

Boundaries

“Setting Boundaries” has become a popular phrase.
But, what does it really mean?

We often attempt to set boundaries because we do not like how we are being treated. Perhaps, we hope for more from our relationship with others, ourselves and the environment.

How we set boundaries can bring a relationship closer or push someone away. Have you caught yourself saying, “Don’t do XYZ?” Honestly, the languaging can be confusing. It’s the intent that matters. Are we trying to change someone?

In boundary setting, we are letting others know where we thrive and what are limitations are. It’s about where we exist in the world. Imagine a bubble around you with edges you can see. This separates your space from another’s.

It’s about what you are willing to do and denying what does not feel authentic. It’s about saying, “I love to go out, but I can’t do that *right now*.”
“I love to help when I have room to.”

Boundary setting can be far from easy. Our previous experiences of feeling heard matter. How others respond to our limitations can affect our attempts. Our confidence in who we are can deter us. We have to answer, who are we *right now*. Know, that boundaries and you can always change.

-Rediscover You Counseling

Examples:

- I will leave the room when certain topics are brought up.
- I am thinking about how to keep my mind, health and body safe.
- I can’t attend events on work days.
- I want to honor what future me is asking for.
- Can I make a request for how we have discussions? If it does escalate to yelling, I will need a time out to regulate.
- I do not want to call each other names.
- I can only help if my task list is low.
- I will spend my time with people who have shared interests
- Have I done my self-care before I do XYZ?

Reflection:

1. What have you learned about boundaries?
2. Where does it feel confusing?
3. Who are you comfortable setting boundaries with and who not? Why?
4. What do you do when your boundaries are not respected by you or others?
5. Make a list of things you enjoy and things that you wish you didn’t have to tolerate.