# The Personal Boundary Continuum - a Self-Reflection Tool

Where do your personal boundaries lie on the boundary continuum?

This table offers examples of rigid boundaries that keep others at a distance and porous boundaries that lack clarity, with healthy boundaries somewhere between the two.

| Porous Boundaries | Healthy Boundaries | Rigid Boundaries |
|---|---|---|
| Has difficulty saying no to other people's requests. | Accepts it when others say no to them. | Avoids intimacy and close relationships. |
| Over-involved with others' problems. | Seeks support when appropriate. | Unlikely to ask for help. |
| Dependent on the opinions of others for self-worth. | Values own opinions and perspectives. | Offers an opinion and then uses the silent treatment to manipulate compliance. |
| Fears rejection if they do not comply with others. | Doesn't compromise their values for others. | Cuts people off easily. 'It's my way or the highway.' |
| Over-shares personal information. | Share information appropriately. | Very protective of personal information. |
| Accepts abuse or disrespect. | Communicate their wants and needs clearly. | Is aloof and detached even with romantic partners. |

We can score our personal boundaries on a continuum stretching from 0 to 10 with zero indicating no boundaries (e.g., accepting abuse) and 10 indicating a barrier or wall (e.g., ghosting).

**Porous Boundaries**
**0/10**

**Rigid Boundaries**
**10/10**

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Often, our personal boundaries are different in different life domains. For example, we may have porous boundaries with a spouse at home, but rigid boundaries at work with a difficult boss.

Context affects boundaries. What is appropriate at home between partners during a romantic night in, is not appropriate at a family gathering where children and grandparents are present.

Culture determines what is acceptable behavior. In some countries, displays of physical affection, even between spouses, are taboo. In others, hugging friends and acquaintances is the norm.

Reflect on your personal boundaries in the following life domains and score them on the continuum. There is no right or wrong answer. This is a self-reflection tool and can highlight areas in need of attention.

- Family
- Close friends
- Partner
- Work colleagues
- Neighbors
- Social media
- Roommates

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