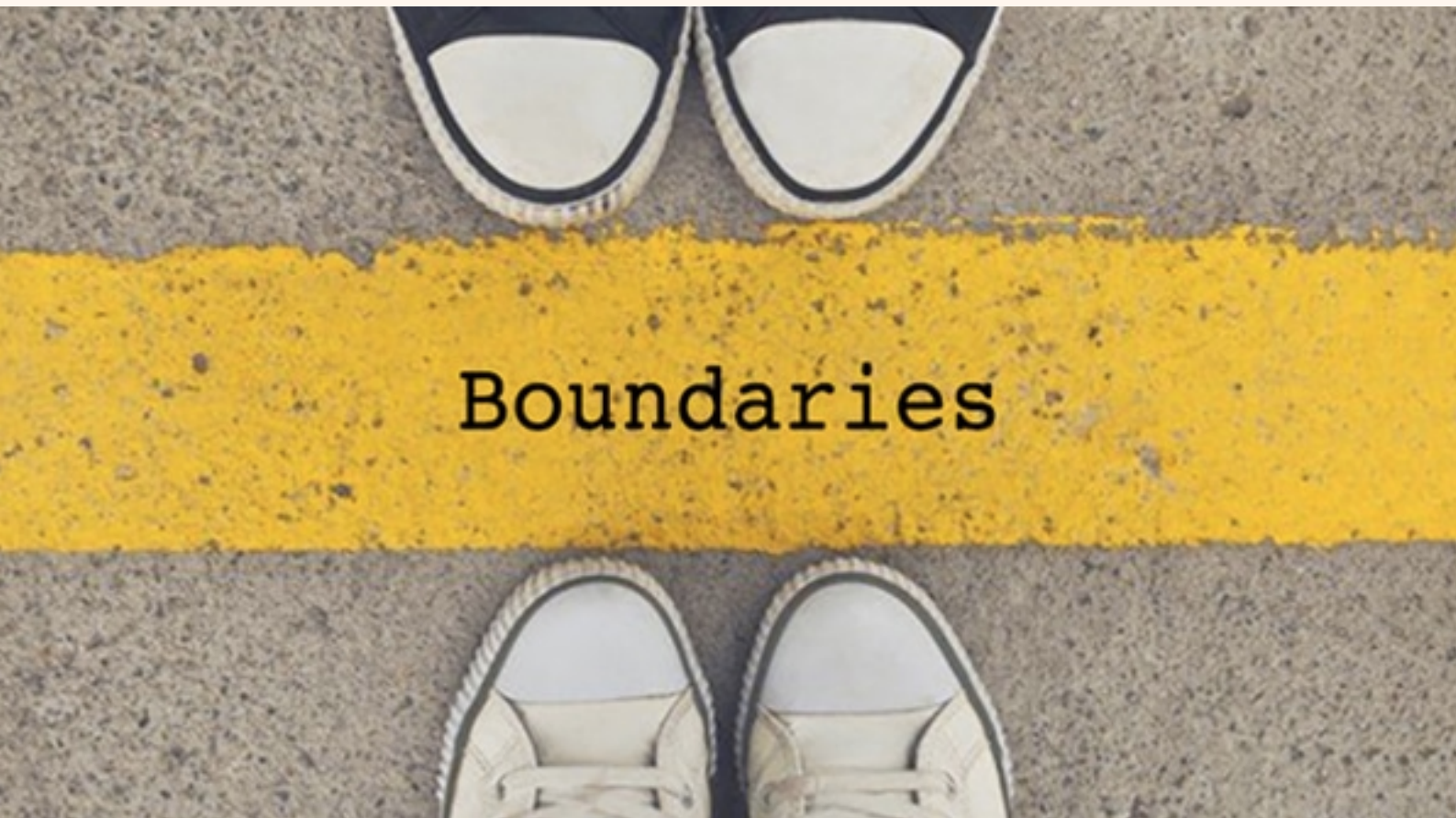


BRAINY GUPSHUP

COUNSELLING DEPARTMENT



Boundaries

As Brene Brown says: “Clear is kind, unclear is unkind.”

Boundaries are important for everyone. They help us protect ourselves and assist us to define what belongs to oneself and what belongs to someone else. Boundaries help standing up for our internal values—they define what is “ok” and what is “not ok.”

Setting boundaries is a personal choice. They form an important part of self-care, just like getting proper rest or nutrition. Boundaries protect who we are. And, just like we evolve and change over time so do our boundaries.

They help us set deeper connection with ourself and others. Often seen as an “uncool” word, our newsletter today focuses on boundaries and empowers the young leaders to center themselves even better. It releases wasted time and helps in identifying “time stealers” freeing more time to pursue one's interests and hobbies. In a way- boundaries set you free.

