

SELF-CARE AND HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear...
(1 John 4:18a)

BOUNDARIES AS SELF-CARE

An important part of self-care, healthy boundaries create an understanding of what we have responsibility for and what is outside of our control.

The healthier our boundaries are, the greater is our capacity to offer empathy and love to others. We are responsible for what happens inside us and for the ways we act and relate to others.

JESUS PRIORITIZED SOUL-CARE

Jesus prioritized soul-care. He often went away from everyone to be alone with God. Then, filled with grace and truth, He was ready to compassionately and generously love those He came to save.

Jesus didn't heal everyone because he lived within the boundaries that the Father set for him. Sometimes He said, "No." Sometimes when He spoke the truth in love, people (like the Pharisees) were offended. Other times, Jesus spoke truth with such tenderness that those He spoke to felt seen and heard for possibly the first time.

PRAYER FOR HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Father God, thank you for knowing me from the inside out. I pray for the strength, courage, and wisdom to set safe and healthy boundaries so that I can love others well, instead of growing frustrated, withdrawing, feeling taken for granted, or becoming angry. Thank You for examples of both healthy and unhealthy boundaries in Your Word, and for the knowledge that Your boundaries are meant to give me direction for my life's purpose. In Jesus' name, amen.

HOW HEALTHY ARE MY BOUNDARIES?

If you agree with a statement below, check the box. Then one by one reflect on and be curious about why you checked it.

- ☐ I do too much.
- ☐ I do things out of obligation.
- ☐ Many people rely on me.
- ☐ I neglect my needs (including food, rest, etc.).
- ☐ I give constantly.
- ☐ I am focused on helping others.
- ☐ I feel anxious or panicked when other people are not OK.
- ☐ I was taught to put others before myself.
- ☐ I feel responsible for other people's emotions.
- ☐ I feel so drained by all my responsibilities.
- ☐ I take on the emotions of others around me.
- ☐ I feel destabilized if someone doesn't like me.
- ☐ I'm very sensitive to criticism.
- ☐ I feel guilty easily.
- ☐ I find myself doing things I don't want to do.
- ☐ I don't speak up when I am treated poorly.
- ☐ I feel unable to say no.
- ☐ I feel unable to make decisions.
- ☐ I can't really relax.
- ☐ I expect other people to anticipate my needs.
- ☐ I discount my own thoughts, opinions, intuition.
- ☐ I don't invest many resources (time, energy, money) into my own dreams.
- ☐ I am uncomfortable being served or pampered.
- ☐ I grew up with adults with poor boundaries.
- ☐ I contain anger until it suddenly explodes.
- ☐ I don't let people get too close to me.

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION?

- In what situations would it be important to create boundaries?
- What are your boundaries trying to protect?
- How can limitations, love, and wisdom help you have God-honoring relationships?
- Setting healthy boundaries requires you to determine what you want. Then you'll know what to ask of others or give of yourself. What's important to you?