

Crafting Effective Boundaries

Robin Barrera



What Are Boundaries

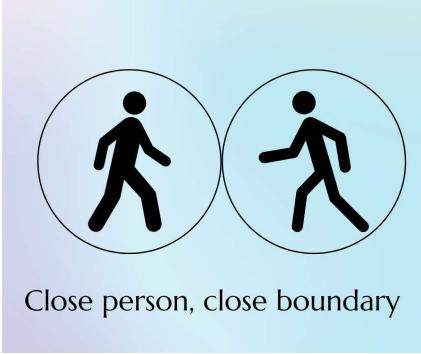
What Boundaries Are

- Limits a person creates to identify for themselves what are safe and permissible ways for other people to behave around them.
- Responses when someone steps outside of those limits.
- “I” statements that direct to others that your boundaries are built for your life and your needs alone.
- For every relationship in your life, even with yourself.
- Flexible, and are meant to change over time as relationships develop.

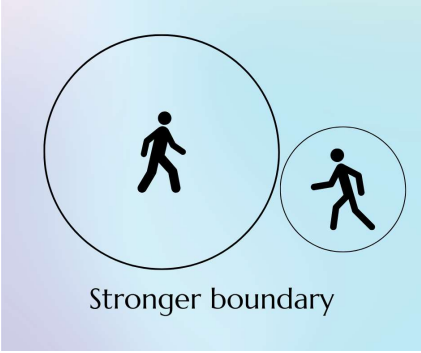
What Boundaries Are Not

- Rules – Rules put limits around another person's behavior, and boundaries focus on your behavior. Rules focus on what you want another person to “be” or how you want them to behave.
- Ultimatums – Ultimatums focus on pressure, while boundaries invite opportunity for growth. The key difference is the intent behind them. An ultimatum is a mechanism to manipulate another person through use of threats.
- Walls – Walls are rigid, static, and are about defending oneself. Walls often arise during times of anger / conflict. Walls create a victim / martyr persona for the person building them, thus forcing separation between the two parties.

Boundaries Are Meant To Be Flexible



Close person, close boundary



Stronger boundary

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Signs You Need Boundaries

Saying yes to please others at your own expense

Often feel disrespected, but not standing up for yourself

Always worried about what others think about you.

Needs are not met because of fear of conflict

Fear of being rejected or abandoned makes you settle

Lack of boundaries can lead to lower self image and self worth, thus creating a spiral effect.

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Two Basic Groups Of Boundaries

Internal

- Regulate the relationship you have with yourself.
- Internal self-discipline.
- Empower you to follow through on the commitments you make to yourself.

External

- For other people.
- Specific constructs within the relationship between you and another person.
- Teaches another what is and is not okay in your relationship.
- Where you stop and another person starts.

Types Of Boundaries

Space	Money	Power	Words	Feelings
You are entitled to feel safe and comfortable in your space. You are entitled to define what that space is.	You are entitled to spend your money as you wish based on your needs, wants, values, and morals.	You are allowed to define the control or influence another person has over you. You are allowed what you will and won't compromise on.	You are allowed to say the words you wish to say. You are allowed to define the words you are willing to hear. Words, tone, volume.	You are allowed to have any feeling you have for any situation you encounter. You are allowed to decide when and how you express that feeling.

Relationships

Yourself – This is the one everyone forgets about. Having effective boundaries with yourself is a loving and compassionate way to prevent self-sabotage.

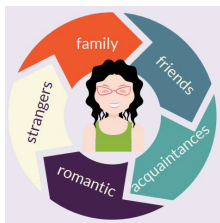
Family – You are under no obligation and owe nothing to your family beyond what you are comfortable with.

Romantic – Even though your partner / spouse is usually the closest person to you, boundaries that uphold your value system are healthy.

Outside Relationships – You are under no obligation to share any of your life with another person, no matter what. You can define the relationship however feels right to you.

Loved One Has SUD – Your safety is always paramount. A lack of boundaries leads to enmeshment, which is an entanglement of two people. Neither person can heal in this situation.

Building Effective Boundaries



Type

What areas in my life do I need boundaries?
 What types of boundaries do I need in those relationships?



Needs

What are my requirements for a healthy relationship in each of these areas?
 Are these my requirements or those that have been placed upon me?



Values

What personal values should be honored by setting boundaries in each of these relationships? Are these values mine or have they been placed upon me?



Results

What do I want the end result to be for me through these boundaries. Am I making this statement to change me alone, and not to change the other person?