Personal boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave towards them. Boundaries also include the ways in which a person will respond when someone crosses those limits. Boundaries are physical, emotional and mental limits we establish to protect ourselves. They allow us to separate who we are, and what we think and feel, from the thoughts and feelings of others. They are built out of a mix of conclusions, beliefs, opinions, attitudes, and past experiences. So, understanding of rigid, porous and healthy way of setting boundaries is mentioned below:

RIGID	POROUS	HEALTHY
Boundaries	Boundaries	Boundaries
• Avoids intimacy and close relationships • Unlikely to ask for help • Very protective of personal information • May seem detached • Keeps others at a distance to avoid possibility of rejection	• Overshares personal information • Difficulty saying no to the requests of others • Overinvolved in other's issues • Dependent on the opinion of others • Accepts disrespect or abuse • Fears rejection if they do not comply with others	• Values own opinions • Doesn't compromise values for others • Shares personal information in a appropriate way (does not over or under share) • Knows personal wants and needs and can communicate them • Accepting when others say no to them

Why Personal Boundaries are Important and How to Set Them

Personal boundaries are simply the lines we draw for ourselves in terms of our level of comfort around others.

Personal boundaries are vital but not always easy to establish. Still, with a few helpful tips, setting and communicating boundaries becomes easier. From childhood, we're often taught to bend and mold ourselves to make others comfortable. Sometimes this wiring is implied (as in wishing good morning, for instance), and sometimes it is direct ("I don't care if you don't want to hug your grandfather, it's rude not to!"), but the one truth is that it's always there. No wonder some of us find it difficult to set appropriate boundaries as we get older. We don't want to offend or hurt others.

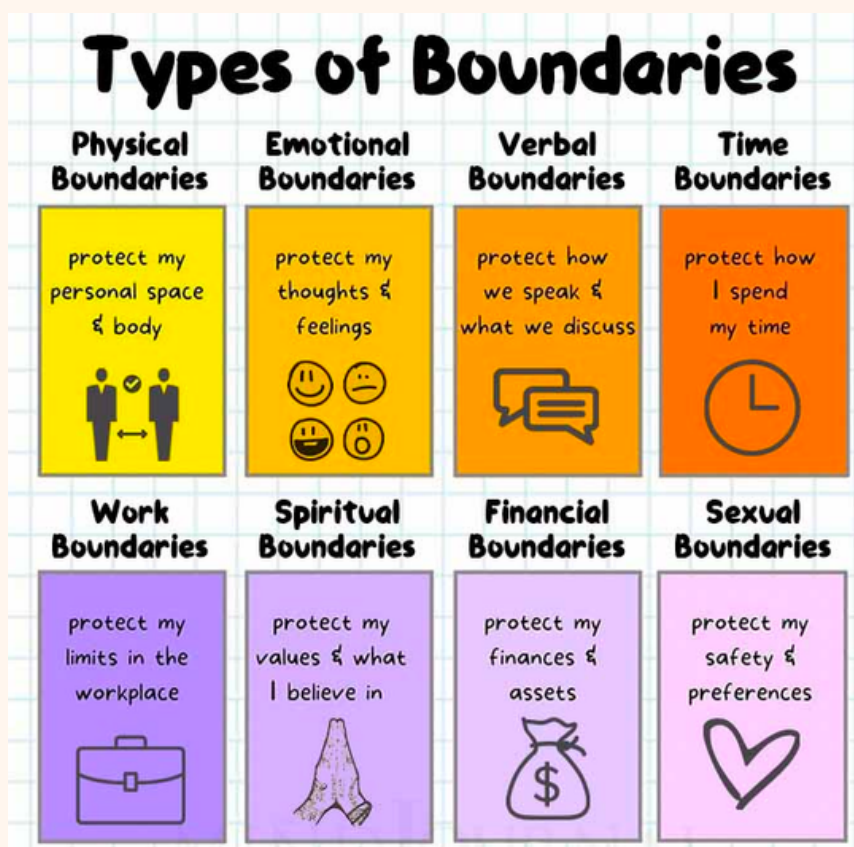
We've been taught from a young age to put the feelings of others ahead of our own needs, to the point that many of us don't even know the answer to the question, "What are boundaries?" let alone how to set them. We would want to have happy relationship with ourselves and with others.



Research has found that the violation of personal space can cause discomfort, and personal experience tells most of us that discomfort caused by boundary violations can lead to anxiety and fallout in our relationships — both personal and professional.

These boundaries may have to do with:

- physical contact (not feeling comfortable hugging a person you've just met)
- verbal interactions (not wanting a friend or family member to speak down to you)
- our own personal space (choosing to not have others in your home when you aren't there)



The benefit of setting boundaries are:

- It is beneficial for emotional and mental well-being
- There is a feeling of peace and safety
- There is less anger and resentment
- There is more compassion for self and others
- There is improved communication and healthy relationships.

