

FOCUS WORD: Set boundaries

INTRODUCTION

POSSIBLE ACTIVITIES

See attached material

POSSIBLE RESOURCES

Falling Sparrows

The Swimmer

The Vertical Ladder

8 dozen beer and nothing to do

JOURNAL WRITING

Set Boundaries

Purpose: To practice learning to communicate verbally and nonverbally in order to develop trust.

Group Activity: Silent Lineup

1. Introduce the activity. This is a silent challenge. [You may want to demonstrate or brainstorm other ways to communicate without talking.]

2. Line up. Line up according to ... [a particular order, such as height (tallest to shortest), date of birth (from January 1 to December 31), or any other category].

3. Debrief. Discuss: What was challenging about doing that lineup in silence? What were different ways you communicated with each other? What other creative ways might you do a lineup?

4. Round 2. Now line up according to ... [Give them a second category for lining up.]

5. Debrief. What does this teach us about setting boundaries?

Group Activity: Untangled

1. Form groups. [Divide the participants into groups of up to four, six, or 12 people.] Form a tight circle.

2. Grab first hand. Grab the hand of anyone in the group—except someone standing right next to you.

3. Grab other hand. With your other hand, grab the hand of anyone in the group except the people standing next to you and the person you are already holding hands with.

4. Untangle. The challenge is to get untangled without letting go of each others' hands. This requires a lot of communication and cooperation!

5. Mid-point check-in. Is there anything about this game that is particularly difficult? Has anyone discovered any secrets that might help the rest of the group get untangled?

Note: For additional rounds, add difficulty by making the groups larger or adding restrictions to their communication methods.

6. Debrief. Was this game difficult? How did people feel when they found it hard to get untangled? Was anyone tempted to cheat and just let go of a hand? Shall we try the game again and time ourselves to see how long it takes to get untangled?



Speak Up

Purpose

To explore how you can set stronger boundaries by speaking up.

Prep Steps

1 Butcher/flipchart paper and markers.

- Prepare four posters and write one sentence on each (modify to be relevant to your participants). Cover the posters up until you're ready to reveal them for the game in step 4.
 - 1 Someone you work with or go to school with shouts at you.
 - 2 A friend or family member criticizes you in front of others.
 - 3 Someone is harassing, bullying or gossiping about you.
 - 4 Someone is pressuring you to do something that you don't want to do.

Alternatives

- 1 Use the instructions to have a conversation.
- R Ask participants to offer disrespect scenarios they're going through in their own lives. Modify the posters to list these issues instead. You can also change the format to be a partner share or an individual writing activity.

ACTIVITY

Instructions

●●OPENING●●

- 1 **Share purpose.** Today we will focus on how you can set stronger boundaries to take care of yourself and reach your goals.
- 2 **Define boundaries.** What is a boundary? Who will share their definition? (Get at least three examples.) There are three types of boundaries. (See sidebar.)
- 3 **Discuss self-respecting boundaries.** Your boundaries show that you respect yourself, honor your values and are focused on your goals. In relationships, boundaries aren't just about keeping people out—they're about letting people in. When you share your boundaries, you're showing people how to be close to you and that you're taking care of yourself. And when you respect each other's boundaries, more respect and trust grows. What boundaries do you set to take care of you? Go around the circle and share:
 - To take care of myself, I set boundaries like ...
- 4 **Play the boundary game.** Now, let's play a game to practice setting boundaries. Find a partner and choose one person to be person A and one person to be person B. Person A will set boundaries first. Person B will give you a thumbs up or thumbs down for how assertive your boundary is or isn't. You'll have 30 seconds to set your boundary. Make it direct, using one sentence. Remember, show respect in the way you give feedback.
 - (Display poster 1.) Person A, what's a boundary you can set? Tell Person B.
 - (After 30 seconds.) Person B, was the boundary assertive? Give a thumbs up or thumbs down.
 - (Repeat game with the remaining three posters. Alternate who is setting boundaries between person A and person B.)
- 5 **Debrief.** Let's hear some examples of assertive boundaries that your partner set. (Go through each poster to elicit examples. Get at least one example for each poster.)

●●CLOSING●●

Three Kinds of Boundaries



Assertive boundaries are the most respectful—to yourself and others. They are clear, direct and focused on your feelings or needs, not the other person.

Aggressive boundaries are argumentative, blaming or might even incite violence.

Passive boundaries are unspoken or dishonest, such as when you expect others to read your mind; you lie or you are vague.

Example: You don't want to go to a party because you have an early commitment the next day and you don't drink alcohol.
ASSERTIVE: I'm not going to the party.
AGGRESSIVE: I would never go to that party—I don't drink and you shouldn't either!
PASSIVE: I'll meet you there (and then you won't show up).

Discussion Questions

Here are some additional discussion questions you can use with a  or  to explore and practice Set Boundaries:

- What's important to you? What boundaries are you willing to set to achieve what matters to you?
- What beliefs or values do you live by each day?
- In what situations, or which relationships, do you struggle with keeping boundaries?
- What are ways you can maintain your self-respecting boundaries when you're with friends, family or boyfriend/girlfriend?
- When in your life did you say "yes" even though you really wanted to say "no" instead?
- What feels in balance versus out of control about your life right now?
- Where have you gone past a boundary that you need to re-set?
- What are ways you need to take care of yourself better so don't you H.A.L.T (get too: hungry, angry, lonely, tired)?
- What do you need to stop doing that is causing you too much stress or making you "hate" life?
- What are common situations in which you find yourself feeling resentful towards others? How are your boundaries—or lack of boundaries—connected to these feelings of anger?
- What are ways you take care of yourself each day to reach your goals?
- Based on what we discussed, what's one way you are going to practice Set Boundaries?

●**TIP!**● See card #63 for additional engaging discussion questions.

ACTIVITY

set
BOUNDARIES

Practice

1. In your journal, get clear on your top boundaries. What are you saying YES to and what are you saying NO to?
2. **Your values.** What's important to you? What beliefs do you live by?
3. **Self-care.** How can you take care of yourself each day? Remember your goals, how you want to feel and how you want to treat people.
4. **Work, school, volunteering and passions.** What do you need to stop doing that is stressing you out or making you hate life? What do you love that you want to do more often?
5. **Relationships.** How do you want to maintain your self-respect when you're around friends, family or BF/GFs? Where have you gone past a boundary you need to re-set?