

YOUR BOUNDARIES

learn
look out
step up
speak out

adults
network

[understanding boundaries]

One important way to take care of yourself is to set strong and healthy boundaries. A boundary is the line between the behaviors and people you are comfortable and uncomfortable with, what is acceptable to you and what is unacceptable to you. Boundaries help protect your emotional and physical safety.

Healthy boundaries are flexible. For example, you might have looser or more open boundaries with people who are closer to you (like family members or your best friend). You may also have firmer boundaries with people you don't know as well or that you distrust.

[boundaries and your relationships]

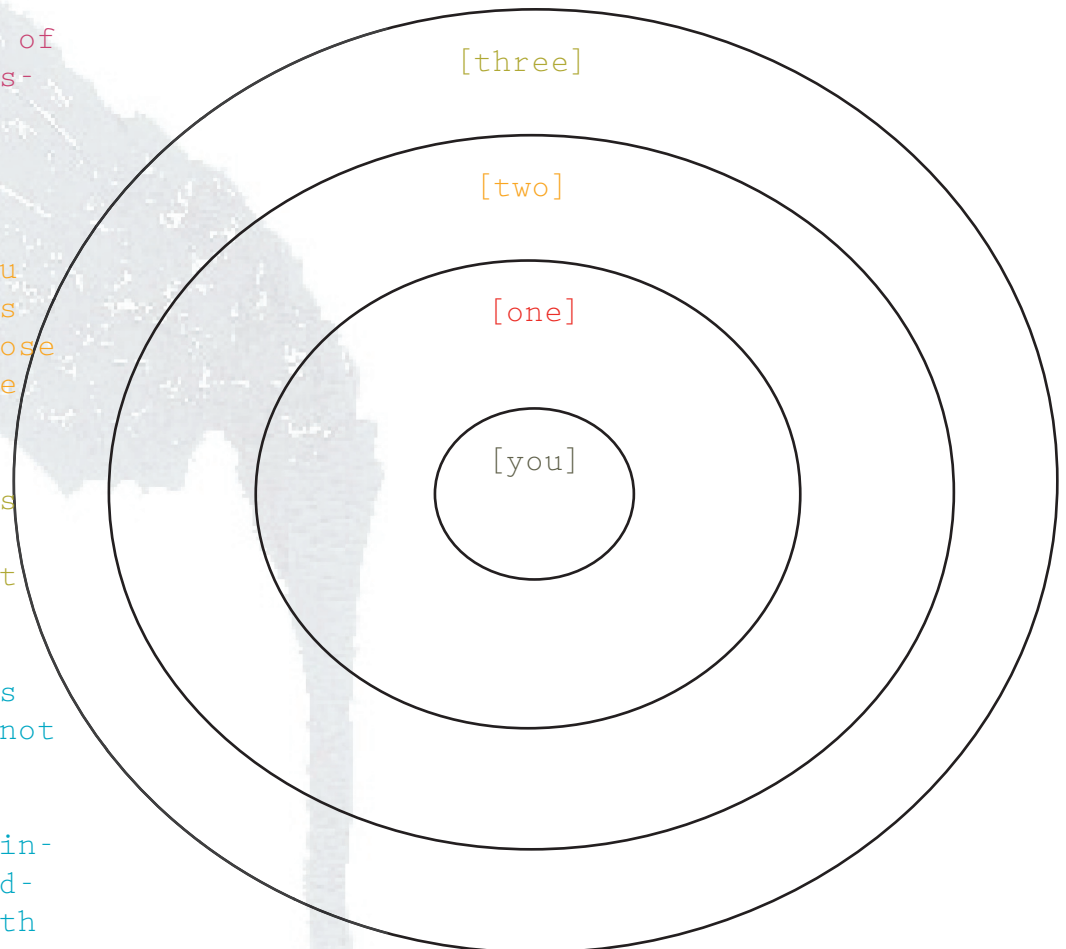
This exercise is designed to help you determine which people in your life you are more open with and those people you wish to have firmer boundaries with.

In circle 1 (around "you") write the names of the people who are closest to you and who you open the most for.

In circle 2, write the names of people who you have good relationships with but are not as close as the people in circle 1.

In circle 3, list names of people who you have relationships with that are not very personal.

Is there anyone who has given you good reason not to trust them? Write these names outside of the solid line, which indicates that your boundaries are very firm with them.



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Along with helping us identify which people we want to be close to us, healthy boundaries also help us to control our own behavior and which behaviors we will accept from others. For example, you may be comfortable hugging your partner in public, but may draw the line at kissing in front of people. The line between hugging and kissing in public is a boundary. Abuse happens when one person consistently violates another person's boundaries.

Think about some boundaries around physical touch, language, morals, and values. Write examples of your boundaries.

[boundaries I am
comfortable with]

[boundaries I am
uncomfortable with]

