

Boundaries is a book about setting and maintaining boundaries by saying yes and no at the right times. It's written by Drs. Henry Cloud and John Townsend, who are Christian psychiatrists. Boundaries helps readers identify their weaknesses in saying no to others, as well as examine how boundaries are presented in the Bible. The authors also discuss the symptoms of unhappiness that arise when someone can't say no (e.g., being unappreciated, disrespected, stressed out from doing too much at home or work).

A person's reluctance to set boundaries is rooted in their childhood. If a parent withdraws affection or becomes angry when a child does something they dislike, the child will be reluctant to say no as an adult because that could cost them relationships or anger others.

People who don't set boundaries have trouble in all areas of their lives. They struggle with relationships, especially with parents, spouses, and children. They also have problems with friends, coworkers and bosses, God or other spiritual figures they believe in (such as a higher power), and even themselves. A person can take back control by saying no to someone lovingly but firmly without apologizing for it. It's important to do this slowly rather than setting boundaries on many people at once. A boundaryless person should also be ready to deal with resistance from others because some people will not like them after the change has been made.

There will be challenges when trying to set boundaries, but the benefits of doing so can have a positive effect on relationships and lower stress levels.

#### Key Takeaways

Some Christians have trouble saying no to others, which makes them unhappy and less productive.

Fear is the main reason why many people are not able to say no. Many fear losing love or making someone angry, so they end up saying yes instead of no. Those who take advantage of boundaryless people aren't a problem; rather, it's the boundaryless themselves who need to take control over their lives and stop letting other people push them around. Setting boundaries doesn't mean that you're selfish or cruel—it means that you respect yourself enough to make decisions about what will happen in your life. The boundaryless have been allowing others to walk all over them for a long time, and when they finally start standing up for themselves, they can expect resistance from those who have taken advantage of them in the past. Because of this resistance, longtime boundaryless must begin setting boundaries gradually. They should also surround themselves with positive support systems. When the boundaryless do begin saying no, however, it needs to be done without apology. Boundary setters need to stipulate consequences that will face if someone else resists their decision.

Setting boundaries with people in your life can help you gain control of your own life and be happier. It's important to set boundaries for yourself, as well as those who take advantage of you.

Key Takeaway 1: Some Christians' refusal to say no to others, to set boundaries, makes them unhappy, resentful, tired, stressed, and less productive than they should be.

#### Analyze

Some American Evangelical Christians tend to set no boundaries around themselves, letting others take advantage of them. They do too much housework, give away their time and attention to friends and family members, and do more work than they should for their bosses. Not only that, but there is also misinformation about setting boundaries in religious teachings that can make the problem worse by causing psychological issues such as depression.

on or panic disorders.

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A survey conducted by Harris Interactive Incorporated shows that stress levels have risen in the past five years. People are stressed about work, family and health

concerns. They feel fatigued, depressed or sad, nervous or anxious and overwhelmed. The findings also show that people believe they would be healthier if they had willpower to eat better and exercise more often.

Key Takeaway 2: Fear is the main reason many boundaryless fail to say no. Many fear losing love or making someone angry.

People who have been badly treated in their childhood often fear being alone and feeling like a bad person. They develop these fears as they grow up. Stan, for example, whose parents withheld love from him and made him feel angry when he did something wrong, never learned to say no.

Robert Burney, author of the book "The Dance of Wounded Souls" and codependence therapist, grew up believing he had the power to break his mother's heart and make his

father angry. The reason this belief was formed was because when Robert did something that upset his parents, they would act anguished or angry. Basically, he believed that if people got really upset with him, then it meant he could hurt them just as much as they were hurting him. This carried over into adulthood where it manifested itself in a reluctance to say no to others out of fear of losing relationships or making others mad at him.

Key Takeaway 3: Those who take advantage of the boundaryless are not the problem. The boundaryless need to take control.

Many people blame others for their problems because they want to avoid responsibility. They think that if they can shift the blame, then they won't have to take action themselves. However, this is a cop-out and it's not helpful in the long run.

People who are unable to say no blame others for their unhappiness. They think that if someone helped them more often or criticized them less, they would be happier.

However, this is not true because the people causing these boundaryless people grief will probably never change. Therefore, it's better for the boundaryless person to change themselves by taking a new approach to the problem rather than blaming others and expecting them to change as well.

Key Takeaway 4: Setting boundaries does not mean a person is unloving, against the biblical view of boundaries, selfish, or cruel.

Many people are hesitant to say no because they think it's un-loving or going against the Bible. In reality, setting boundaries is loving and biblical for both parties in the relationship. It shows that the relationship needs balance between you and another person.

Saying no is a sign of respect. People who say no are taking care of themselves and they're loving others by not being

g taken advantage of. Saying yes to something when you don't want to can be harmful to yourself as well as those around you because people will take advantage of your good nature. So, it's important for people to learn how to say no in order to love themselves and other people more effectively.

**Key Takeaway 5:** The boundaryless who begin saying no can expect resistance from those who have taken advantage of them.

People who set boundaries for the first time can expect resistance from others. Some of that will be external, or come from other people. And some of it will be internal, or come from their own hearts and minds. People who have taken advantage of boundary setters in the past may resist them with anger, guilt trips, or even violence. Boundary setters' internal resistance might come from fear of losing someone else's love and support if they change their behavior; fear of being unable to get their needs met; fear of what would happen if they changed; and so on."

