

BOUNDARIES MY SPONSOR TAUGHT ME

I want to set boundaries in a loving, gentle and polite way. At first it was difficult and I blurted them out in a less than graceful way. But in the beginning the point is to set them. Progress not perfection.

I. EXTERNAL BOUNDARIES (*Things I say to other people ...*) I begin my boundary by saying:

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| a. | "I want..." | "I don't want..." |
| b. | "I like it when..." | "I don't like it when..." |
| c. | "It's ok with me..." | "It's not ok with me..." |
| d. | "I appreciate it when..." | "I don't appreciate it when..." |
| e. | "I am available for..." | "I'm not available for..." |
| f. | "I'm willing to..." | "I'm not willing to..." |
| g. | "I am comfortable with..." | "I am not comfortable with..." |

... then I immediately follow my statement with **"Do you understand?"** (and say no more.)

When I set a boundary the other person may argue. If that happens, first I listen quietly (saying nothing in return) until they stop*. I then reply with **"I hear you and I understand. Nevertheless..."** (here I restate my boundary in the *exact* same words I used the first time), followed by, **"Do you understand?"** (Repeat this process as many times as necessary, remembering to state your boundary *exactly* the same each time. *Don't explain, justify or argue*). ***If the other's argument or verbal push-back becomes abusive or frightening, stand up and leave.**

This stuff really works. And the people with whom I've set boundaries usually respect them, and they respect me more because I have boundaries...and I can feel it. This is so powerful! And the calmer and gentler I set them the stronger they seem to be.

II. INTERNAL BOUNDARIES (*Things I say to myself when I'm out of whack*). Sometimes I mix these and use more than one at a time.

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| a. | "Don't go there." | b. | "That behavior is not about me." |
| c. | "Stop it." | d. | "Turn it over. Detach from it. Let go and let God." |
| e. | "Oh well." | f. | "It isn't always about me." |
| g. | "Put down the stick" | h. | "That's not my business. Hands off." |
| i. | "Is that my business?" | j. | "No one asked me (my opinion/my help)" |
| k. | "Am I taking care of my Self?" | l. | "No blaming. No Whining" |

NOTE: *What I've learned about setting boundaries is that if the word "you" appears anywhere in my boundary, it's not a boundary. It is an attempt to control someone else's behavior. If my boundaries don't remain focused on my needs and my actions I just end up with yet another amends to make! Boundaries are for me. They are strong spiritual fences around my spiritual turf.*

THE CONTRACT THAT SETS MY SPIRIT FREE

(and makes boundaries more effective)

It is called the No DREJJ contract. Try it for one month. If you find it useful keep using it. I was going to use it for a month. That was 2002 and I still use it today. On the lines below write examples of what these actions look like to you.

No Defending _____

No Rationalizing _____

No Explaining _____

No Justifying _____

No Judging _____