

SETTING BOUNDARIES

Most of us enter recovery full of fear and confusion in all areas of our lives. Becoming aware of the woman we present to others is essential in understanding how people react and treat us. Low self-esteem, low self-worth, and the need to be liked by all (even those we don't like or want in our lives) lead us to become "people pleasers". This prevents us from stating how we feel, saying "no", or making our own decisions.

We often made the role of "Mother", Wife", "Girlfriend", you can add to the list, one of sacrifice for "the good of others". What we were looking for was love and adoration regardless of the effect on us. Through working the 12 steps in our lives, we learn that we are intelligent, competent women who can stand on our own two feet and voice a preference. This knowledge doesn't come over night. It is something we slowly work through.

Take the baby steps. Start by telling someone that you will need them to babysit or will meet them later – and you attend your much needed meeting; or you can't meet the girls for lunch – because you are meeting your sponsor. As you begin to change you realize that you have laid down and said "doormat right here!" so that you would feel loved and adored.

We hesitate to stand up for ourselves because of fear of rejection or anger. Learning to say "no" and sticking to it is not easy. Compromise is sometimes necessary. Learn what feels right for you. Remember, this is a journey, not an event. Starting with changes such as surrounding yourself with positive, encouraging women is vital to your growth.

Remember, you are on a path to becoming a confident, capable woman. That means no more "superwoman" and no more "door mat". Balance is the aim and learning to set and implement your boundaries takes practice and persistence.

Take advantage of available help to become a more confident woman. Along with a Twelve Step program you may need therapy (dealing with the past) or a coach (determining and aiming for your future goals). You are worth the effort. Let the miracle happen!

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