

Boundaries

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Boundaries are definitions of personal space

- Temporal – time needs to be respected
- Emotional – emotions need to be respected
- Mental – thoughts need to be respected
- Physical – human body needs to be respected
- Spiritual – God’s claim on life needs to be respected

Purpose of boundaries

- Identity – allows individual to be unique as his/her own person
- Protection – from unhealthy imposition upon personal space
- Control – allows individual control and prevents control by others

Perceptions of self

- I am a human being made in the image of God
- I am a child of a loving God
- I have choices to make about my life
- I have much to offer to the persons God has placed in my life
- I am a servant of God to serve others in healthy ways

Boundaries help us not to:

- Control others
- Be responsible for other’s feelings
- Rescue people (rescuers need “lost” people to rescue)

Problems

- Children can be made to feel responsible for others feelings
- Those children can become adults who feel a need to “fix” everything and everybody.
- People play “victim” and “rescuer”
- People select relationships that reinforce wrong thinking
- People can become approval addicts

Response

- Require others to be responsible to keep schedules and promises
- Require others to respect your boundaries (kindly and gently)
- Be strong – make and keep boundaries
- Do not allow others to make you feel guilty if you do not allow them to invade your boundaries (does not apply to parents of under-age children)
- Say “no” with regrets and a genuine smile
- Healing will initially make you feel “mean” and disrespectful
- Healing will eventually make you a more respected person

Boundaries in preparation for and during marriage

Properly defined boundaries around your person guard your life for your spouse

Properly defined boundaries around your marriage guard the marriage

Jesus called people to discipleship and integrity but did not make decisions for them

The woman at the well - John 4

Matthew 23

Feed my sheep - John 21

Mark 6:31

Follow me

Mark 10:17-22

Types of Boundaries		
Independent	Inter-dependent	Dependent
Ignore	Love	Cling
Insecure	Secure in God	Insecure
Control	Relationship/trust	Control

Illustrations

Temporal

Frequently interrupt your supper to ask a favor

Disregard your break time or day off

Emotional

“You do not want to wear that shirt!”

Wrong - “You do not want a car like that”

Right – “That car is not appropriate for a Christian to own and drive”

Mental

Express thoughts of you mind

Encourage expression of thoughts

Provide a nonthreatening atmosphere

No “put-downs” allowed

Thoughts can be “trial balloons”

Physical

Touch can be very healing or can be very invasive

Inappropriate and unwanted physical touch is wrong

“Wrong” touch is very damaging

Spiritual

Allow sin to displace God in life

Obsess about sports or business and neglect God and family

Assert my will instead of allow God’s will

Enforce Bible teachings without love for individual

Make rules that do not have a Biblical basis

Questions and Notes

Are you “rescuing” this person OR are you called by God to minister to them?
Are you addicted to “fixing” everyone or are you called by God to serve them?
Can you require others to accept the responsibility for their lives?
Do you need to be needed? Or are people “dumping” and “discarding” you?
Real love is reflective (listens) but also is directive (requires responsibility).
Boundaries are not walls. Walls are created to keep people away.
Boundaries are to provide honor and respect for self and others.

Boundaries give structure and identity to life by defining borders.
Parents have the right to know personal information about underage children
Teachers sometimes need to know information about students
 to protect others
 to guard the school
 other authority situations need to be handled with care
The human spirit is very fragile and must be handled carefully

Consider the manner in which Jesus dealt with people

Accepted sinner but did not tolerate sin
Caring but not controlling
Forgiving but not permissive
Accepting but not manipulating
Common but not condescending
Truthful but not invasive
Honest but not flattering
Wise but not clever
Holy but not isolating
Righteous but not self-righteous
Firm but not harsh
Loving but not mushy
Took risks but was not risqué
Insightful but not depreciating
Sensitive but not sentimental
Persistent but not pushy
Confident but not arrogant
Humble but not hesitant
Compassionate but not compromising