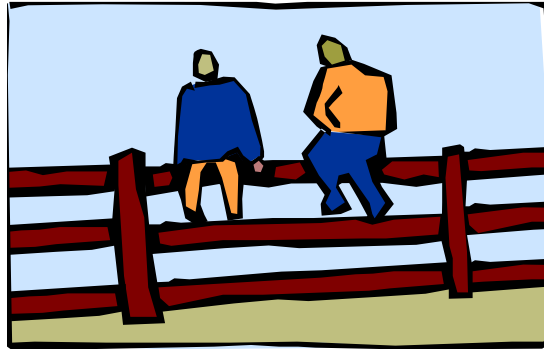


Boundaries ~ Friend or Foe?

January 2017



***"Personal Boundaries are great
solutions for Isolation"***

~ Shigemitsu

**It has been said that you can lead a horse to water
but you can't make him drink**

**A person that refuses to drink recovery's water
can certainly die of thirst or from just plain old stubbornness**



**A personal commitment to walk in the sunlight of the spirit
is hard to do especially when a person has not ever seen the light**

**The motivation to change may also seem out of reach
when a person has no faith in the affirmation
"It Works When You Work It"**



Enjoy a better future by using boundaries today

Boundary Factoids

Boundaries...

- a) Are not brick walls that support isolation
- b) Are everyday rights that were withheld from a very early age
- c) Can begin by learning and defending our human rights
- d) Define my *sense of self* → esteem, confidence and worth
- e) Define who I am by where I begin and where I end
- f) Will tell me if I exceed my practical limitations
- g) Can help to discover and capture my missing pieces
- h) Can provide permission to heal a painful past
- i) Are a matter of personal choice and not external demands
- j) Are the keys to escaping the prison of isolation
- k) Are an essential element of working my Recovery Program
- l) Are better supported by choosing needs first over wants
- m) Can protect us from bullies and boundary busters
- n) Are sensible warnings to look before I leap
- o) Are guided by the Serenity Prayer and Spiritual Principles
- p) Are responsible *choices* and *actions*
- q) Are benchmarks of personal integrity and self-ownership
- r) Are meant for everyone to share responsibly

Boundary Characteristics

External Boundaries

Physical / Sexual which protects the body

Internal Boundaries

Mental → Thoughts

Emotional → Feelings

Spiritual → Higher Power

Factors which influence our boundary systems, to name a few, include:
familial, social, cultural, financial, educational, and environmental.

Here is an example of a continuum of a boundary system, on an internal
and external basis, from a black and white perspective to in between,
and from having no walls to thick walls as a protection.

Doormat

Balance

Bully

No Walls	Appropriate Boundary	Thick Walls
Low to No Self Esteem	Self-Confidence & Esteem	Arrogant & Grandiose
Too Vulnerable	Open & Vulnerable	Invulnerable
Too Good or Perfect	Balanced Values	Bad or Rebellious
Dependent	Inter-Dependent	Anti-Dependent
Lack of Control	Self-Accepting	Controlling / Dominating
Victim / Doormat	Autonomous	Martyr / Dictator
Trusts All	Trusts Appropriately	Trusts None
Despair / Worry	Integrity / Serenity	Don't Care at All
Withdrawn / Submissive	Intimate	Takes Hostages
Whining / Stuffing anger	Expressive / Assertive	Raging Out of Control
Other Powered	Higher Powered	Self-Powered

Self-Mapping and Boundary Choices

Maintaining balance in each area of our lives

Physical	Intellectual	Emotional	Spiritual
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1

Black and White ~ Common Entry Level Choices

=== Applicable for some but not most situations ===

All	Nothing
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2

1 through 10 ~ Variations/Gradations/Degrees/Stages

Assessing and Measuring Situations

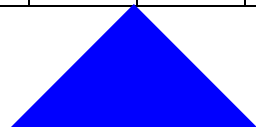
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
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3

Goldilocks Standard ~ Self-Affirming Choices

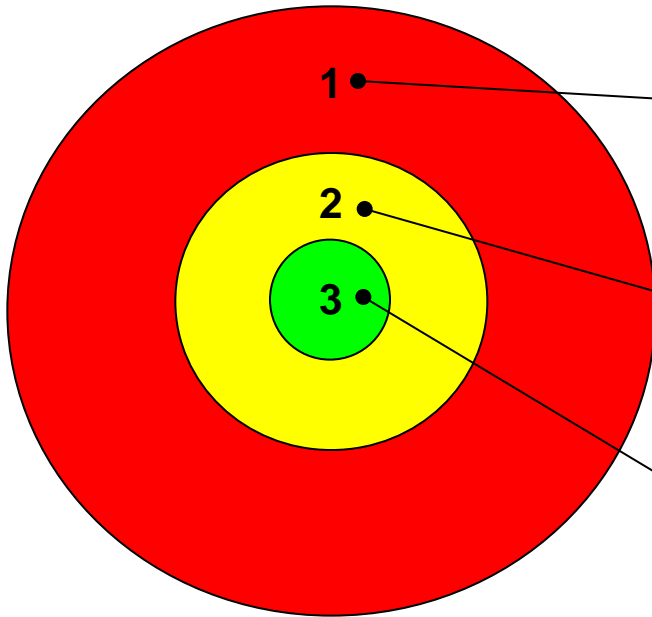
Balancing Responsibility in Relationships

