

Developing Healthy Personal Boundaries

Personal boundaries are defined by the physical and emotional limits you establish with other people. They are the unspoken rules you have about personal closeness in every relationship, whether it is with your boss, your friends, or your loved ones.

When you do not have *clear* personal boundaries, you may feel that you are controlled by another person. When your personal boundaries are too *rigid*, you may feel isolated and lonely and misunderstood. When you have healthy personal boundaries, you recognize that each individual is unique, with distinct emotions, needs, and values. You are able to communicate what you need from other people, while respecting their own point of view.

As you develop insight about your personal boundaries, you will develop healthy and mutually rewarding relationships. You can use this worksheet to help you think about your personal boundaries and the things you can do differently in your relationships.

The following are statements that reflect a positive approach to personal values.

Rate each statement from 1 to 3, with: 1=never, 2=sometimes, and 3=always. If you feel that a statement does not apply to you, write in "NA."

- _____ I am able to trust others by observing their behavior over time.
- _____ I look to myself first to fulfill my personal needs.
- _____ I reveal my personal thoughts and feelings to people I trust.
- _____ I seek emotional intimacy with the people who care about me.
- _____ I seek physical intimacy only in a trusting and caring relationship.
- _____ I make my own decisions about my relationships.
- _____ I focus on my own needs and goals without being influenced by others.
- _____ I consider the consequences of my decisions and how they affect others.
- _____ I do not allow people to take advantage of me.
- _____ I maintain my personal values no matter what other people say or believe.
- _____ I am able to take care of myself when I feel emotionally vulnerable.
- _____ I am aware when someone infringes on my rights.
- _____ I am able to say 'no' if I feel that someone is asking for something I do not wish to give.
- _____ I am aware of the personal boundaries of others and respect them.
- _____ I don't take advantage of others.
- _____ I don't change my opinions or do something against my values in order to get someone to like me.
- _____ I don't allow people to take advantage of my time or money.
- _____ I trust the decisions I make about my relationships.
- _____ When in doubt, I seek advice from people I trust, but I still make up my own mind.
- _____ I have a clear idea about who I am and what I want from life.

