

# Boundaries - Protecting your Space

By Phyllis V. Du'Gas

Do we honestly teach people how to treat us?

Can we think about Boundaries? Let me know if this sounds familiar to you:

As I grow, I find myself requiring more space. My emotional well-being has become very important to me. At home, at work, as a consumer, taxpayer, mother, mate and a friend. I'm learning that just as I have CHOICES, those choices require certain guidelines, that is, in order to remain sane, as well as remain true to who I am as a person. Those guidelines have become my boundaries in life. In other words, where I will or will not allow another person to take me. It's another CHOICE you can make in life.

In terms of relationships I must coin the favorite millennium Dr. Phil phrase, **"We teach people how to treat us"**.

We have to be more up front and let people in on how we're feeling. We especially need to start being more honest with ourselves about what behavior we will accept from others, whose lives we share. If we don't, we're robbing ourselves and the person or persons we interact with on a daily basis.

We spend a great deal of time and energy discussing and worrying about everyone's business except our own. Our family, close friends. What they are doing, and what they are not doing, and the biggest of all...what they should be doing. The coworker and her personal problems...AGAIN! Your company's lack of enthusiasm about money and procedure. Your girlfriend's "not good enough for my sistah" man. Your brother's new wife. The neighbor's new car. Workplace favoritism. We all have issues. It's what makes the world go round. It's the real world that we live in.

We fail to realize that people are who they are, good or bad. All of us are at different stages and experiences. We need to honor that! (Cease all of the Control issues)

Most of our stress is self-induced because we've failed to set boundaries. If

your friend or family member is continuing to borrow money from you and not paying it back, you really must consider not repeating that mistake again. Don't get mad and talk about it to everyone, except them. Let them know, "I'm sorry, but I can no longer loan money to you". Learn the lesson and move on. If you're in a dead-end relationship, stop and ask yourself what kind of boundaries did you set for your own happiness and self worth? Boundaries are really about self worth. (Typically, the more you allow someone to mistreat you, the lower your self-esteem). Something women and men alike have a hard time accepting.

If your relationship has split and gone back more than twice, boundaries are something you might want to look at. We are constantly (especially in new relationships) teaching our mates how to treat us. If you're hurt right now, dreading Valentine's Day or any other holiday, you may want to think about boundaries not being set in your life. We really do have a say-so in our romantic/personal lives. Wake up! It's a new time.

We're not setting enough boundaries.

We tip toe around the truth for various reasons, mainly out of fear. Fear of not being accepted, not being liked, and not being loved. "If I said what I was really feeling, that person might not like me". So we create illusions instead. We can't keep the illusion up for long because it turns into frustration. (Reality is what I call it) The next thing you know...we've burst. We turn into "Sybil" and our mate says we're crazy. Sounds like a boundary issue to me, what do you think? It's not entirely their fault...you allowed it to continue. (Illusion vs. Reality)

No one can do anything to you except that which you allow them to do. If you continue to allow people to violate your space; your boundaries, you're robbing one person...you! You don't have to be rude or hostile to have boundaries. You set them, practice them consciously, and not allow people to cross them. Let go of the fear! Stop saying yes, when you want to say "hell no"!

*Maya Angelou said, "When you fail to place boundaries in your life, people inject themselves into places of your life where you don't want them, and where they have no business being".*

Are you allowing people to "inject" themselves into your life where you

don't want them?

Examine the boundaries in your life.

**It's Just My Opinion!**

Closing thought: Smile and say "NO" to one thing this upcoming week that you normally would say yes to. Talk to that person you've been avoiding. Express yourself. Let go of the fear and guilt!