

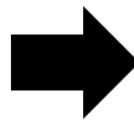
Healthy Boundaries

-Week 4-



1 IMPROVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH BOUNDARIES

Your mind has been blown wide open this week. All the effort that you have put into hiding how you really feel, what you really need, and your personal boundaries is *not* helping your relationships. You're not being nice to the other person. You're not sparing their feelings. Over time, your relationships are being negatively affected by lack of communication. The other person can't help you keep the relationship healthy or happy if they don't know the truth. This week, we'll work on ways for you to communicate what you need, feel and want from a place of love, so you can preserve or improve your relationships.



BOUNDARIES ARE NOT SHARED **OR DEFINED**

Family, friends and loved ones don't know your needs or boundaries

Unhealthy and unbalanced relationships

Frustration and resentment build on one or both sides

Fights, arguments or feelings of being a victim or trapped

BOUNDARIES ARE CLEARLY DEFINED

Family, friends and loved ones understand the boundaries and know what's OK for you

Happy, balanced relationships

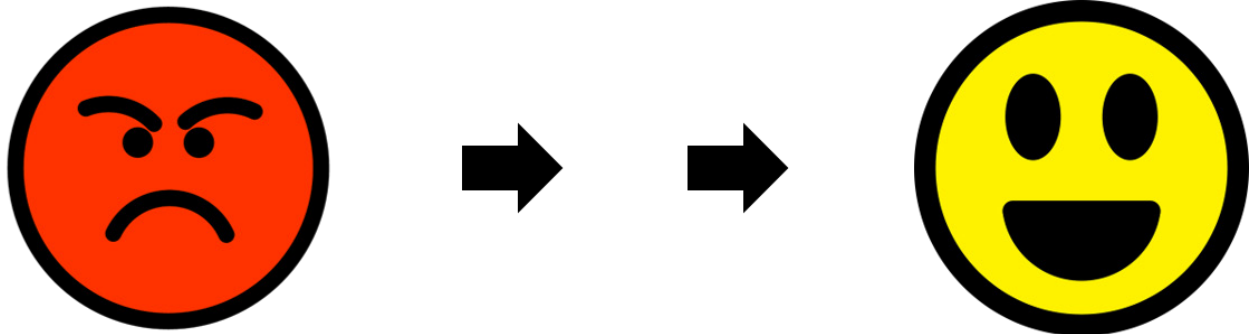
Everyone takes ownership of their feelings

You feel in control of you, free to care for your needs and allow others to work on themselves and their feelings

Clear communication, better understanding

1.1 ASSESS AND GROW YOUR RELATIONSHIPS.

It's a gradual process to move from no boundaries to a healthy relationship that preserves the integrity of your boundaries, and it requires communication.



What do I need? What boundaries am I afraid to share?

I'm feeling tired, overworked and stressed. I need my husband to do more around the house and help with the kids so I'm not burned out by the end of the week.

How will it make the other person feel if I establish boundaries? What am I afraid of?

I'm afraid my husband will think I'm just complaining and not hear me. I'm afraid he will say no and nothing will change. I'm afraid he'll be angry with me for setting boundaries.

What will happen in our relationship long term if I don't communicate my boundaries?

If I don't discuss this with him, I see myself getting more resentful than I already am now. I can see myself becoming passive aggressive or getting short with him or argumentative. I can see our relationship being negatively impacted in the long term.

How will establishing boundaries keep the relationship healthy and strong?

If I share how I'm feeling and lay out a clear list of what I would like his help with, I feel he will at least be aware of what I need and my boundaries around what I can do. I will work on reinforcing what I need, and if we don't make improvements, we will need to get marriage counseling to help with this issue.

Think about your relationships. How can you begin to grow them by preserving the integrity of your boundaries?

What do I need? What boundaries am I afraid to share?	How am I afraid it will make the other person feel?	What will happen if I don't communicate my boundaries?	What will happen if I do communicate my boundaries?

1.2 BRAINSTORM WAYS TO SET BOUNDARIES.

First, think about your relationships and identify a specific person and situation where you see a need for boundaries.

Example #1

I need to set boundaries with my mother because she comes over on the weekend when we have events planned, and I don't know how to gracefully ask her to leave as we are headed out the door. I know I need to establish a boundary with her around coming over unannounced.

Example #2

I need to set boundaries with a co-worker who takes things off my desk without asking. She usually returns them, but sometimes when I go to use something, I feel frustrated because I can't find it. I have to track her down and ask for it back. I know I need to establish a boundary with her about taking things off my desk without asking.

I need to set boundaries with _____ because...

I need to set boundaries with _____ because...

Now think about the integrity of the relationship. How will it be compromised over time if you don't clearly set these boundaries?

Example #1

If I don't set boundaries with my mom around coming over unannounced, I'm afraid it will cause me to be annoyed with her and take out my frustration in a passive aggressive way. I'm afraid that she will cause us to be late for the events we have planned, and I will be angry with her and feel aggravated in the moment. I don't want to feel anything but love for my mom. I will set these boundaries so we can keep a healthy relationship.

Example #2

If I don't set boundaries with my co-worker around taking things off my desk, I'm afraid it will cause me to begin to treat her differently. I may get resentful toward her. I would hate to make a scene at work or lose a friend over this, so I will set boundaries to preserve our working relationship.

If I don't set boundaries with _____, I'm afraid...

If I don't set boundaries with _____, I'm afraid...

Think about the person you're establishing boundaries with. What good qualities do you see in him or her? How do you feel about him or her?

Example #1

My mom is a wonderful and giving person. She shows up and is always willing to help with the kids. She sits and does homework with them. She brings healthy snacks for them after school. She knows how hard I work and just desperately wants to help me out when she can. She is amazing!

Example #2

My co-worker is an amazing lady. She pitches in at the office and helps us with getting projects done when we ask her. She sets up the coffee in the break room every morning, and when she orders snacks for the office, she always looks out for those of us with food allergies. She is very thoughtful and kind. I enjoy her company and know her heart is in the right place.

_____ is...

_____ is...

Now think about how you can establish boundaries that are about *you*, not the person you'll be communicating with. Write down what you want to say. The dialogue should be complimentary, not accusatory. It should be focused on you, not them. These are your boundaries, not theirs.

Example #1

Mom, I love you so much. You are so wonderful and supportive of us. I love how you help the kids with their homework and provide healthy snacks for them. You are a blessing to us. I really value your time, and I would hate to have you drive here and not be able to spend time with us. I don't want either of us to feel resentment around our get-togethers. So, to make sure we all enjoy and get the most out of our time together, I'm asking that you call before you come over. This way I can let you know if we will be able to spend time with you at that time. If not, we can reschedule for another time when we will be available to have fun with you.

Example #2

Sally, I really want you to know how much I appreciate all you do. I know you take good care of us here in the office. You set up the coffee every morning, and you're so willing to pitch in on work that's due, even if it's not your responsibility. I really value you. I have an issue I'm hoping you can help me with. There have been a few times when I needed something off my desk and could not find it, and I had to spend time tracking it down. I'm requesting that anyone who wants to borrow something off my desk ask first, so I will know where it is and when it will be returned. It will help me be more productive at work and less stressed. What would be the best system for this? Would you like to text me if you want to borrow something, or would you like to fill out a sheet on my desk, listing what you borrowed and when you will return it, so I know where it is if I need it?

Conversation with _____:

Conversation with _____:

Now the most important part: practice, practice, practice. Stand in front of a mirror and work on your delivery.