

The Real You 101: Healthy Boundaries in a Demanding World

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Relational Boundaries

RELATIONAL boundaries are boundaries that are in place for the various types of relationships that you have in your life. Relational boundaries are the big guns and where most of us see the impact of unhealthy boundaries in all the other areas of our life... because there is nothing like a partner, kid, best friend, frenemy, co-worker, or boss to showcase where things are out of balance.

Developing an awareness of our relational boundaries will give us a foundation for future work on emotional, energetic, and spiritual boundaries.

○ What are my 3 prominent relational issues right now?

(This can be positive, negative, frustrating, painful, warm and fuzzy, etc. Make sure they are three relationships/issues that you have a definitive feeling about.)

1.

2.

3.

○ The Drama Triangle

Post nearby!

Stop the Drama!

PERSECUTOR
(Bully)
to
Challenger

"This is your fault."
"You're not OK but I am so do what I tell you."

- Critical
- Puts other down
- Blames and finger points
- Keeps victim down
- Driven by anger or resentment
- Rigid in thinking
- Bossy
- Dominating

Move to **Challenger** with **Clear Structure**

State Boundaries:
"I am willing to listen to your story for ten minutes."

Active Listen:
"I am willing to listen to *your problem* without making it mine to solve."

Make expectations clear:
"I want you to keep your agreement. Please have it done by Tuesday."

Provide choices:
"You can either keep your agreement or I will no longer be involved. You choose."

VICTIM
(Helpless)
to **Survivor/Thriver**

"Poor me. I give up."
"I'm not OK and everybody else is."

- Feels oppressed, hopeless, ashamed, powerless, incapable and misunderstood.
- Seeks to hook up with a rescuer to validate the above feelings.
- Refuses to make decisions, solve problems, get professional help, do self-care or change.

Move to **Survivor/Thriver** with **Problem Solving**

State what you want: and take action.

Keep Agreements: If someone helps, do your part by following through.

Ask Yourself: "How can I get what I really want in a healthy way?"

Count Your Blessings: Acknowledge your strengths and what is going well.

Remember: *You make you!* and *You're stronger than you think!*

RESCUER
(Saviour)
to
Coach

"You need my help."
"You're not OK but I am nice and will fix you."

- Provides support when doesn't want to.
- Feels guilty and anxious if doesn't rescue.
- Feels connected when *victim* is dependent.
- Rescuing creates sense of being capable.
- Often expects to fail in *rescue mission*.

Move to **Coach** with **Clear Support**

Give the message:
"I care about you and I know you are capable."

Do nothing that the other can do for him or herself.
"I know you can do this."


Active Listen:
"I am willing to listen to your problem without making it mine to solve."

State boundaries:
"I am willing to listen for twenty minutes."

Provide Choices:
"I will listen for fifteen minutes now or you may call back next Tuesday. You choose."

Notes:

- 1) Adapted from *The Drama Triangle* by Stephen Karpman
- 2) For more details read: Relationship Drama Part 1 & Relationship Drama Part 2 at <http://SolutionsForResilience.com/blog/>



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○ Identify Yourself

In the three different situations you listed above, go back and identify yourself and the others involved as: Victims, Rescuers, or Persecutors. (You can add in people if you realize are playing a role in your relationship, either directly or indirectly.)

1. Relational issue #1

-
-
-

2. Relational issue #2

-
-
-

3. Relational issue #3

-
-
-

Using either information from our call or tips from the Drama Triangle image on the previous page, list one step YOU can take to shift YOUR ROLE to the positive aspects of that role: Challenger, Thriver, or Coach.

1. Relational Issue #1

- Your role:
- The step you'll take to shift that role:

2. Relational Issue #2

- Your role:
- The step you'll take to shift that role:

3. Relational Issue #3

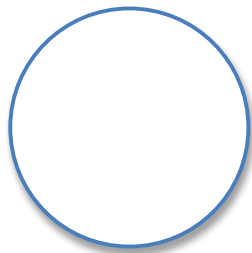
- Your role:
- The step you'll take to shift that role:

○ Solar System

1. Choose 4-8 people in your life, who are closest to you. Plot them on the paper at a position and distance significant to you. Draw circles (or other shapes) around them

2. Draw lines connecting you to these different people. These lines are like spokes on a wheel connected to you. These lines can be thick and bold, thin, jagged, dotted, loopy, any line you want. This is an opportunity to draw lines that represent an aspect of the connection you have to different people. For example, if my relationship to a specific person is hot and cold, I might draw a dotted line to show both connection and distance.

Illustrate the energy input and output each relationship represents. The question you are answering is: in this moment, is this relationship giving me energy and support or draining my energy? Using (+/-) or arrows to show the energy giving and energy depleting for your relationships.



○ Is there anyone I have improper relational boundaries with?

This can look like enmeshment, imbalance of power, wanting to be the cool kid (even as an adult), etc. Use your body compass because our heads can talk us into a lot of relationship dynamics that might not be serving us OR the other person in a healthy manner.

1.

2.

3.

○ What has been challenging about working on Relational Boundaries this week?

1.

2.

3.

○ Ways I will continue strengthen my Relational Boundaries

1.

2.

3.

Resources:

1. Dale, Cyndi (2011). Energetic Boundaries Sounds True.
2. Katherine, Anne (2010). Boundaries Where You End And I Begin: How To Recognize And Set Healthy Boundaries (p. 14). Hazelden Publishing.
3. <http://www.livestrong.com/article/14718-building-healthy-boundaries/>