

Boundaries can be healthy and unhealthy. Boundaries can be used to keep yourself from hurting and manipulating others. Boundaries don't just affect your love life, they extend to family members, co-workers and even strangers. **Start by acknowledging what you can do and what you can't do. You can control your feelings. You can't control other's feelings. You can control your actions. You can't control other's actions.** It is very important to get the wording right; because that will affect whether you use boundaries as a tool to help yourself, or as a weapon to hurt others.

A healthy boundary keeps you from being taken advantage of but be careful that you don't create bad boundaries in attempts to get your way.

Compromises

Compromises are the sacrifices you make from the way you would desire things to be, but never from the boundaries of how things must be.

Categories: Emotional, Physical, Intellectual/Spiritual, Sexual and Financial

Emotional:

- When we have people we care about, we may not notice we are taking on their problems or emotions and it is affecting us. It feels good to be the person your friend turns to, but **it's not your responsibility to make someone else happy. You can only take care of yourself.**

Physical:

- "I won't have my kids around unsafe people." If their daddy is involved in drugs, dangerous activity or is abusive, then that definitely crosses the line.
- **It is not okay to use your children as bargaining tools.**
- **Boundaries should be very clearly communicated, but also not just preferences.**

Intellectual/Spiritual:

- Intellectual and spiritual values and beliefs are different for everyone, but mutual respect is universal.
- A good boundary for discussing religion or politics is, "I will not be insulting or offensive with my beliefs."

Sexual:

- Two things that cause marriages or relationships to fall apart are communication and sex. When the two of you are on the same page about everything, you will feel the most loved. Any pressuring into sex or pressure to do anything you don't want to do can be completely avoided by communicating clear expectations.

Financial:

- If you aren't married, a good boundary is "I won't share a bank account with anyone." If you are married a good boundary is "I won't be stolen from."
- **Consequences don't have to end in separation or divorce, but if communicating results in no change, seek counseling and take it from there.**

At first, boundaries will have to be intentional, but eventually they will become routine. Choose your battles wisely: it's about your safety, peace and freedom. You shouldn't have to walk on eggshells around anyone, but you also don't need to have your way all the time.

One way to check if your values are petty is to ask: will this matter in a week? A month? A year???

Remember, the decisions you make today will create a better life for you and your family a week, month, and year from now.