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and mindset
Establishing
Healthy Boundaries

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Establishing Healthy Boundaries

KEY LESSONS FOR THIS TRAINING:

1. To understand healthy boundaries and personal responsibility;
2. To learn how to identify boundary violations using 10 Universal Laws;
3. To practice correcting boundary violations.

BOUNDARIES & PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY:

Boundaries are an act of personal responsibility and empowerment.

By practicing boundary setting with love, you understand and empower yourself and others to own these four truths and take responsibility for their personal care taking:

1. My success or failure in life largely depends on me.
2. Though I can look to others for comfort and instruction, I alone am responsible for my Self and my choices.
3. Though I am deeply affected by my significant relationships throughout my life, I am responsible for finding solutions to my problems.
4. Though I will fail and need support, I must learn to depend on myself to overcome my spiritual, emotional, financial and relational crisis.

What are healthy boundaries?

	I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR	I AM <u>NOT</u> RESPONSIBLE FOR
1	MY FEELINGS	THEIR FEELINGS
2	MY ATTITUDE + BELIEFS	THEIR ATTITUDE + BELIEFS
3	MY CHOICES	THEIR CHOICES
4	MY BEHAVIOURS	THEIR BEHAVIOURS
5	MY VALUES	THEIR VALUES
6	MY LIMITS	THEIR LIMITS
7	MY TALENTS	THEIR TALENTS
8	MY THOUGHTS	THEIR THOUGHTS
9	MY DESIRES	THEIR DESIRES
10	MY LOVE	THEIR LOVE

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WAYS TO SET BOUNDARIES:

- skin as a boundary (The body is a boundary. You are responsible for your body (from skin inward) and no one has the right to "cross/violate" without your permission.)
- communicate through words
- share the truth of who you are
- create geographical distance
- take time off
- create emotional distance
- other people as a barrier/support
- allowing the experience of natural consequences

THE 10 UNIVERSAL LAWS OF BOUNDARY SETTING:

(The 10 Laws are based on the book: "Boundaries" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend)

1. Law of Cause and Effect

You will experience the effects of your choice. We learn and grow into personally responsible interdependent adults when we experience the law of cause and effect.

Examples:

- If you wear a jacket you will likely be warm.
- If you take care of your car your car will work well for you.
- If you spend your money mindfully you will experience the effects of mindful spending.
- **Problems occur when** someone without boundaries tries to prevent another from experiencing the natural effect of the choices that they made. The rescuer takes on the physical, emotional and spiritual "pain" that was meant for the person who was rescued and tries to prevent them from experiencing the natural effect of their choice. This robs the person of the learning that was meant for them and creates dependency.
- This is called "The Rescuer Tendency"
- Can you think of an example from your life where this boundary was crossed?

2. Law of Responsibility

We are responsible to, but not for others.

Examples

- I cannot feel your feelings for you, and you cannot feel my feelings for me.
- I cannot think for you and you cannot think for me.
- I am responsible for getting my own needs met and you are responsible for getting your own needs met and we are responsible to listen and respond with love to each other.
- I can choose to meet your need, but I am not responsible for it and you can choose to meet my need, but you are not responsible for it.

Problems occur when we believe that we are responsible for what someone feels, what they think, the choices they make, what is happening to them or for meeting their needs; Or when others make us responsible for how they feel, what they think, the choices they make, what is happening to them or for their needs.

This Is called "The Caretaker Tendency."

Can you think of an example from your life where this boundary was crossed?

3. Law of Power

Know what you have the power to change and what you do not.

You have the power to change what is within your control: YOU and only you.

You have the power to change any aspects of your Self.

Problems occur when we believe that we have the power to change what's not within our control.

What is not within our control:

- other people
- our past
- the collective experience – the economy, global events, politics
- the weather

What is within our control:

- We do have the power to *influence* others by changing ourselves, our perceptions and how we behave but we never have the power to change others.
- We have the power to change our perceptions, our attachments and the attention we give to our past.
- We do have the power to influence change by BEING the change we collectively seek.
- We do have the power to change our perceptions and our attachments to the weather.

Can you think of an example from your life where you or someone else crossed this boundary?