- There is less anxiety and stress
- There is increased self esteem as there is more space for self-fulfillment.
- It helps inculcate a feeling of respect and understanding of family and friends
- There is increase in confidence, self-autonomy, identity and assertiveness

Specific Ways of Setting Boundaries

HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES		
I Value:	So I Need:	& Will Honor By:
CREATIVE FLOW	→ MINIMAL CALLS & MEETINGS	→ SCHEDULING ONLY WHEN CRITICAL
QUALITY TIME	→ FOCUSED 1-ON-1 CONNECTION	→ WEEKLY DATE NIGHT W/O TECH
FOCUS & DEPTH	→ A FEW "HELL YES" PROJECTS	→ SAYING "NO" TO EVERYTHING ELSE
MY WELLBEING	→ REST, PLAY & "OFF" HOURS	→ NO WORK ON WEEKENDS

Openly Communicate Your Boundaries The more precise and direct one is in communicating their boundaries, the easier it will be to uphold them. The expectation become clearer. Boundaries are like the “rules” of a relationship. When they’re displayed for all parties involved, it is much easier to respect them. They become the working agreement (like we follow in the classroom when there is a collaborative task at hand).

Tune in: Our bodies always give us signals when we are near a personal limit. Notice if you feel your jaw tighten or your fists clench. Maybe you start to squirm, or you break into a sweat. Perhaps you feel it in your throat or stomach? Whatever the cue, honor what your body tells you and take some time to explore your discomfort and understand the arising boundary.

Understand your priorities : Next time you say yes to someone, make sure you’re not saying no to yourself. Take some time to write a list of priorities and compare it to where you spend your time and energy to assess if you need to make any adjustments.

Reiterate and Uphold Your Boundaries : Like the visible perimeter fence around a yard that protects a child from running into the street, boundaries protect you from overextending your mental and emotional well-being. To explain this further - the child is aware of the fence and is also aware of the parents request for not stepping out. This guidance when given consistently conditions the child in understanding, " I am not supposed to go out". The expectation of the norm is clearly set and consistently followed giving clarity to the child of what is not OK.

The same is true of human boundaries. Not everyone will understand or respect your boundaries the first time. It's essential to stand firm in your decision while kindly reminding them of your needs when necessary. The important thing is to communicate ones need positively and in explaining that the intent is kind and loving. It is important to note that things may not change overnight, but it is important consistent, positive and attentive. If someone doesn't initially respect your boundary, remind them, but stay firm with your original decision. After all, the boundary you would want to create is to make the relationship with yourself and others more loving and productive.

Respect other's boundaries: Just as we want others to recognize and respect our boundaries, it is equally important that we respect other's requests and needs.

Be Kind: Using loving speech with oneself and with others is important. An important aspect of emotional intelligence is to be able to create a healthy balance with self and with others. Understanding your own needs and the need of others through attentive listening and mindful engagement would help know the boundaries that would be healthy and productive for you in your relationships. Self -care begins with knowing the areas that one can work on - one at a time and being kind to oneself in the process.

Helping our children set their own boundaries is important

Learning to establish boundaries is a critical part of human development. As parents we would need to role model to them how we maintain the balance and communicate our own needs in an acceptable way. Modelling good boundary setting at home is important to teach positive relationship building and valuing each member in the family. "Saying no" can be taught to be a positive word and a life skill that helps incorporate self-discipline in the long run.

Examples of how you can clearly communicate your boundaries:

- ♥ I get uncomfortable when people are too close to me.
I need a little more personal space. (Physical boundary)
- ♥ I'm not willing to discuss this topic right now.
(Conversational boundary)
- ♥ I respect your opinion, but please don't force it on me.
Accept that we see things differently. (Mental boundary)
- ♥ I feel embarrassed when you joke about me to your friends. I don't find such jokes funny and I'd like you to stop. (Emotional boundary)
- ♥ I can only stay for an hour. (Time boundary)
- ♥ Please ask me first before you borrow my car.
(Material boundary)

The first step of teaching setting healthy boundaries to your child would be to teach them to be self aware. As parents it is important to have dialogue with your child and helping them know themselves, their interests, their needs.

Along side self awareness, the second step would be to help our children articulate their needs simply and clearly.

Stating the need calmly and positively, while respecting the other person's need would be the third step and the final step that needs to be consciously inculcated.

Collaboration and understanding the other's need while upholding your own need would take a lot of practice and patience. Tuning in and respecting other's boundaries would also need to be deliberately taught. Trying this at home between parents, siblings and child, and then with close friends in the society/ family.

"Daring to set boundaries is about having the courage to love ourselves even when we risk disappointing others."