

A. Psychoeducation Topic: Boundaries

What is a Boundary

- A boundary is an imaginary line that separates me from you. It separates your physical space, your feelings, needs, and responsibilities from others.
- Your boundaries also tell other people how they can treat you – what’s acceptable and what isn’t.
- Without boundaries, people may take advantage of you because you haven’t set limits about how you expect to be treated.
- Boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify for themselves what are reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around them and how they will respond when someone steps outside those limits. (outofthefog.net)
- A person with healthy boundaries can say “no” to others when they want to, but they are also comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationship.
- Some cultures have very different expectations when it comes to boundaries.
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Barriers to Boundary Setting

It seems obvious that no one would want his/her boundaries violated. So why do we allow it?

Why do we NOT enforce or uphold our boundaries?

- FEAR of rejection and, ultimately, abandonment.
- FEAR of confrontation.
- GUILT.
- We were not taught healthy boundaries.
- Safety Concerns

Different type of Personal Boundaries

Physical boundaries refer to personal space and physical touch. Healthy physical boundaries include an awareness of what's appropriate, and what's not, in various settings and types of relationships (hug, shake hands, or kiss?). Physical boundaries may be violated if someone touches you when you don't want them to, or when they invade your personal space (for example, rummaging through your bedroom).

Intellectual boundaries refer to thoughts and ideas. Healthy intellectual boundaries include respect for others' ideas, and an awareness of appropriate discussion (should we talk about the weather, or politics?). Intellectual boundaries are violated when someone dismisses or belittles another person's thoughts or ideas.

Emotional boundaries refer to a person's feelings. Healthy emotional boundaries include limitations on when to share, and when not to share, personal information. For example, gradually sharing personal information during the development of a relationship, as opposed to revealing everything to everyone. Emotional boundaries are violated when someone criticizes, belittles, or invalidates another person's feelings.

Sexual boundaries refer to the emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of sexuality. Healthy sexual boundaries involve mutual understanding and respect of limitations and desires between sexual partners. Sexual boundaries can be violated with unwanted sexual touch, pressure to engage in sexual acts, leering, or sexual comments.

Material boundaries refer to money and possessions. Healthy material boundaries involve setting limits on what you will share, and with whom. For example, it may be appropriate to lend a car to a family member, but probably not to someone you met this morning. Material boundaries are violated when someone steals or damages another person's possessions, or when they pressure them to give or lend them their possessions.

Time boundaries refer to how a person uses their time. To have healthy time boundaries, a person must set aside enough time for each facet of their life such as work, relationships, and hobbies. Time boundaries are violated when another person demands too much of another's time.

How to Set Healthy Boundaries:

- When you identify the need to set a boundary, do it clearly, calmly, firmly, respectfully, and in as few words as possible. Do not justify, get angry, or apologize for the boundary you are setting.
- You are not responsible for the other person's reaction to the boundary you are setting. You are only responsible for communicating your boundary in a respectful manner. Remember, your behaviour must match the boundaries you are setting. You cannot

successfully establish a clear boundary if you send mixed messages by setting a boundary and then apologizing for it.

- At first, you will probably feel selfish, guilty, or embarrassed when you set a boundary. Remind yourself you have a right to self-care and boundary setting can be an important form of self-care. Setting boundaries takes practice and determination. Don't let anxiety, fear or guilt prevent you from taking care of yourself.
- When you feel anger or resentment or find yourself complaining, you probably need to set a boundary. Listen to yourself, determine what you need to do or say, then communicate clearly.
- Learning to set healthy boundaries takes time. It is a process. Set them in your own time frame, not when someone else tells you. Develop a support system of people who respect your right to set boundaries.

Benefits of Setting Boundaries:

- Build greater self-esteem.
- Get clear on who you are, what you want, and your values and belief systems.
- Bring focus to yourself and your well-being.
- Enhance your mental health and emotional well-being.
- Avoid burnout.
- Develop independence.
- Gain a greater sense of identity.

Boundaries and Resilience:

- Setting good boundaries means that we don't waste our finite resources on what's not good for us; they allow us to be in charge, choosing what we allow inside our lives, and therefore helping us to become more resilient.

B. Infographic:

7 Tips for Setting Healthy Boundaries

1 Start your day with limit-setting intentions.
Know from the start what you are capable of taking on.

2 Acknowledge what you gain by setting boundaries.
This allows you to re-center and remain committed, even when things get tough.

3 Define your priorities.
Get clear on what you need, what you want, and what would be nice to have.

4 Communicate directly, clearly, and often.
Telling people about your boundaries is your responsibility.

5 Pay attention to your needs.
Feelings of discomfort, overwhelm, or resentment are often indicators that we've overreached a boundary.

6 Start with small adjustments.
Committing to and following through with small boundary changes builds your confidence to make harder decisions in the future.

7 Practice self-compassion.
If you don't follow through with the boundaries you set, instead of judging yourself respond with kindness.

Gain more resilience resources at adurolife.com.

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Reference

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