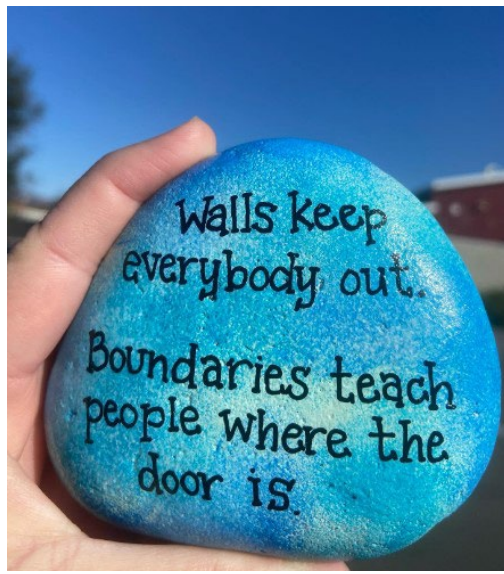




Season of Change Series: The Beauty in Boundaries November 7th

Healthy boundaries are beautiful and build stronger and more understanding relationships.

Boundaries are not brick walls; they are like beautiful picket fences.



Boundaries are about us, our *own* behavior, choices, and limits, not other peoples.

- They're about what we are willing to engage in
- Healthy boundaries are about feeling valued, feeling respected
- Healthy boundaries are about safely allowing people into your life in ways that you are comfortable with
- We have been conditioned to think that boundaries are bad, but really, they are life saving

How do I know when a boundary is needed?

- When you feel anger or resentment towards someone.
- You feel dread around a certain topic of conversation.
- In relationships where you tend to agree to things to avoid confrontation.
- When you feel that you're being disrespected by others.
- You feel drained interacting with certain people OR you simply avoid them.

How to create a boundary?

- Use clear and kind language but make it about you. Some examples:
 - o "Thank you for inviting me, but I cannot attend."
 - o "I would like to, but I am unavailable."
 - o "I don't find that joke funny, please don't say it again."
 - o "I feel hurt when you do "x." Do you think we can try "y?"
 - o "I can't add anything to my to-do list right now unless we reprioritize."
 - o "Going forward, I will not be able to do "x."
 - o "I can't do "x," but I can help you with "y."
 - o "I am not having this conversation with you. Let's talk about "x" or maybe we need to take a time out."
 - o "In the future I need you to include me in decisions."
 - o "Please give me some space." -or- "Let's take a timeout."
 - o "I don't want to do that. Can we do "x" instead?"
- Be consistent and intentional with your message.
 - o Many of us FEAR upsetting others or feeling rejected. You are NOT responsible for the other person's reaction to the boundary you are setting. If it upsets them, that's their problem.

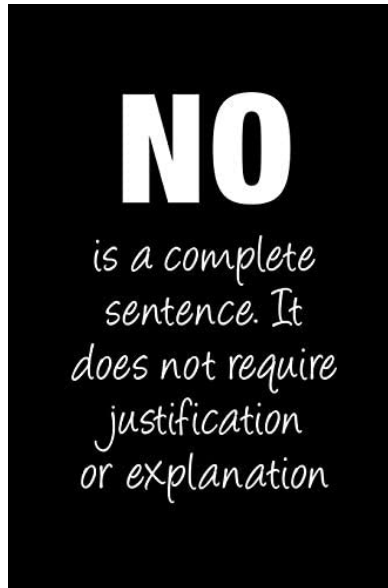
**The number one
reason people
don't enforce
their Boundaries:**

They're afraid the person
will get upset.





- We aren't trying to control other people OR their actions by setting boundaries

Specific boundaries we covered based upon collective responses:

SAYING NO:



When you say yes to something, you are inevitably saying no to something else. Most often the one impacted is you, something important or of value to you.

