

At Home Exercise - Establishing Boundaries

Sit comfortably on a bed or on the carpet and delineate your boundaries by drawing a circle around you that your partner can visibly see in the carpet. (See Diagram of boundaries) Ask the following:

1. Is your boundary drawn so lightly it is hard to determine where it is? What does that mean for you? Do boundaries feel uncomfortable - unfamiliar - Talk about how **not** having well defined boundaries effects you and those around you.
2. Check in with your body and mind to see if you are sitting comfortable distances apart - Are you feeling too close - too far? Talk about what is comfortable for each of you and adjust your positions. See if you wait for your partner to adjust before you do.
3. One at a time, have one partner erase their boundary and talk about how it feels when one person has a boundary and the other does not have one. Give each person a chance to talk about his or her feelings about having or not having a boundary. Talk about what it feels like for yourself and also how it feels that your partner either does or does not have a boundary.
4. One at a time, have one partner move back a foot at a time and feel and discuss the responses that arise in each of you when you feel distanced or removed. Do you feel emotional, energetic, or physical *leaving* as abandonment? Talk about how you stay connected when you are not close together or in the same space and what is your comfort level with distance before you begin to feel abandoned or engulfed.
5. Talk about how your boundaries were respected or not respected as a child and how that has affected you as an adult.

6. Talk about how you feel boundaries are respected or not respected in your relationship.
Give suggestions on how you can each create more respect for your own boundaries and those of your partner.

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