

Do you have healthy boundaries?



What are Personal Boundaries?

Personal boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves (within relationships). A person with healthy boundaries can say “**NO**” to others when they want to, but at the same time they also feel comfortable opening themselves up to intimacy and close relationships.

Adrenal Fatigue & Personal Boundaries

The obvious causes of Adrenal Fatigue that you can read about almost anywhere include stress, poor **diet**, poor work-life balance, poor sleeping, a lack of control, lack of social support, stressful relationships, mismatch in values or doing a job you hate or don't feel equipped to perform well at.

All of these are boundary issues; they arise because of an inability to draw a clear boundary, an inability to know when to say no, to **know when to stop**, and also not being able to ask for help, and not being able to make healthy choices.

When you are not able to draw and maintain healthy and strong boundaries in your life, you are vulnerable to Adrenal Fatigue.

Adrenal Fatigue affects anybody who tries to do too much but, more specifically, tries to do too much of the wrong thing. When you keep forcing yourself into doing something (or some things) that are not good for you, and that does not make you happy, you open yourself up to Adrenal Fatigue.

This could be staying in a job that you hate or a relationship that isn't working out for you. This could also be drinking and eating things that are not healthy for you, but you do so in order to fit in or to make other people happy.

When you do the wrong thing at home, at work, in a relationship or in the world, **you create an ongoing tension between what you want to do and what you tell yourself to do.** And that drains you of your energy...

Boundary Characteristics

Someone who always keeps others at a distance (whether emotionally, physically, or otherwise) is said to have ***rigid boundaries***. On the other hand, someone who tends to get too involved with others has ***porous boundaries***.

Rigid Boundaries	Porous Boundaries	Healthy Boundaries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Avoids intimacy and close relationships. ➤ Keeps others at a distance to avoid the possibility of rejection. ➤ Unlikely to ask for help. ➤ Has few close relationships. ➤ Very protective of personal information. ➤ May seem detached, even with romantic partners. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Difficulty saying “no” to the requests of others. ➤ Overinvolved with other’s problems. ➤ Overshares personal information. ➤ Dependent on the opinions of others. ➤ Fears rejection if they do not comply with others. ➤ Accepting of abuse or disrespect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Values own opinions. ➤ Knows personal wants and needs, and can communicate them. ➤ Doesn’t compromise values for others. ➤ Shares personal information in an appropriate way (does not over or under share). ➤ Accepting when others say “no” to them.



One size does not fit all. It’s common for people to have a mix of different boundary types. For example, someone may have healthy boundaries at work, porous boundaries in romantic relationships, and a combination of all three types with their family.



The appropriateness of boundaries depends heavily on the situation. What’s appropriate to say when you’re at work might not be appropriate when you’re out with friends.

Types of Boundaries

Physical boundaries are personal space and physical touch but also privacy. Healthy physical boundaries mean that you are aware of what's appropriate and what's not, in different settings and types of relationships. Physical boundaries may be violated if someone stands too close to you, touches you when you don't want them to, or when they invade your personal space (for example, rummaging through your bedroom).

Intellectual boundaries include thoughts and ideas. Healthy intellectual boundaries are about respect for others' ideas and an awareness of appropriate discussion. (Should we talk about the weather or politics?) Intellectual boundaries are violated when someone dismisses or belittles your thoughts or ideas.

Emotional boundaries refer to a person's feelings. Healthy emotional boundaries include limitations on when to share, and when not to share personal information. For example, gradually sharing personal information during the development of a relationship, as opposed to revealing everything to everyone. Emotional boundaries are violated when someone criticizes, belittles, or invalidates your feelings.

Sexual boundaries include the emotional, intellectual, and physical aspects of sexuality. Healthy sexual boundaries involve mutual understanding and respect of limitations and desires between sexual partners. Sexual boundaries can be violated with unwanted sexual touch, pressure to engage in sexual acts or sexual comments.

Material boundaries are about money and possessions. Healthy material boundaries means setting limits on what you will share, and with whom. For example, it may be appropriate to lend money to a family member, but probably not to someone you met this morning. Material boundaries are violated when someone steals or damages your possessions, or when they pressure you to give or lend them your possessions.

Time boundaries refer to how you use your time. To have healthy time boundaries, you should set aside sufficient time for all aspects of your life such as work, relationships, hobbies (quality time with yourself). Time boundaries are violated when another person demands too much of your time.

Boundary Exercise

Think about a person, or a group of persons, with who you struggle to set healthy boundaries. This could mean that your boundaries are too porous (you open up too much) or too rigid (you keep this person at a distance).

Who do you struggle to set healthy boundaries with? (for instance your partner ,colleague or manager)

In your relationship with the person (or a group of persons) you identified above, how are your boundaries in each of the following categories? Place a check in the appropriate column for each category.

Boundary Category	Porous	Healthy	Rigid
Physical Boundaries			
Intellectual Boundaries			
Emotional Boundaries			
Sexual Boundaries			
Material Boundaries			
Time Boundaries			

Take a moment and imagine what it will be like when you begin to establish healthy boundaries with this person. If your boundaries are too porous, it might mean setting limits and saying "no" when you don't want agree to something. If they are too rigid, that might mean to open up.

What are some specific actions you can take to improve your boundaries?

How do you think the other person will respond to these changes?

How do you think your life will be different once you've established healthy boundaries?