  ** Remember the flower analogy. If you start each day with 1500 flowers, remember to preserve those for who you want to share them with, including yourself, and try to find others who will share their flowers with you. **  

Remember:

- People will take as much as we are willing to give.
- The more we say yes, the more people will ask.
- Keep your 'no' simple, diplomatic, and candid:
 - o "I appreciate your predicament, but I just don't have the bandwidth to fit it into my own workload. Thanks for understanding.'
 - o "I would love for the kids to have a play date today (last minute) But we have other family commitments."
 - o "Thank you so much for the invite but that night doesn't work for me."
- Try saying no but suggesting alternatives that meet your needs
 - o "I'd prefer not to go happy hour BUT how about we take the dogs for a walk"

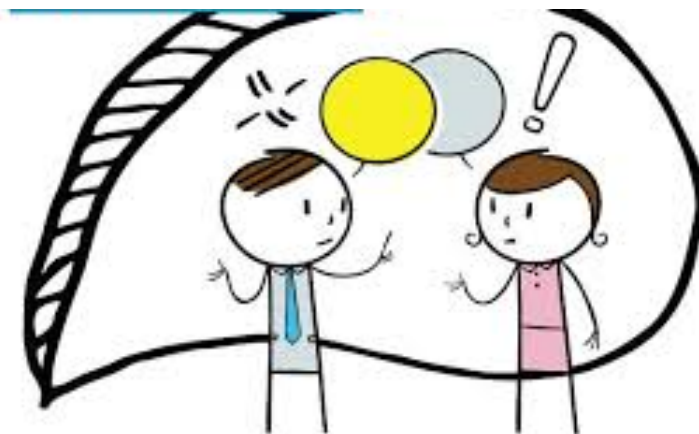
TOUCHY TOPICS:

The holidays are coming and there are subjects that we KNOW are going to set the turkey running for cover.

Here are 3 methods of response:

1. **HONESTY:**
 - a. "I'm not comfortable with this subject let's move on."
 - b. "Thanks, but I don't need your advice."
2. **HUMOUR:**
 - a. "How about them Bears?"
 - b. "What's for dessert?"
 - c. "What's the weather like tomorrow?"
3. **SETTING RULES** before the conversation starts –
 - a. "I hear you, input but I'm going to stick to my schedule/game plan/routine because it works for ME."
 - b. "While I believe you're trying to be helpful, these types of comments are hurtful so I would appreciate you not offering unsolicited advice or comments about my home."
 - c. "I appreciate your concern, but I've got this."

***Remember THE GREY ROCK analogy. If the conversation becomes uncomfortable simply think of a rock, lack of emotion or movement. You don't need to participate. Find the right time to excuse yourself from the conversation. ***



STAND YOUR GROUND, DON'T CHANGE YOUR ROUTINES IF THEY ARE HEALTHY FOR YOU.

The good news is that the holidays are a time to bring people together. Sometimes that means that you are traveling, or others are traveling to you. It's important to stick to the habits that you have even if that means that they might not align with the expectations others may have on you – which has nothing to do with you.

Here are a few examples:

1. If physical activity is important to you, find the time to keep it in your daily routine. There is also room for compromise. Perhaps you can't go on a three hour walk, could you do an hour?
2. Try to limit you being talked into something you don't want to do.
 - a. Family not happy about you choosing one group over the other?
 - i. "Perhaps we try and get together on another day, time?"

Be mindful of your choices

Every day we are bombarded with choices, and it is important to stop and ask ourselves what feels light and right in our hearts. Stop and think about how you feel about the choices you are making. Before you try to please someone else, make sure you are honoring your path and respecting your boundaries.

FEELINGS OF GUILT:

If you're not used to setting boundaries you will feel icky, anxious, guilty, but it gets easier with practice. Like anything you must flex your muscle memory and shift your mindset.

A couple things to consider if you are having an internal struggle with creating a boundary:

1. Think about why you are saying no and what you'd be giving up if you said yes.
2. Remember boundaries are about YOU.
3. We aren't out to offend people or lose friends but as you practice boundaries, those that are receiving them may react in a way that is personal to them. Remember, you are NOT responsible for another's reaction.
4. Please don't apologize for the boundaries you are setting. Try not to apologize for your decisions. Practice the below sentences:
 - "I can see that you are disappointed, and I hope you'll respect that this is what's best for me"
 - "I understand you are upset but please understand this is my answer"
 - "I'm sorry this is how you are choosing to experience this conversation"
5. While you absolutely want others, especially your adult children to be happy, we cannot instill happiness in others.

FIND YOURSELF AN ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER:

It might be hard at first, but if you have someone to encourage you or "practice" how you implement boundaries it will make a difference.

Lean into our Modern Prairie community to help. Join the Beauty in Boundaries Facebook Group @OfficialModernPrairie and comment, share, encourage and invite, others.

Email us:

Boundaries@ModernPrairie.com