

# HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

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AMY JACKSON, LCSW, MPH

LUNCH AND LEARN

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# INTRODUCTION

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- The ParTNeRS Health & Wellness Center, located in downtown Nashville on the 3rd floor of the WRS TN Tower, welcomes all state and higher education employees enrolled in the State Group Health Insurance Plan.

The center provides the following healthcare services at no cost to most eligible employees:

- Sick and injury visits
- Wellness and preventive screenings
- Allergy shots
- Certain immunizations
- Chronic condition management
- Employee assistance counseling services
- Onsite health coaching



Boundaries are a part of  
self-care. They are healthy,  
normal and necessary.

Doreen Virtue

# WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

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Boundaries are limits people set in order to create a healthy sense of personal space. Boundaries can be physical or emotional in nature, and they help distinguish the desires, needs, and preferences of one person from another.

Boundaries provide a way for each individual to maintain their own identity and personal space within professional and personal relationships. In essence, boundaries are the guidelines a person determines for themselves that dictate how they want to be treated and what types of interactions they are willing to accept from others.

# WHAT ARE THE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES?

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Physical  
boundaries

Emotional  
boundaries

Time  
boundaries

Intimacy  
boundaries

Intellectual  
boundaries

Material  
boundaries

# THREE TYPES OF BOUNDARIES: DIFFUSE, RIGID, AND FLEXIBLE

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- Rigid: The person's boundary is too closed.
- Diffuse: The person's boundary is too open.
- Flexible: The person's boundary is neither too closed nor too open.



## WHERE DO OUR BOUNDARIES COME FROM?

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- Before you blame yourself for having poor boundaries, stop for a moment. Our childhoods dictate our comfort levels in boundary setting. Families have different norms.
- As children, we had no control what our parents, teachers, and the adults around us taught us. Most people who possess absent or weak personal boundaries were set a bad example when young. Observing codependent dynamics within our families contributed a lot to this issue, as well as being taught that love = what we did, not who we were.

# IMPORTANCE OF BOUNDARIES

- Personal boundaries are an essential part of creating and upholding a healthy self-image. When a person has strong personal boundaries, it communicates to the world that they exude healthy self-respect and self-worth. Hence, creating boundaries makes us feel good about ourselves and preserves our personal integrity.
- But without personal boundaries, we run the risk of confusing our needs and wants with others, which leads to codependency. Codependency is a term that describes a toxic one-sided relationship. **It is impossible to enjoy a healthy relationship without strong and clear boundaries.**
- Without personal boundaries, there is also the risk of experiencing heightened stress and feelings of hopelessness. Overcommitting to everyone and everything tends to take a serious toll on your mental health, which can eventually lead to burnout. Or worse: a nervous breakdown.
- Finally, **a lack of personal boundaries can result in feelings of being worthless, weak, or not good enough.** In other words, our self-esteem is severely impacted and we might struggle with issues such as chronic self-doubt or self-loathing. Not being able to voice our truth and communicate our needs in a clear way can be deeply distressing.

DO THESE  
SOUND  
FAMILIAR?!

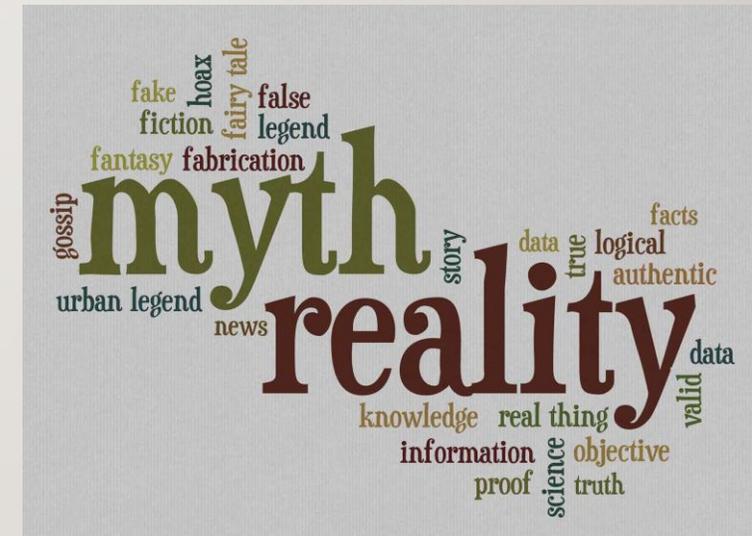
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# 7 MYTHS ABOUT BOUNDARY SETTING

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- 1. If I set boundaries, I'm selfish!
- 2. Boundaries are a sign of not being dependable.
- 3. If I begin setting boundaries I will be hurt by others.
- 4. If I set boundaries, I hurt others.
- 5. Boundaries mean that I'm angry.
- 6. Boundaries cause feelings of guilt.
- 7. Boundaries are permanent, and I'm afraid of burning bridges.



