

# How To Set Boundaries In Your Relationships

## Step One: Recognize And Acknowledge Your Feelings

In order to set effective boundaries, we must be able to know what it is that we are feeling. Did this person's critical comment make me feel bad? Is this person making me feel overwhelmed or drained?

Being able to do this is absolutely vital because by being able to check in with ourselves and recognize how we are feeling then have separated ourselves from the other person.

The problem with many of us who have weak or leaky boundaries in relationships are that we become so enmeshed, so encompassed by the other person's "stuff" that we have no idea that it is that we ourselves are feeling. By taking the time to break away, reflect, and really check in with yourself, you are then consciously making the distinct difference between yourself and the other person.

## Step Two: Recognize How Your Boundaries Have Been Crossed

So now, looking at your feelings, stop and recognize how your boundary has been crossed. Is this person always asking to borrow money from you but they never pay you back? Do you find yourself always answering your friend's text or phone calls late at night and it's causing you to lose sleep? Is this person always making critical comments towards you? Does this person always seem to have problems that you always have to help them with? Do you have a client who always shows up late for your appointments?

## Step Three: How To Set Boundaries

Once you can recognize what it is that is causing you to feel overwhelmed, drained, or, simply, bad, then decide what it is that you need

to say to this person.

If the person is always borrowing money from you, but they never pay you back, then you may need to tell them that you are no longer allowing them to borrow from you until you are paid back from what you have already given.

If a friend texts and calls you at times that you are can't or do not want to answer, you may want to tell them that you can't talk due to your need to sleep/work/spend time with family or you can decide to not respond until it is a time that works better for you.

If someone keeps making critical comments towards you, then you can tell them that you do not appreciate being spoken to in such a way, explain how those words make you feel and set the boundary that expect respect.

If a friend tends to have a lot of problems and they tend to drain your energy, then the issue needs to be addressed by saying something along the lines of, "I know you are in pain, and I do care, but I have to focus my energy on my own issues."

#### Step 4: Get Grounded

There are two things that often happen when boundaries in a relationship are weak. 1. There is backlash from the other person and 2. you feel guilty.

For this reason, it is important to become grounded within yourself. You can do this by increasing self-awareness through, accepting emotions, meditation, grounding, breath work, and reflection.

Remember that your emotions are valid. For that reason, you are not wrong for setting your boundary. In fact, you are taking care of yourself, which is something that we should all do above all else.

### Step 5: Voice It!

Make your boundary known – communicate it to the other person. Keep in mind that if there is any backlash from the other person or if they want to argue, then it may be best to simply just walk away temporarily or permanently and focus on taking care of yourself.

The reality is that if there is backlash then the other person isn't respecting your boundary. If we acknowledge their disrespect by arguing with them, then we are giving them what they want: A weakness in our boundaries. By acknowledging and focusing on their backlash we are then subconsciously telling them that we are not grounded within ourselves and confident in what we want.

### Step 6: Take Care Of Yourself

If setting the boundary brought up any backlash or feelings of guilt, then be sure to take care of yourself. Go for a walk, exercise, be out in nature, etc. Do something to help yourself get re-centered and don't spend too much (or any) energy focusing on what happened.

Even if someone else wants to talk about the "drama" of what happened, refuse to allow yourself to go back into that moment. Tell them you don't want to talk about it, because when we revisit it, we the stress and fear-based thinking alive. A conversation can happen only keep when/if both people are ready to have a safe and healthy discussion.