

Boundaries

Adapted from *Boundaries* by Henry Cloud & John Townsend (Strand Publishing, 1992)

Some Boundary Principles.

- Your boundaries define you in relation to others.
- Boundaries define what is you and yours.
- You have the right to assert boundaries (in an appropriate way). That includes saying “No” at times.
- If someone challenges your boundary, you have the right to set a stronger/bigger boundary with that person.
- People who are not used to observing and respecting boundaries will complain at them at first, or they may withdraw in retaliation. It takes time to get used to them.
- If a person gets angry at you for setting boundaries, that’s their problem, not yours.
- Some people try to heap guilt on you for setting boundaries. That is anger in disguise.
- When you choose an action you also choose the consequence. Transgressing a boundary may invoke a consequence.
- Cause and Effect, also known as Sowing and Reaping. We need to feel the effect of our actions, and having someone save us from consequences gives us the wrong message.
- We are responsible for our actions.
- It is neither selfish nor rebellious to set boundaries.
- Setting appropriate boundaries will not harm us or others.
- Similarly we will not be harmed by others setting appropriate boundaries.
- Set boundaries around parts of your life, eg, my wife and I have agreed to not bring work to the dinner table or into the bedroom.

Things That Inhibit Us From Setting Boundaries

- Fear of rejection or abandonment
- Fear of anger
- Fear of loneliness
- Fear of losing a good feeling
- Feelings of Guilt
- Guilt attributed by others
- Need for Approval
- Over-identification with someone’s loss