



Healthy Boundaries

CONNECTION WITHOUT LOSING YOURSELF

I can care about you and still care for me.

What Are Boundaries?

Boundaries are the limits that help define where you end and another person begins. They help you know what you are comfortable with, what you need, what you are responsible for, and how you want to be treated.

Boundaries are not walls.

They are **healthy limits** that allow for closeness, respect, and authentic connection.



Why Are Boundaries Important?

- Protect your well-being
- Prevent resentment
- Create clearer expectations
- Build trust and respect
- Allow for healthy independence
- Make authentic intimacy possible



Boundaries Are Not Selfish

- Saying no does not mean you don't care.
- Having needs is human.
- Boundaries help you show up as your best self.
- You can love someone and still have boundaries.



Healthy Boundaries Strengthen Relationships

- Create safety and trust
- Support honest communication
- Reduce misunderstandings
- Help both people feel valued
- Allow for connection without enmeshment
- Make it possible to be close without losing yourself



You Are Allowed To...

- Have your own feelings
- Have different opinions
- Set limits
- Say no
- Take care of your needs
- Make mistakes
- Change your mind
- Prioritize your well-being

The Boundary Continuum

Boundaries exist on a continuum. The goal is connection with enough separation for both people to remain themselves.

ENMESHED (DIFFUSE BOUNDARIES)

Too close / little separation

Enmeshed Boundaries

When you take on too much of others' feelings, needs, or responsibilities.

- Difficulty saying no
- Feel responsible for others' happiness
- Overinvolved in others' problems
- Lose sight of your own needs
- Fear of disappointing others
- May lead to resentment and exhaustion

*"If you're upset, I have to fix it."
"We should tell each other everything."*

IMPACT: Can lead to people-pleasing, confusion about your identity, and difficulty making independent decisions.

HEALTHY (CLEAR BOUNDARIES)

Connected and separate

Healthy Boundaries

When you honor both your needs and the other person's needs.

- Know what you are responsible for
- Can say no without guilt
- Respect others' feelings without trying to control them
- Communicate openly and respectfully
- Maintain individuality and connection
- Feel more grounded and authentic

*"I can love you and still disagree with you."
"You are allowed to be disappointed with my decision."*

IMPACT: Creates safety, trust, and mutual respect. Supports healthy, lasting relationships.

RIGID (DISENGAGED BOUNDARIES)

Too much distance

Rigid Boundaries

When you keep others at a distance to avoid getting hurt.

- Avoid vulnerability
- Keep emotions hidden
- Struggle to ask for help
- Uncomfortable with closeness
- May shut people out during conflict
- Can lead to loneliness

*"I don't need anyone."
"My problems are my business."*

IMPACT: Can create emotional distance, limited intimacy, and difficulty trusting others.

A Healthy Boundary Sounds Like...

- "I'm not comfortable with that."
- "I can listen, but I cannot continue this conversation while being yelled at."
- "I need some time to think about it."
- "I care about you, and I also need to take care of myself."



Remember:

- Setting a boundary may feel uncomfortable — and that's okay.
- Someone else's disappointment does not mean the boundary is wrong.
- You are responsible for your own behavior, not someone else's reaction.
- Healthy boundaries create the safety necessary for genuine closeness.

*Stronger Boundaries
Brighter Relationships* ♥