



- 1) If you begin to feel angry, threatened, suffocated, whiny or victimized, these feelings can indicate that boundaries need to be set. Pay attention to what your body is trying to tell you.



- 2) You will set boundaries when you are ready, not sooner. Setting boundaries occurs at your own pace, not someone else's. This is because setting boundaries is connected to your own growth.
- 3) When you identify that you need to set a boundary with another person, do it in a clear and non-threatening manner using as few words as possible. There is no need to justify, rationalize or apologize. We wouldn't need lengthy explanations when we say yes, and the same is true when we say no.
- 4) Remember that setting a boundary and taking care of another person's feelings cannot be accomplished at the same time. If you have to choose between guilt and resentment, choose guilt every time.
- 5) Be ready to enforce the boundary that has been set, because people will test it. As long as you know your limits, it will not be difficult to convince others. Most people are happy to respect our boundaries. It is not what others have been doing to us – it's what we have been doing to ourselves. Other people may get upset or even angry when we set boundaries – this will be a good indicator who you might want to keep in your life and who you don't.
- 6) Be prepared to act consistently with respect to your boundaries. Your boundaries need to match your behavior. Boundaries are used to take control of ourselves, not to control others.
- 7) Develop a support system to help you obtain feedback about what is normal and what isn't.
- 8) Remind yourself that there is a fun side to setting boundaries. Along with learning to identify what hurts and what we do not like, we learn to identify what we like, what feels good, what we want, and what brings pleasure.
- 9) Educate others on how to respect your new boundaries. Get others' commitment to honoring you. The people who really care will understand.
- 10) Make a list of 10 things you will not tolerate around you, such as someone putting you down with digs, negative remarks, or criticism.
- 11) Have a plan of action: inform people around you what you are doing, and request they stop immediately. If they don't stop, walk away without any snappy or get-even comments.
- 12) Make a list of 10 ways you are violating others' boundaries. Stop violating the boundaries on that list.
- 13) Thank those who are respecting your boundaries
- 14) Keep hope alive. Setting boundaries is a skill that you can master.
- 15) Give people a chance to grow with you and learn from you during this process, instead of just announcing this in a take-it-or-leave-it kind of way.
- 16) Set your boundaries as a way to love yourself.
- 17) Give compassion to yourself when you make mistakes, and remember that it gets easier! At some point, your boundaries will be automatic, requiring almost no attention on your part.
- 18) Ask yourself, if I don't take care of myself now, who will?