



# Establish Boundaries That Honor You By Natalie Gahrmann

Boundaries are imaginary lines that help you protect yourself both physically and emotionally. They keep other's actions and behaviors from hurting, distracting, annoying, or imposing on you. Boundaries are limits you set on how others can treat you or behave around you. People treat you as you allow them to; however, you can actually teach others how to treat you based on how strong or weak your boundaries are.

Having strong boundaries are important for protecting your body, mind, and spirit. Setting boundaries can make an enormous impact on the quality of your life. It is a major step in taking control of your life and vital for taking responsibility for your self, your life, and your wellness. It is the one skill that you most need to develop in order to create the kind of life you really want. However, it's often the area where most people seem to have the most difficulties.

Setting strong boundaries will help you stand up for yourself, stop agreeing to do things you really don't want to do, and start feeling less guilty about putting your own needs first. It's a part of the process of defining yourself and what is acceptable to you. When you don't have boundaries set other people will step over the line without even realizing where it is.

## Essential Boundary Setting Steps:

1. **Self Awareness:** Identify where your boundaries are weak or non-existent. Establish some new boundaries that honor you. What may people no longer do around you, do to you, or say to you? (Be realistic)
2. **Inform:** Educate others about unacceptable behaviors and expressions. Help people understand how they can respect your new boundaries. Communicate without blaming. Verbalize your boundaries.
3. **Request:** Calmly tell each person very specifically what you want them to stop doing or saying. Get their commitment to honoring you.
4. **Follow-Up:** Let them know how they are doing on meeting your request. Continue educating and reinforcing. Reward those who are respecting your boundaries.
5. **Demand:** Warn them about possible consequences if they continue ignoring your request. Enforce your boundaries.
6. **Consequences:** Follow through with the consequence if results aren't forthcoming. Determine which battles are worth fighting and which are worth letting go; walk away without any further comment if necessary. Set consequences that impact the other person more than you.
7. **Respect others' boundaries:** Stop violating other people's boundaries. Be aware and respectful of other people's boundaries.