Too Little Powerless			Within Moderation Empowered				Too Much Powerless		
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10



Levels of Trust ~ Boundaries in Action

Circles of Trust



Levels of Trust

1	Firm Boundaries ~ Trust not yet earned <ul style="list-style-type: none">▫ Superficial ~ a light public relationship▫ Casual/Familiar ~ association/mutuality▫ Greater Majority – guarded & vigilant
2	Established Trust & Respect ~ Closeness <ul style="list-style-type: none">▫ Companionship ~ similar interest▫ Friendship ~ similar belief systems▫ Small Minority ~ trusted few
3	Deepest Trust & Respect ~ Intimacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">▫ Loving Relationship ~ sharing & caring▫ Committed Partner ~ deep love & respect▫ Sacred Grounds ~ precious few

About Your Trust Choices

I do/don't trust my HP because _____

I do/don't trust myself because _____

I need/don't need to trust because _____

I do/don't know how to trust because _____

I lost/found trust when _____

I am open/closed to trusting because _____

I know/don't know how to restore trust because _____

I am trustworthy/not trustworthy because _____

I gained/lost someone's trust because _____

I want/don't want to learn more about trust because _____

Relationship Boundaries Assessment

Rate each relationship according to their Trustworthiness Level

1 = Low

2 = Medium

3 = High

Characteristics and Qualities of Trustworthy Relationships	Your Choice	Higher Power	Best Friend	Self
Accurate, open, and transparent communication				
Makes commitments and keeps them (walks the talk)				
Engages in difficult conversations & problem resolutions				
Consistent, balanced, competent & predictable behavior				
Respectfully caring of self and others with lots of love				
Questions and stands up to perceived violations				
Willing to be open, honest and vulnerable				
Reliable performance of responsibilities				
Reciprocity of benevolent contribution to the relationship				
Similarity of goals, values, beliefs and spiritual principles				
Is dependable and reliable (can be counted on)				
Makes apologies, amends and practices forgiveness				
TOTAL Points for Relationship →				



0 – 12 = Low



13 – 24 = Medium



25 – 36 = High

Self-Mapping of Attitudes, Beliefs & Actions

Many of the attitudes, beliefs and actions learned in dysfunctional families contribute to one's powerlessness and unmanageability. Suffering continues when a person holds on to the self-defeating or sometimes self-destructive belief system. These character defects can be replaced by choosing to practice personal responsibility and taking ownership of life affirming actions for continued self-growth and empowerment.

ABSTINENCE IS THE MIDDLE COLUMN → HALF WAY TO SELF ACTUALIZATION!

False Self Issues > Powerlessness < Emotional & Spiritual Immaturity	High	Med	Low	Half Way	Low	Med	High	Authentic Self Solutions > Empowerment < Emotional & Spiritual Maturity
Addiction								Autonomy
Anger (Explosion/Implosion)								Calm
Apathy								Enthusiasm
Approval Seeking								Self-Acceptance
Attachment								Letting Go
Black & White Thinking								Golden Mean
Blame								Responsibility
Caretaking/Enabling								Self-Care
Conditional Love								Unconditional Love
Distrust								Trust
Dominance/Dependence								Equality
Enmeshment								Autonomy
Fantasy Based Thinking								Reality Based Thinking
Fear								Faith
Fragmented								Whole
Giving Up								Perseverance
Greed								Generosity
Inaction								Action
Inconsolable								Self-Soothing
Instant Gratification								Long Term Gain
Irresponsibility								Commitment
Isolation								Intimacy
King/Queen Baby								Emotional Maturity
My Will								God's Will
Need to Control								Let Go and Let God
Negative Self Talk								Positive Self Talk
No Limits								Boundaries
Passivity								Assertiveness
Powerlessness								Empowerment
Pride								Humility
Procrastination								Promptness
Resentment								Forgiveness
Resistance								Acceptance
Scarcity								Abundance
Self-Abandonment								Self-Parenting
Seriousness								Fun/Play/Relaxation
Shame								Grace
Submission								Surrender
Symptom								Cause
Thanklessness/Despair								Gratitude
Worry								Hope
Wounding								Healing

To Thine Own Self Be True

Life affirming boundary systems are based on developing an authentic sense of self that is sustained by emotional and spiritual maturity



=== **Living Abundantly** ===

Believe in your self

Accept life as it is and not as you would have it

Be yourself and not how you “think” you should be

Be the change you want to see

Disappointment is relative to expectation

Follow your heart though the best and worst of times

Honor your own boundaries

Learn how to make and practice life affirming choices

Live without the approval of others

Keep the promises you make

Place forgiveness ahead of resentment

Know how to soothe your self

Say what you mean and mean what you say

Life defeating belief systems are based on self-centered fear compromised by emotional and spiritual immaturity.

=== **Living Dangerously** ===

Not doing your best

Living life as a victim

Taking things personally

Avoiding self-responsibility

Criticizing and judging others

Refusing to live in the solution

Making decisions from fabrications