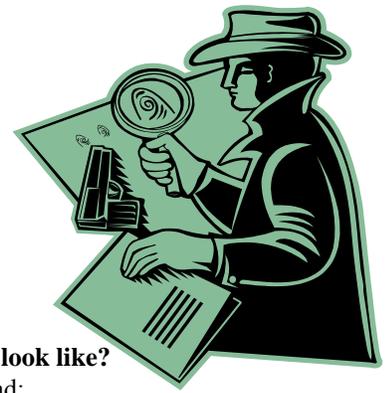


Analyze *THIS*

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Relationships can be hard to manage at times. The people that we love spending time with can be the same people who drain our energy. Why does this happen? Often problems in relationships come from conflicts in boundaries.

What are boundaries?

Boundaries are a way to delineate what we are and are not responsible for. They help to determine where we stop and others start. People with poor boundaries often struggle with saying no to the control & pressure demands that are upon them, and sometimes the real needs of others too.

What do healthy boundaries look like?

Boundaries help us keep the good in and the bad out. They guard our hearts, as well as allow an openness to connect to others. Having boundaries allows you to make decisions out of a sense of priority and love, rather than out of pressure and coercion. “Boundaries are personal property lines that define who you are and who you are not, and influence all areas of your life” (Cloud & Townsend).

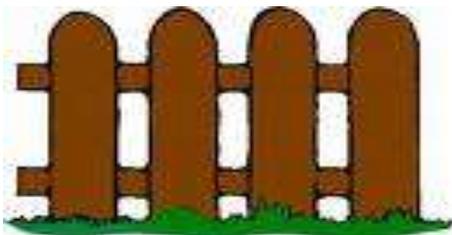
Why are there boundary problems?

The reason boundaries can be difficult to navigate is sometimes they feel unclear and difficult to balance. Thankfully scripture gives us a good sense of how to determine this:

Galatians 6:2 “Carry each other’s burdens...” this verse shows our responsibility to one another when their burdens are too big to bear (the Greek word for burden means “excess burdens” or a boulder that would crush us).

Galatians 6:5 says “each should carry his own load.” This refers to how we have to take ownership of certain aspects of our daily lives that are our own load (Greek for load means “cargo” or “the burden of daily toil”, like the equivalent to a knapsack).

Problems arise when people act as if their ‘boulders’ are ‘daily loads’ and refuse help, or as if their ‘daily loads’ are ‘boulders’ they shouldn’t have to carry.



What do boundary problems look like?

- Saying ‘Yes’ to the Bad:

These people can’t stand alone distinct from other people who want something from them. They pretend to like whatever their friends like “just to get along”. They are unable to recognize or say no to controlling, manipulative, and exploitative people.

- Saying ‘No’ to the Good:

It’s the inability to ask for help, to recognize one’s own needs, and to let others in. These individuals withdraw from others when they need support the most. Individuals with impermeable boundaries see their problems and justifiable wants as something bad, destructive, or shameful. This often makes the problems bigger and more difficult to address, as well as making access to God and supportive friends impossible.

Boundaries help us keep the good in and the bad out

- Not Respecting Others’ Boundaries:

These individuals struggle with hearing and accepting others’ boundaries. This generally comes out when a person does not want to take responsibility for his or her own life, so they seek to control others. They can’t hear no and project responsibility for their lives onto others.

- Not Hearing the Needs of Others:

These individuals are critical towards others’ needs. They hate being incomplete in themselves, so they ignore the needs of others or they are so absorbed in their own desires and needs that they exclude others.

If you think you struggle with boundaries, ask yourself the following questions:

Can I set limits and still be a loving person?
Do I feel guilty when I consider setting boundaries?
Do I seek wisdom from God when I say yes or no?
Do I value myself/my needs/my time?
Do I feel it is okay for me to take a break?
Do I have people whom I share things with and they share things with me?
Am I being thoughtful about my life choices and my relationships?

