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The Six Types of Boundaries

1. Physical Boundaries: personal space and physical touch are your physical boundaries.

Here are a few ways to honor your physical boundaries:

- Verbalize your needs for physical distance to others.
- Be clear with others about your discomfort with certain types of physical touch, such as hugging.

Setting a physical boundary sounds like this: "I'm more of a handshaker; I don't want to hug." "I've asked you not to rub my back. It makes me feel uncomfortable." "These are my private writings. Please don't look at them, because it's a violation of my privacy."

2. Sexual Boundaries: touching, making sexual comments or engaging in sexual acts without consent is a violation of sexual boundaries.

Here are a few ways to honor your physical boundaries:

- Report sexual misconduct.
- Don't make excuses for poor conduct.

Setting a sexual boundary sounds like this: "Your comments about my appearance make me feel uncomfortable." "Move your hand off my leg." "Your comment isn't funny; it's sexually inappropriate."

3. Intellectual Boundaries: these boundaries refer to your thoughts and ideas.

Here are a few ways to honor your intellectual boundaries:

- If you're a parent, refrain from discussing adult matters with your kids.
- Be respectful of people different from you.

Setting an intellectual boundary sounds like this: "You can disagree without being mean or rude." "I won't talk to you if you keep raising your voice." "I just said something, and you dismissed me. Why?"

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4. Emotional Boundaries: when you share and express your feelings.

Here are a few ways to honor your emotional boundaries:

- Ask people if they want you to just listen, or if they're looking for feedback. This will help you determine whether or not to offer suggestions.

Setting an emotional boundary sounds like this: "It isn't okay for you to tell me how I feel. My feelings are valid." "I will take my time on processing my feelings. Don't rush me to move on."

5. Material Boundaries: material boundaries have to do with your possessions.

Here are a few ways to honor your material boundaries:

- Share your expectations for your possessions up front.
- Don't loan things to people who've demonstrated that they will not respect your possessions.

Setting a material boundary sounds like this: "I can't loan you my car this weekend." "Be sure to return my tool in good condition".

6. Time Boundaries: how you manage your time, how you allow others to use your time, how you deal with favor requests, and how you structure your free time.

Here are a few ways to honor your time boundaries:

- Before you say yes to a request, check your calendar to make sure you're not overcommitting. Don't try to squeeze in another event or task, or you'll be upset about doing so.
- When you're busy, allow calls to go to voicemail and texts or emails to go unread until it's convenient for you to respond.

Setting a time boundary sounds like this: "I'm unable to stay late today." "I can help you with your taxes, but my fee is seventy-five dollars."

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Exercise

Grab your journal or write below to complete the following exercise.

- Which type of boundary do you struggle with setting the most?
- How can you improve in this area?

Book: Set Boundaries, Find Peace: Written By: Nedra Glover Tawwab

Worksheet Created By: Janay Bailey, LMHC