Parts Of A Boundary

1. The “I” statement – All effective boundaries are stated as “I” statements.
2. The response – If your boundary is broken, there should be a response that is something that you can completely control and will move you back into safety and comfort.
3. The communication – Effective boundaries are communicated both verbally and through actions. Lack of follow through of the response action will sabotage the boundary.
4. The consistency – In order for any boundary to be effective, it must be held consistently.

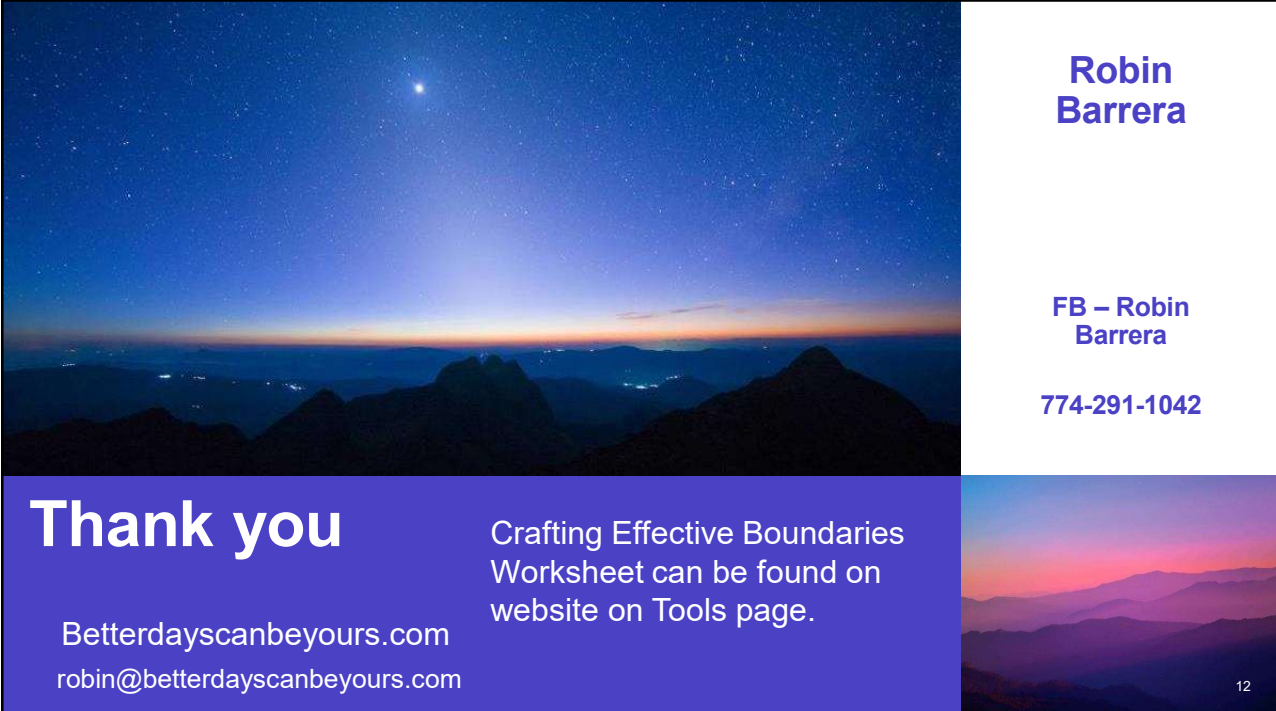


Sizing Boundaries

Sample Boundary	Closer Boundary	Expanded Boundary
I will not clean your room for you.	I recognize that you are making an effort with your room. I can help you with your laundry.	Your room is getting worse. I am going to throw away whatever I find on the floor.
I will not give you money any longer.	I see that you are doing well in your recovery. Let me buy you dinner tonight.	You have abused any of my assistance. I will no longer give you any rides or pay for your phone.
I will not be in a conversation where I am disrespected.	Thank you for honoring my feelings. I would like to spend more time with you.	Every time I interact with you, you disrespect my emotions. I am not going to spend any time with you.
I will not be around an intoxicated person.	Thank you for respecting my recovery. Let's go to a baseball game. I am trusting you on this trip.	You have not respected my boundary. I cannot spend any time with you now.

Holding Your Boundaries

- Reflect on the reasons for your boundaries.
- Make sure you have communicated your boundaries.
- Be consistent, be consistent, be consistent.
- Be consistent, be consistent, be consistent. Seriously. In every situation where your boundaries are pushed.
- You can use a word tract that you create to keep the message the same.
 - “I will not have my feelings disrespected or pushed aside.”
 - “I will not give you money any longer.”
- Don't be afraid to include extra boundaries if needed.
- Take time for yourself to recharge.



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Thank you

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Crafting Effective Boundaries
Worksheet can be found on
website on Tools page.

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