

# Safe Environment Middle School Lesson

Healthy Boundaries

# *Boundary*

**Defined...**

**SOMETHING THAT INDICATES A  
BORDER OR LIMIT**

**BOUNDARIES** ARE IMPORTANT IN FRIENDSHIPS BECAUSE THEY DETERMINE WHERE YOU START AND END, AND WHERE THE OTHER PERSON STARTS. JUST AS AN OWNER OF REAL ESTATE MAY BE ANGRY TO HAVE SOMEONE TRESPASS ON LAND THAT IS OWNED, WE BECOME ANGRY AND HURT WHEN ANOTHER PERSON TRESPASSES ON OUR PERSONAL BOUNDARIES.



# **THE PURPOSE OF HAVING BOUNDARIES**

**IS TO PROTECT AND TAKE CARE OF OURSELVES. WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO TELL OTHER PEOPLE WHEN THEY ARE ACTING IN WAYS THAT ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE TO US. A FIRST STEP IS STARTING TO KNOW THAT WE HAVE A RIGHT TO PROTECT AND DEFEND OURSELVES. THAT WE HAVE NOT ONLY THE RIGHT, BUT THE DUTY TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR HOW WE ALLOW OTHERS TO TREAT US.**



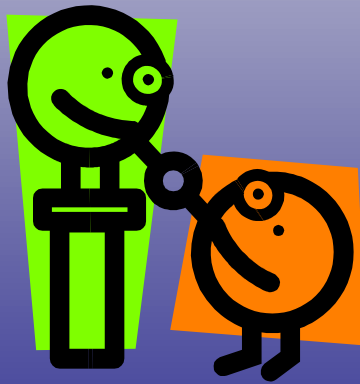
# Types of Boundaries

- **PHYSICAL**
- **MENTAL**
- **EMOTIONAL**



# Physical Boundaries

**PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES REFER TO THE AREA AROUND A PERSON (PERSONAL SPACE), WHICH IS GENERALLY 2.5 TO 3 FEET. HEALTHY BOUNDARIES RESPECT PERSONAL SPACE.**



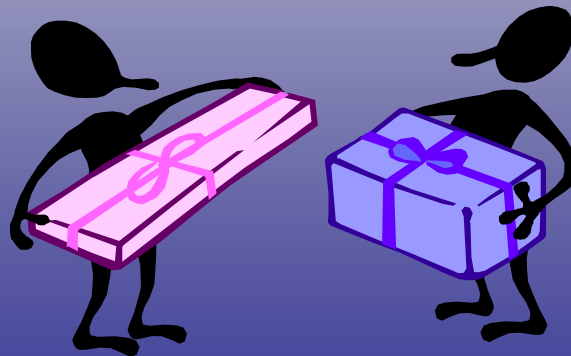
# Mental Boundaries

**MENTAL BOUNDARIES INCLUDE MANY IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF LIFE: BELIEFS, THOUGHTS, DECISIONS, AND CHOICES.**



# Emotional Boundaries

**EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES** REFER TO A PERSON'S SELF-ESTEEM AND FEELINGS. NAME CALLING OR LABELING A PERSON CAN HAVE NEGATIVE EFFECTS, EVEN IN JEST. HUMOR IS A POWERFUL TOOL, AND IT SHOULD BE USED WISELY AND NEVER TO HURT.

