



Shepherd Care®

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To Care for People Where They Live and Work

COMMUNITY Care TOPIC

Setting Personal Boundaries

Boundaries are imaginary lines that help you protect yourself both physically and emotionally. Boundaries are like a property line and guard rail around your home and life that can buffer and protect. These provide margins that 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.

It's important to note that in establishing boundaries:

- Your personal needs are valid. It is not necessary for you to defend, debate, or over-explain your request.
- For at work issues- some boundary lines are defined in company handbooks and human resource guidelines. You can also report to supervision.
- Enlist the support of a friend for before and after the boundary-setting conversation, if necessary.
- Begin setting boundaries with the easiest one's for you and build yourself up to the more challenging ones. Let your communication and behavior get stronger before you tackle the harder boundaries.
- Tell people immediately when they are doing something that violates one of your boundaries.
- Simply tell them what they are doing that makes you feel angry, frustrated, violated, resentful, or uncomfortable.

- Communicate gracefully and honestly.
- Make a direct request that they stop the behaviors that offend or bother you. Be very specific about what you want.
- Follow-up to let them know how they are doing at honoring your request.
- Thank them for making the change.

And, if they refuse to cooperate:

- Warn them of a possible consequence if they continue disregarding your request.
- Demand that they stop.
- If work related, report issue to supervision.
- Just walk away without getting angry or fighting.
- Or, if necessary, follow through with the consequence you previously warned them about.
- Turn to faith resources. Getting God involved *is* helpful, as he is bigger than we are! God is protective over how people treat His children.

Boundary-setting is like any new skill—you'll need to learn the basics, create a plan for applying your new skill, and then follow through with action and a support system. Over time and with practice, setting boundaries will become easier. Remember that setting boundaries is a way to fully honor and respect yourself.

Introducing your Community Chaplain

Eric Kieselbach
(pronounced "key-sill-baa")

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"Boundaries are imaginary lines that help you protect yourself both physically and emotionally."

"Thou shalt not remove thy neighbor's landmark (*boundary line*), which they of old time have set in thine inheritance, which thou shalt inherit in the land that the LORD thy God giveth thee to possess it."
Deuteronomy 19:14

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