

MY STEP BY STEP PROCESS TO MAKE BOUNDARIES

THAT WORK

To me, making personal boundaries with our addicts is all about defining our “ideal lives” and figuring out what we need to live them. In our last lesson, we made our goals. Now we’re going to talk about how to keep them and how we’re going to use them to set the perimeters for our personal boundaries.

Look at the goals you made in the previous lesson. In today’s worksheet we’re going to outline the specifics of how you’re going to accomplish the goals but for now, let’s talk about ways you can find success in keeping them!

1. Make sure you’re defaulting success. Ex. If you want to drink less wine and more tea, put the wine on a very hard to reach cupboard and put the tea on the counter, ready, with a glass, the sugar, ginger cookies and anything else you’ll need to see it and think, “Tea looks good”. If you want to spend less time on social media in the mornings and more time reading your Bible, make a commitment to put your phone in a downstairs room every evening and not beside your bed. Replace it with an old-fashion clock and your Bible, a notebook, a pen, a reading lamp- making it easier for yourself to succeed.

2. Set limitations around all of your goals. Ex. Instead of saying: I want to live a healthier lifestyle so I will make eggs in the morning. Say, I want to live a healthier lifestyle so I will make eggs in the morning no more than three times (realistic) and no less than two times a week. Instead of saying, I will go to the gym every week you could say, I will go to the gym no more than four times a week and no less than two times a week.

3. Try to be as specific as possible by including a TIME, DAY and PLACE.

4. Opt-in to things you can set up now so you have to opt-out of your goals to not do them. Example, purchase your yoga class entrance for every week today while you're feeling motivated. That way, when it comes time to go, you've already paid for it and are therefore more likely to go.

5. Simplify your life while you're goal-setting. Don't take on too many responsibilities while you're working on changing your lifestyle. Keep life as simple and easy as possible.

6. Beat procrastination by keeping track of your progress and success on a BIG chart that you can look at every day. Every day you work on your goal- colour the day! It's not about measuring the results, just measuring the effort.

You'll have a chance to put this into action in the worksheet with this lesson. But now, let's discuss why we need these goals to make boundaries that work.

When we try to make boundaries without goals, we get stuck in the stagnant boundaries we discussed in a previous lesson. Instead of moving toward a goal, we're simply stopping an action. The problem with this is that it really doesn't improve our day. When a loved one has an addiction our goals tend to get put on the back-burner because we're too consumed with supporting them, resisting their anger, whatever the case. Setting goals is one of the most important parts of becoming disentangled from a loved one's addiction. We untangle ourselves from their goalless futures, stop moving backwards and start moving toward a better life. At the very least, toward our most "perfect day".

I know you may be thinking, "But I can't do these things!" and I know it can be tough to accomplish ANYTHING when we're dealing with addiction in the family but that's why we're only making five reasonable, doable-with-God, kind of goals. You may not be able to financially go back to school right now for that new career but you can absolutely

determine to wake up early every morning and take an inexpensive, online class related to your area of interest.

If you're all like, "Ohhh nooooo! Why didn't you tell me this earlier? I did my goals all wrong!" Don't worry. That's what this lesson is for. I want you to dream big dreams and big goals. Now, we can go back and assess what we realistically can and cannot do in the short-term. So look back, adjust as needed and write your new goals down in the spaces provided on the worksheets. Please also write your goals in the chat box, if you feel like sharing, so we can support you in them!

Now, how does this apply to our boundaries? Our best boundaries will move us toward our goals. The feeling that perfect day gives us? That's our goal. Knowing what we learned about boundaries so far, use the worksheets to fill out what you see the obstacles to your goals will be. We're going to work through those obstacles to find solutions that will move us toward our perfect day and that, my friends? That will be boundaries that work.