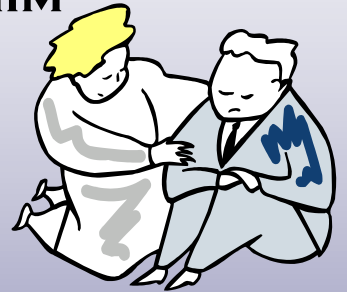




# Possible Unhealthy Boundaries

## **YOU...**

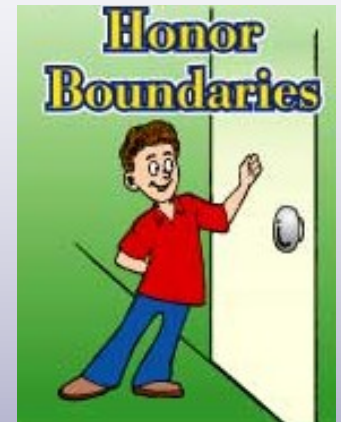
- **TELL YOUR FRIENDS INTIMATE PERSONAL INFORMATION**
- **MEET A TOTAL STRANGER AT THE MALL AND INVITE HIM INTO YOUR HOME**
- **GIVE YOUR PHONE NUMBER OUT TO EVERYONE**
- **CHAT WITH AND SHARE PHOTOS OF YOURSELF WITH STRANGERS ON THE INTERNET**
- **POST PERSONAL INFORMATION ON THE INTERNET**
- **LET A FAMILY FRIEND HUG YOU ALL THE TIME AND FOR TOO LONG**
- **GIVE MONEY TO YOUR BEST FRIENDS**
- **WALK INTO YOUR FRIEND'S HOUSE WITHOUT KNOCKING**



# Setting Boundaries

**LEARNING TO SET BOUNDARIES IS VITAL TO LEARNING TO LOVE ONESELF, AND TO COMMUNICATING TO OTHERS THAT WE HAVE WORTH.**

**THERE ARE BASICALLY THREE PARTS TO A BOUNDARY. THE FIRST TWO ARE SETTING THE BOUNDARY - THE THIRD IS WHAT WE WILL DO TO MAINTAIN AND PROTECT THAT BOUNDARY.**



**If you** - a description of the behavior we find unacceptable

**I will** - a description of what action you will take to protect and take care of your self in the event the other person violates the boundary.

**If you continue this behavior** - a description of what steps you will take to protect the boundary that you have set.

# What Do You Think?

## ARE THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES OF HEALTHY BOUNDARIES?



### WHY/WHY NOT?

- “EVER SINCE JOHNNY WAS FIVE YEARS OLD, HIS MOTHER WOULD WALK INTO THE BATHROOM WHILE HE WAS BATHING. HE IS NOW TEN YEARS OLD AND SHE STILL WALKS IN ON HIM.”
- “UNCLE CHARLIE, A FAMILY FRIEND, WOULD BOUNCE ME ON HIS LAP WHEN HE’D COME OVER. I’M 12 YEARS OLD AND HE STILL WANTS TO BOUNCE ME ON HIS LAP.”
- “A SCHOOL FRIEND OF MINE WALKS RIGHT UP TO ME, WITHIN 2 OR 3 INCHES OF MY FACE, TO TALK TO ME. “
- “MY SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER SHAKES MY HAND EACH TIME HE SEES ME. ACTUALLY, HE SHAKES EVERY STUDENT’S HAND.”

# Examples of Setting Boundaries

**“I would appreciate it if you don’t hug me all the time. It makes me feel uncomfortable. If you continue, I will no longer spend time with you.”**

**“If you ever hit me, I will call the police and press charges - and I will leave this relationship. If you continue to threaten me, I will get a restraining order and prepare to defend myself in whatever manner is necessary.”**

**“Whenever you make fun of me and make me the brunt of your jokes, it really hurts my feelings. I would appreciate it if you stop. If you continue with the insults, then I will stop hanging out with you.”**

**“When you carve stuff on your wrists and arms with a razor, it really scares me. It really is not healthy for you to be doing that stuff. You need to stop hurting yourself. If you continue, then I will call your parents”**



# Reflect For A Moment...

**WHAT ABOUT YOUR BOUNDARIES?**

**WHAT ABOUT THE BOUNDARIES OF  
OTHERS:**

**FAMILY?**

**FRIENDS?**

**ACQUAINTANCES?**

**STRANGERS?**



# A Final Thought...

**Jesus is our guide in all things. In the Scriptures, we find He rarely spoke harshly to anyone. Some of his harder sayings, however, were reserved for those who would harm others.**

**Jesus was also One who forgave, and continues to do so today. His nature and interaction with us is redemptive. In any circumstance where we have failed to attend to modesty, misused language or humor, or exploded our anger, we can begin again with our hope in Christ's compassion.**

**Finally, we should remember the gold rule: **Treat others the way you want to be treated.** Being an example is always the best teacher- and what we do always overwhelms and overshadows and outreaches what we say.**

