Relationship Boundaries

A Guide for Checking Your Boundaries Within Relationships

Without good relationship boundaries:	With good relationship boundaries:
Feel afraid - anticipate crisis - always expect the worst to happen	Feel secure - grounded - able to cope
Loose objectivity when flattered or complimented	Do not allow manipulation but can accept appropriate, genuine, positive feedback
Have difficulty saying "no"	Are able to set limits and say "no"
Have relationships with narcissistic or borderline people who manipulate	Create relationships with people capable of providing mutual bonding and love
Often become obsessive about partner's actions or reactions	Can be affected by partner's behavior without taking it personally or making yourself wrong
Change your behavior, plans or opinions to pacify partner - withhold your truth	Remain true to self and attempt mutually satisfying compromise that respects the needs of both
Make exceptions and excuses for partner's behavior - even when appropriate	Is flexible and accountable and expect others to be flexible and accountable also
Are unclear about your choices, preferences and opinions - wonder if you are right often	Feel clear and decisive and act to get what you want and need
Make others responsible for your good and bad feelings about yourself	Take responsibility for your own feelings and responses
Act out of compliance, control, non- compliance or other passive aggressive ways of getting needs met	Act out of agreement without abandoning yourself or your partner
Use guilt, fear, shame, intimidation or interrogation in attempting to change partner	Speak with "I" messages and attempt to hear and understand partner
Stay in relationships too long doing more for less while feeling out of control	Set limits. Ask for and expect to get mutual benefit
Are more focused on partner's needs, emotions and feelings than you are on your own	Are in touch with your own needs, emotions, feelings and attend to them with self- nurturing
Are unable to get angry but often feel victimized	Can express healthy anger and refuse to be victimized
Feel you must physically separate to get space and feel safe	Can stay engaged and yet feel separate

Often discount intuitive hunches	Listen and abide by intuition
Find yourself in situations where you feel there is no way out	Stay focused on your choices and act accordingly
Commit to giving far beyond what is healthy and reasonable for self	Set limits on how long and how much you will commit
Accept promises, minimal effort and constant apologies as good reason and basis for staying	Ask for and get genuine, on-going positive attempts to improve
Will comply with unwanted sexual advances in order to feel loved	Do not compromise your integrity for sex
Allow others to be abused by partner	Insist on respect for all boundaries
Give yourself up out of fear	Respect self and trust your own ability to deal with consequences
Attempt to get your own needs met by constantly doing for others	Are direct about getting needs met and does not attempt to manipulate others
Feel you will be overwhelmed or become overly responsible for partner's intense feelings	Can stay present to partner's intense feelings without taking them on or changing them
Fantasize that things will be better without any realistic indication or action having been taken	Realize you are the creator of and responsible for your own quality of life
Avoid knowing the truth in attempting to avoid pain	Willing to experience temporary frustration or pain as an accepted part of growth
Experience another's criticism as indication you are a bad person	Can separate actions that need changing from sense of own value and worth
Experience lack of spiritual connectedness and self-esteem, or anxiety, hopelessness, betrayal, and insecurity	Experience spiritual unity, self-love, self- respect, aliveness and on-going growth
Total Without Good Boundaries Check Marks:	Total With Good Boundaries Check Marks:

Total up your score: If you have 7 points or more on the **"Without Good Boundaries"** side, you will know this is an issue affecting your relationship.

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Reprinted with permission - Original Boundary List from How To Be An Adult, by David Richo

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