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“Our Lives Under Construction”

*A series on building healthy relationships in our marriages,
our homes, our workplaces, our friends, and our world!*

“Putting Up Walls – Establishing Healthy Boundaries” Part 3 – Walls

*“It was You who set all the boundaries of the earth;
You made both summer and winter.” Psalm 74:17*

A. God is the author of boundaries in relationships...

“And the LORD God commanded the man, ‘You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will surely die.’” Genesis 2:16-17

1. The Ten Commandments were given as boundaries to protect relationships.

“And God spoke all these words...” Exodus 20:1

2. The promises of God were given as a means of increasing our relationships with Him and others.

“Then you will have success if you are careful to observe the decrees and laws that the LORD gave Moses for Israel. Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or discouraged.” 1 Chronicles 22:13

“If My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land.” 2 Chronicles 7:14

3. The biblical instructions were given to establish healthy relationships within the church and families.

“Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need...so that the church can help those widows who are really in need.” 1 Timothy 5:3-16

4. The need for discipline was given to help maintain boundaries. Violation of boundaries will always cause a loss in relationship!

“Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him. You may be sure that such a man is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned.” Titus 3:10-11

B. God provided boundaries to...

“When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place,” Psalm 8:3

1. Boundaries were given to protect relationships.
“But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God’s holy people. Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a man is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient. Therefore do not be partners with them.” Ephesians 5:3-7

2. Boundaries were given to bring security to our relationships.

“We know that anyone born of God does not continue to sin; the one who was born of God keeps him safe, and the evil one cannot harm him.” 1 John 5:18

3. Boundaries were given to bring freedom to our relationships.

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32

4. Boundaries were given to bring order and greater effectiveness to all relationships.

“Dominion and awe belong to God; He established order in the heights of heaven. Can His forces be numbered? Upon whom does His light not rise?” Job 25:2

“I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” John 10:10

C. Unhealthy boundaries will hinder our relationships...

“For I am afraid that when I come I may not find you as I want you to be, and you may not find me as you want me to be. I fear that there may be quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder. I am afraid that when I come again my God will humble me before you, and I will be grieved over many who have sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual sin and debauchery in which they have indulged.” 2 Corinthians 12:20-21

1. Unhealthy boundaries fail to accept personal responsibility.

“‘Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?’” The man said, ‘The woman you put here with me—she gave me some fruit from the tree, and I ate it.’” Genesis 3:11b-12

2. Unhealthy boundaries fail to fill the real need in our lives.

“In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews

because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve... said, ‘It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables... choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word.’” Acts 6:1-4

3. Unhealthy boundaries fail to use our energies in the areas where God intended.

“I plead with Euodia and Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with (others)...whose names are in the book of life.” Philippians 4:2-3

4. Unhealthy boundaries fail to see who we are in Christ.

“For if you possess these qualities in increasing measure, they will keep you from being ineffective and unproductive in your knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. But if anyone does not have them, he is nearsighted and blind, and has forgotten that he has been cleansed from his past sins. Therefore, my brothers, be all the more eager to make your calling and election sure. For if you do these things, you will never fall, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.” 2 Peter 1:8-11

D. Building healthy relationships through healthy boundaries...

“that all of them may be one, Father, just as You are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in Us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me.” John 17:21

1. Healthy boundaries realize that life is full of choices.

“But if serving the LORD seems undesirable to you, then choose for yourselves this day whom you will serve,” Joshua 24:15

2. Healthy boundaries realize that I am responsible for my own choices.

“The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’” Luke 15:21

3. Healthy boundaries are continually in a process of growth and understanding.

“I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.” Philippians 4:12

4. Healthy boundaries develop healthy relationships.

“I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.” Philippians 4:13

Healthy and Unhealthy Boundaries in Relationships

Healthy

- Feeling like your own person
- Feeling responsible for your own happiness
- Togetherness and separateness are balanced
- Friendships exist outside of the relationship
- Focuses on the best qualities of both people
- Achieving intimacy without chemicals
- Open, honest, and assertive communication
- Commitment to the partner
- Respecting the differences in the partner
- Accepting changes in the relationship
- Asking honestly for what is wanted
- Accepting endings

Unhealthy

- Feeling incomplete without your partner
- Relying on your partner for your happiness
- Too much or too little togetherness
- Inability to establish and maintain friendships with others
- Focuses on the worst qualities of the partners
- Using alcohol/drugs to reduce inhibitions and achieve a false sense of intimacy
- Game-playing, unwillingness to listen, manipulation
- Jealousy, relationship addiction, or lack of commitment
- Blaming the partner for his or her own unique qualities
- Feeling that the relationship should always be the same
- Feeling unable to express what is wanted
- Unable to let go

What do people believe who have not accepted personal responsibility?

- * It's not my fault I am the way I am.
- * I never asked to be born.
- * Now that you have me, what are you going to do with me?
- * I want you to fix me.
- * Life is unfair! There is no sense in trying to take control of my life.
- * Why go on; I see no use in it.
- * You can't help me; nobody can help me. I'm useless and a failure.
- * God has asked too much of me this time. There is no way I'll ever be able to handle this.
- * When do the troubles and problems cease? I'm tired of all this.
- * Stop the world; I want to get off.
- * Life is so depressing. If only I had better luck and had been born to a healthier family, or attended a better school, or gotten a better job, etc.
- * How can you say I am responsible for what happens to me in the future? There is fate, luck, politics, greed, envy, wicked and jealous people, and other negative influences that have a greater bearing on my future than I have.
- * How can I ever be happy, seeing how bad my life has been?
- * My parents made me what I am today!
- * The problems in my family have influenced who I am and what I will be; there is nothing I can do to change that.
- * Racism, bigotry, prejudice, sexism, ageism, and closed-mindedness all stand in the way of my becoming what I really want to be.
- * No matter how hard I work, I will never get ahead.
- * You have to accept the luck of the draw.
- * I am who I am; there is no changing me.
- * No one is going to call me crazy, depressed, or troubled and then try to change me.

Terms used to describe those who have not accepted personal responsibility include martyrs, self-pitying, depressed, losers, quitters, chronically angry, dependent personalities, complainers, addictive personalities, blamers, stubborn, persons in denial, troubled people, stuck, fearful, pessimists, despondent, mentally unstable, obstinate, hostile, aggressive, irresponsible, weak, guilt-ridden, resistant to help, passive, irrational, insecure, neurotic, obsessed, and lost.

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Setting Boundaries must include three parts...

If you... a description of the behavior we find unacceptable (being as descriptive as possible.)

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.

