

Healthy Boundaries That Build Connection

If you haven't read our blog post *Boundaries Aren't Walls: How Healthy Limits Strengthen Relationships*, do this first! Then, come back and use this guide to help you explore where boundaries might look like in your relationships.

Boundary issues often show up when people are unclear about what they are responsible for, what they are allowed to ask for, or how much access others should have to their time, emotions, decisions, and personal space. Many of us were never taught what healthy boundaries actually look like. Boundaries are not walls that keep people out. They are limits that create the safety needed for relationships to grow.

Let's look at some common boundary issues in relationships:

- **Difficulty saying no**
Agreeing to requests out of guilt, fear of conflict, or concern that the other person will be disappointed
- **Taking responsibility for another person's feelings**
Believing you must keep someone happy, prevent their anger, or solve their emotional distress
- **Expecting others to read your mind**
Assuming a partner, friend, or family member should automatically know what you need without you communicating it
- **Emotional overdependence**
Relying on one person to meet nearly every emotional, social, or relational need.
- **People-pleasing and self-neglect**
Consistently putting another person's needs first while ignoring your own well-being, preferences, or limits
- **Difficulty accepting another person's no**
Responding to a limit with pressure, guilt, anger, withdrawal, repeated requests, or punishment
- **Confusing support with rescuing**
Repeatedly fixing problems, covering consequences, making excuses, or doing things another capable adult needs to manage

If any of those feel familiar, you're not alone.

Healthy boundaries aren't about becoming less loving. They're about becoming more honest. This guide isn't about building walls. It's about creating relationships where both people have room to thrive.

Use the prompts below to reflect on where boundaries might be missing and explore how you can begin to develop them.

As you begin to explore your boundaries, keep in mind the focus is on your boundaries, not other people's.

What's one boundary from the list above, or one not listed, that you notice is missing in your relationship(s):

What are some examples of the missing boundary in your relationship(s)? Be specific and think about the most recent examples:

Once you recognize where a boundary has been missing, you can choose to begin establish one. Let's look at some common ways to begin establishing a boundary:

- **Difficulty saying no:**
 - "I appreciate you asking, but I'm not able to do that"
 - "I need to decline this time so I can honor my other responsibilities"
- **Expecting others to read your mind:**
 - "I realize I have not clearly explained what I need. Can I share with you?"
- **Confusing supporting with rescuing:**
 - "I believe you can handle this, and I'm available to talk through your options"
- **Difficulty accepting another person's no**
 - "I'm disappointed, but I respect your decision"

Remember, the goal in establishing or strengthening boundaries in your relationships is to create more connection through honest and respectful conversation. List out 3 conversation you want to have this month, then make a plan about when, where, and how you'll start each one.

1.

2.

3.

If you'd like to explore how boundaries can help you experience greater connection in your relationships, we'd be honored to walk alongside you.

Reach out to **The Greenhouse Collective** to schedule an appointment. Give us a call at 863-225-2794 or email us at info@grnhouseco.com.

This growth guide is for informational purposes and is not intended to diagnosis, assess, or provide treatment. The use of this guide does not establish a therapist-client relationship.