

You and Your Relationships:
Setting Healthy Boundaries

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Abstract

Expressing our self when we need to say “no” or cannot extend our self further can be a real challenge! Whether interacting with family members, friends, work colleagues, or even with our self, we too often give when we have little left to give. In this two-hour class we will explore three areas of work that can help you approach boundary setting in a fresh, informed way. These three skill-based modules include: Listening to Self, Stating Your Boundaries Assertively, and Living with You Boundaries. Clear, well-formulated boundaries foster both a healthy self and strong relationships.

Description

Setting healthy boundaries for our self and with others is essential to good mental health, *and* setting healthy boundaries can be a challenge to many. Anxiety and depression can result from poor boundary setting. When we over-extend our self and/or allow others to press past our boundaries, there is an emotional toll on us. Effective parenting involves good boundary setting as do healthy adult relationships.

We are involved in boundary setting on a daily basis from basic decisions, such as how many hours to work today, to more far-reaching decisions, such as money management, caregiving, and social engagement.

Our difficulties in setting healthy boundaries come from various sources, ranging from not being aware that we need to set a boundary to being fearful of the repercussions of doing so. Fears of displeasing others, making them mad, or even being abandoned by them can come into play.

Healthy boundary setting involves three areas of skills which are all based on a healthy connection with self. Too often our boundary setting does not start with this connection with self. We either retreat from the situation or reactively state a boundary that we later regret. When we connect first with self we can become responsive not reactive to what we are dealing with.

Content

This session will first teach the meaning and importance of having this healthy connection with self. This sets the stage for the boundary work that follows:

1. Listening to Self

- Pause
- Listen to your self
 - Thoughts
 - Feelings
 - Body
 - Spirit
- Find your “I” statement

2. Stating your boundaries assertively

- Express your boundary in a statement not a question
- Stick with your boundary
- Don’t over-explain your reasons for your boundary
- Stick with the specific topic
- Stay in the present not pulling in old issues

3. Living with your boundaries

- Remember your reasons for your boundary
- Listen but be careful not to over-defend your choices
- Know when to stop participating in a conversation about your boundary
- Stop