One way to deal with the resistance of other people who are trying to prevent a boundaryless person from changing is to recognize the tactics they're using and develop counter-tactics. Tactics that others use include bullying, whining, trying to provoke guilt trips, and flattery. To counter bullying, you should remain calm by not getting angry or emotional when dealing with them. If you do get angry or emotional then they've won half the battle because it makes you uncomfortable about losing control over yourself. Whiners try to prevent a boundary setter from saying no by constantly complaining about something until they're worn down and give in. Ways that one can counter this include changing subjects, being sorry for their hard time but not agreeing to help them out, and avoiding them for awhile if possible. Guilt trippers will often say things like "You never come through for me." You can counter this by reminding them of all the times that you have come through for them before. Flatterers will try to manipulate new boundary setters into giving in by praising their efforts. Boundary setters need be aware of this tactic so as not let themselves be manipulated

**Key Takeaway 6:** Because of the resistance they will face, longtime boundaryless need to begin setting boundaries a little at a time. It is also crucial that they have a support group.

When setting boundaries, it is best to do so in a measured fashion. Trying to set boundaries with everyone at once would be overwhelming and could lead you not wanting to continue. It's better to start by setting boundaries on one person first, seeing how that goes, and then moving on from there. When people are trying to set boundaries with someone else, they should carefully map out what they want to say beforehand. They should also try not do this alone; friends or a support group can help provide encouragement and ideas when needed.

Setting boundaries is a gradual process. The first step is to identify the easiest person on your list and set a boundary with them. Then, you can move onto more difficult people. It's good to practice what you're going to say beforehand so that you feel confident when setting the boundary in real life. You should also have some help from friends or family members who will support you while practicing this new behavior. When it comes time for real-life encounters, there will be resistance.

This means that you'll probably have to improvise a few responses during your conversation because no one knows exactly what they're going to say until they actually encounter those reactions firsthand. However, if you've planned correctly, then it will make things much easier for yourself when trying out these new behaviors in real life situations.

**Key Takeaway 7:** When the boundaryless begin saying no, they need to do it lovingly but without apology. Boundary setters need to communicate boundaries with words and actions. They should tell the other person what they are setting as a boundary, then act on it. If the other person responds maturely to their no, they can feel free to renegotiate that boundary if they remain in control of the situation.

When setting boundaries, it's important to be loving and polite but firm. It's also important to make sure that the person understands that you're saying no. You may not want to be blunt or nasty, but just direct them in a clear way about your decision. The other person might think you said yes if they don't understand what you mean by "no." If this happens, they might get upset because they thought you agreed with their request when really you didn't. They could even feel like they were misled about the boundary setter's intention if there isn't an immediate "no" response. Also, it's best not to explain why someone is saying no because the boundary setter doesn't have to give a reason for their decision, nor should they try and convince the other person of anything.

**Key Takeaway 8:** Boundary setters must stipulate consequences that the person they are setting the boundary with will face if the person resists their decision to say no.

Analyzing

For a boundary to be effective, it needs to have consequences. Otherwise, the person you're trying to set boundaries with will ignore them. So before setting a boundary, decide what consequence you'll use if that person crosses your line. For example, say "If you continue yelling at me after I ask you not to yell anymore, I'm going to leave the house."

It is important to set consequences that are not too harsh. The consequence should be something the person who broke the rule will suffer from, but it shouldn't affect you more than them. If a teenager comes home late every weekend night, and his mother tells him that next time he does this she'll ground him for a month, then she's suffering more than her son. That's because she has to stay in the house with him during that month so he doesn't break curfew again. It would be better if his mom told him that next time he came home late she'd take away his driving privileges for a month instead of grounding him. This way, both of them will suffer equally -she won't have to watch over her son all day long just so he doesn't leave, and her son won't have any transportation options during the entire month.

**Key Takeaway 9:** Step-by-step boundary setting lets the boundaryless take control of their lives and, in the process, become happier and more fulfilled.

A fictional character named Sherrie was miserable and exhausted from being taken advantage of. She changed her life by setting boundaries, which allowed her to have better relationships with others, be less stressed, and no longer be exhausted. Setting boundaries can lead to a more balanced life for people who learn how to say no when appropriate.

Psychologist Dana Gionta says that setting boundaries with people will help them build better relationships and become happier. She explains that this is because it gives the person who sets the boundaries energy, peace of mind, and a positive outlook to be more responsive when someone really needs their help. In addition to helping boundary setters build better relationships by saying no, they can also do a better job for others by being rested and at peace. The Mayo Clinic agrees that one way learning how to say no makes people happier is by giving them time to devote to what's important in their lives rather than clutter or trying new things which

can have a positive impact on those around them who notice their new enthusiasm.

**Key Takeaway 10:** Setting boundaries not only helps longtime boundaryless, but also those who have taken advantage of them.

When people work without boundaries, they are usually met with resistance. However, after the initial resentment, those working within boundaries realize that they can no longer take advantage of the boundary setter. They become happier because their relationship is more equal and fair.

A story of a young woman who had no talent for writing and yet was able to become a successful journalist is legendary in the newspaper business. It all started when she first tried her hand at journalism, but failed miserably. Her editor asked her to rewrite some stories that he wrote himself because he thought it would help her learn how to write them herself. He did such an excellent job with his rewriting that she began winning awards for those stories. She eventually became angry with him because he refused to continue doing it anymore, so she left for another paper where they didn't know about the whole situation (and fired her three months later).