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4. Law of Respect

We need to respect the boundaries of others in order to command the respect for our own. When we accept and respect each others' freedom to choose for themselves, to say no and to do what is right for them, then we feel better about doing the same for ourselves. Problems occur when we judge or condemn the boundary decisions of others. Because we judge, we are judged, which sets up a cycle of fear of setting boundaries. We comply instead of setting the boundaries that we need to get love and avoid judgement.

This leaves us vulnerable to feeling resentment, guilt and anger.

Can you think of an example from your life where this boundary was crossed?

5. Law of Motivation

Freedom first, service second - If you give to get free of your fear, you will never be free.

Setting boundaries requires you to say no when a no is necessary.

Some people fear saying no because they believe that they are being unloving or not being of service and that there will be negative repercussions that they can't handle. We can only TRULY be of service when we feel like we have the freedom to set boundaries that honour our own freedom to choose.

What motivates us to avoid setting boundaries, to give more than we receive or to give more than we can give in a joyful way?

Motives aligned with fear:

- Fear of loss of love, or abandonment
- Fear of others' anger
- Fear of loneliness
- Fear of losing the good inside (belief that if you don't say yes then you are not a good person)
- Guilt
- Payback
- Need for approval
- Over-identification with the others' loss

Can you think of an example from your life where this boundary was crossed?

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6. Law of Evaluation

We need to evaluate the effects of setting boundaries and be responsible to the other person but not for their feelings.

We must take someone's feelings into consideration when choosing how to express our boundary but it shouldn't determine whether or not we set it. We all have to take responsibility for our own feelings. There is a difference between hurting someone's feelings and harming someone.

Problems occur when we take responsibility for preventing hurt feelings by not setting boundaries that help us take care of our own needs.

Can you think of an example in your life where this boundary was crossed?

7. Law of Proactivity

For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction.

While you may go through a reactive stage of strongly setting boundaries in your life that requires you to make a strong statement by creating distance, putting up barriers to protect what's been taken advantage of and by practicing being assertive, eventually the goal should be to become proactive. Proactive people show you what they love, what they want, what their purpose and what they stand for and live from this place. They are focused on what they want rather than what they don't want. They are focused on love instead of fear.

Problems arise when people get caught in the reaction phase and stay there instead of living proactively.

Can you think of an example in your life where this boundary was crossed?

8. Law of Envy

When we focus entirely on what others have or on what others have accomplished, we are neglecting our own responsibilities and will end up empty and unfulfilled.

Boundaryless people feel empty and unfulfilled because they look at another's sense of fullness and feel envious rather than focusing on how to define and feel fulfilled for themselves. The key is shifting from a focus on others and our own lack, to taking personal responsibility for developing the unique gifts that we are each meant to express.

The problem with envy is that it means we are entirely focused outside of our boundaries.

Can you think of an example in your life where this boundary was crossed?

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9. Law of Activity

The energy we put out will be matched, but no one can do the work for us.

Activity, not passivity, is rewarded. Nobody can do our work for us. We must be assertive and active in setting boundaries and seeking the life that we are meant to live.

Problems occur when we believe that we can passively experience the results we want by expecting others to do our work. This is a boundary violation and never results in growth.

Can you think of an example in your life where this boundary was crossed?

10. Law of Exposure

Boundaries need to be made visible to others and communicated to them in relationship. We all exist within relationship to others and a boundary acts as a "property line" indicating where we all begin and end.

Problems occur when boundaries aren't communicated or expressed directly, which means they will get communicated indirectly and through manipulation and relationships suffer.

Examples:

- parents show "love" by always giving in (caretaking) and then kids grow into adults who didn't feel loved, parents feel resentful that, "after all we've done for them..."
- partner shows compliance by not expressing feelings and opinions for 20 years and then finally "expresses" a boundary by asking for a divorce.

Can you think of an example in your life where you or someone else crossed this boundary?

- WHICH OF THESE BOUNDARIES IS EASIEST FOR YOU TO OVERSTEP?

- WHICH OF THESE BOUNDARIES IS MOST CHALLENGING FOR YOU TO UPHOLD?

Content Source: "Boundaries" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr John Townsend