

An Honest Conversation on Boundaries 2.0

“A boundary is any limit I need to honor so I can love or work with you without resentment and with integrity.” – Dr. David Gruder

Setting healthy boundaries requires self-awareness and reflection. Take a few moments to answer* the questions below regarding a boundary you may be struggling with now. Start with a deep breath (breathing out longer than in). Now do that several more times. Pause. Now proceed and reflect.

* writing down the answers, or at least saying them out loud, can be impactful.

- 1) What are “healthy boundaries” to you? Why are they important? Why do you want to set them?
- 2) How does a lack of boundaries show up in your life? What do you notice?
 - a. Pay attention to emotional and physical [signals](#). Some feelings that often signal the need to set boundaries are irritability, resentment, overwhelm, anxiety, and dread. Physical signs may include tension, headaches, upset stomach, and fatigue. These are all important cues that boundaries may need to be set or reassessed.
- 3) What has worked for you in the past with setting a boundary? What has yet to work?
- 4) What are the costs of not setting the boundary? What makes this boundary important?
- 5) What is the belief/story you are telling yourself about setting the boundary?
- 6) What is the worst-case scenario if I do set the boundary?
- 7) What helps me tolerate discomfort in other areas of my life? What resources can I tap into?
- 8) What are some specific actions you can take to improve a boundary?
- 9) How do you think your life will be different once you have established a healthy boundary?

Healthy boundary setting is an ongoing practice. There are times when you will do it well, and there are times when you will learn and grow from how you set the boundary. There is no perfection here. There is only trying and then trying again. Remember to give yourself and others grace.

If you want additional help with boundary setting, do not hesitate to reach out to the [D.C. Bar Lawyer Assistance Program](#), which offers free and confidential services.

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