# ARE YOU READY?!

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- 1. Identify where you are starting from. Where in your life would benefit from a shift?
- 2. Identify your values.
- 3. Start simple.
- 4. Listen to your feelings/body.
- 5. Communicate with clarity.
- 6. Get comfortable with being uncomfortable.

# EXAMPLE SCENARIOS:

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- WORK:

Michelle works as an office assistant. Michelle is an hourly wage worker, and her work hours are from 8 am-5pm, Monday through Friday. Despite these set hours, her boss emails Michelle constantly and demands answers outside those hours. Should Michelle set a boundary with her boss? If so, how?

# ANOTHER EXAMPLE...

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- PERSONAL HEALTH:

Johnny has struggled with his weight and body image his whole life, and his family has been a big part of his complicated relationship with his looks/weight. Johnny recently went on a diet and lost 40 pounds and has been feeling more confident, but recently has regained some of the weight. At a family BBQ, Johnny was filling his plate with food and his aunt decided to comment, “You better be careful or you’ll gain all that weight back.” Johnny was crushed. Should Johnny set a boundary with his family? How?

# FINALLY...

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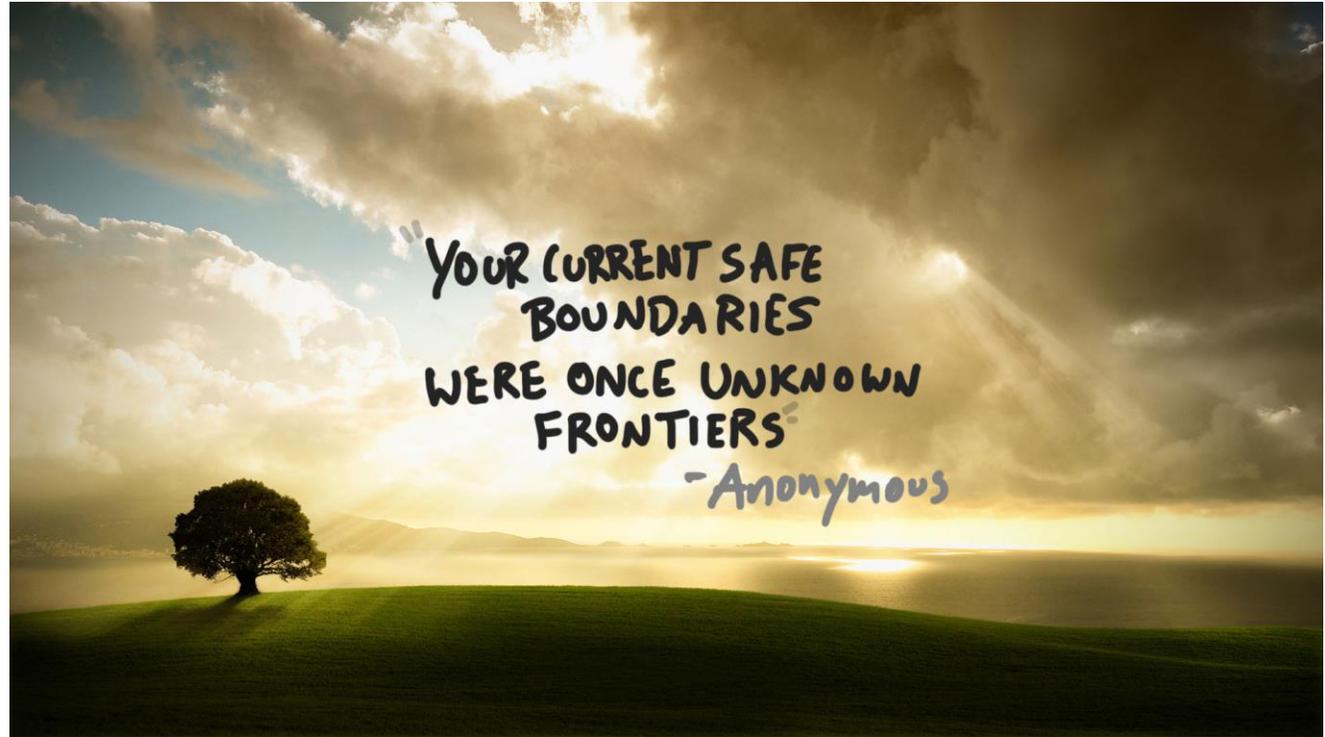
- With friends/well-meaning people

Laura has been having difficulty with her 3-year-old and his temper tantrums. It seems like every time they go out of the house, to church or a restaurant, little Billy acts a fool. The last time an incident occurred, a fellow church member came up to Laura and started giving advice on how she should handle her son. Laura was taken aback. Should Laura set a boundary? How?



FINAL  
THOUGHTS?  
QUESTIONS?

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**REACH OUT!**

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**Amy Jackson, LCSW, MPH**

**ParTNers Health and Wellness Center**

**TN Tower, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor**

**615-741-1732**

**[Amy.Jackson@connectus.org](mailto:Amy.Jackson@connectus.org)**