

Personal Boundaries



WHAT ARE THEY?

Personal boundaries are rules and limits we set to outline safe and acceptable ways for others to behave towards us. A person with *healthy boundaries* is comfortable saying 'no' when needed but is also able to let others in to create close and intimate relationships.

Conversely, a person with *rigid boundaries* tend to keep others at a distance and those with *porous boundaries* tend to become overly involved.

The quality of your boundaries matters

Here are some common features of different boundaries

Rigid	Porous	Healthy
<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Avoids intimacy & closeness in relationships- Unlikely to ask for help- Very protective of personal space & information- May seem detached- Keeps distance from others to avoid rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Often overshares personal information- Has difficulty saying no- Takes responsibility for solving others problems- Often relies on others for decision making- Complies with requests for fear of rejection	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Values own thoughts/emotions & is in tune with personal wants and needs- Does not compromise own values/beliefs for others- Comfortable letting others close & in setting boundaries- Accepting of others when they set their own boundaries

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WHERE DO I NEED THEM?

There are six domains of personal boundaries. The quality of the boundary will differ depending on the relationship and context (e.g. between work and private life).



Physical Boundaries refer to our physical space and being. Healthy physical boundaries includes an awareness of what is appropriate, when and with who.



Intellectual Boundaries refer to our thoughts and ideas. Healthy intellectual boundaries include respecting others opinions and an awareness about what is an appropriate discussion topic at any given time.



Sexual Boundaries refer to all aspects of ones sexuality. Healthy sexual boundaries involve a mutual respect of others sexual limitations and desires.



Emotional Boundaries refer to our emotions. Healthy emotional boundaries include awareness of when to share and when not to share personal information.



Time Boundaries refer to how one chooses to use their time. Healthy time boundaries involve setting aside appropriate time for each facet of life (e.g. work, hobbies, family). As well as having respect for others use of time.



Material Boundaries refer to possessions including money. Healthy material boundaries involve setting limits on what you'll share and with whom.

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HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES

1. Clarify your boundaries

What will you accept in life and what won't you. Consider this in regards to different relationships in your life, for example, your family members, your friends, your work colleagues.

2. What are the consequences of a boundary crossing

This may differ from relationship to relationship but consider how you will enforce your boundaries as a boundary crossing is bound to happen.

3. Clearly communicate your boundaries

It is important for those closest to us to know what our boundaries are. Try to be as clear and concise as possible and remember that boundaries are an important and healthy part of every relationship.

4. Stick to the plan

If someone crosses a boundary after you have clearly communicated what you will and won't accept follow through with enforcing the consequences of that boundary crossing.