

Healthy Boundaries vs. Unhealthy Boundaries

Examples of Healthy Boundaries:

Valuing your own opinions

Not compromising personal values for others

Sharing personal information in an appropriate way (not over- or under-sharing)

Knowing your personal wants and needs, and communicating them

Accepting when others say “no”

Staying focused on your own growth and recovery

Deciding whether a new relationship will be good for you, as opposed to imprinting onto the first person who shows interest

Being your own loving advocate

Noticing when someone is engaging in unhealthy boundaries

Trusting your own decisions

Knowing who you are and what you want

Moving slowly into intimacy

Keeping track of red flags, as opposed to sweeping them aside

Examples of Unhealthy Boundaries:

Making one person the center of your world

Sharing intimate and personal information with someone you’ve just met (such as problems with all of your relationships, sexual history, sexual preferences, the number of times you’ve dated or been married/divorced, your long-term desires regarding a relationship)

Changing the way you look, dress, or style your hair because someone you barely know suggests it

Allowing someone you’ve just met tell you how to interact with or discipline your children

Not noticing when someone invades your boundaries

Not trusting anyone – or, trusting everyone: All or nothing thinking

Letting others describe your reality

Determining My Personal Boundaries

What things make you feel uncomfortable about a current, recently ended or new relationship?

1) I don't like it when:

2) I feel resentful when:

3) When _____(insert name) does this, I think about it for the rest of the day:

4) Things that I believe other people should respect about me are:

5) Things I will no longer tolerate are (i.e., my deal-breakers):

6) The first boundary or boundaries I will set is (are):

Ways to Communicate My Boundaries

Examples of phrasing and words to use:

I feel uncomfortable about...

I'd rather not...

I can see your point of view, but...

It's important to me that...

This is difficult for me to say, but...

I've thought about it, and I've decided not to...

It's okay that we don't agree on everything, that's what makes us different.

I'd feel more comfortable if you didn't...

_____ is unacceptable to me.

I'll think about it.

Perhaps we should agree to disagree.

I'd prefer not to...

I have a problem with that.

Things to consider:

- These steps can be used to establish and implement boundaries in any relationship, but for narcissistic abuse survivors, they are especially important in romantic relationships.
- If you are currently in a relationship with a toxic or abusive individual, it may be necessary for your own safety and well-being to implement them *after* you've exited the relationship.
- If thinking about setting your personal boundaries causes discomfort, it's an indicator that these are the ones that you most need to implement.
- Boundaries are rules for your life designed to make you feel emotionally safe and should not be used to control people or circumstances.
- When setting your personal boundaries, make sure they're based on your own wants and needs, and not on what you believe other people will think.
- Learning to establish healthy boundaries is a great way of role modeling for children in your household.

If you need help breaking free from a toxic relationship, consider joining us in [The Essential Break Free Bootcamp](#).

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