'm not scheduled to work? What are my boundaries around time for fun and planning fun into my day/week? What are my boundaries with family?
