

EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES REFLECTION & APPLICATION WORKBOOK (DBT-INFORMED)

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

THIS WORKBOOK IS DESIGNED TO HELP YOU UNDERSTAND YOUR EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES, EXPLORE PATTERNS OF GUILT, ANGER, AND INVALIDATION, AND APPLY DIALECTICAL BEHAVIOR THERAPY (DBT) SKILLS TO CREATE HEALTHIER RELATIONSHIPS WITH YOURSELF AND OTHERS.

MOVE AT YOUR OWN PACE. WRITE HONESTLY. YOU ARE NOT BEING JUDGED.

PART 1: UNDERSTANDING YOUR CURRENT BOUNDARIES

1. WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES TO YOU?

- HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES?
- WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT BOUNDARIES GROWING UP?
- WERE YOUR NEEDS ACKNOWLEDGED OR DISMISSED?

REFLECTION:

2. IDENTIFYING LOOSE OR UNCLEAR BOUNDARIES

CHECK ANY THAT APPLY:

- I SAY YES WHEN I WANT TO SAY NO
- I FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR OTHER PEOPLE'S EMOTIONS
- I AVOID CONFLICT EVEN WHEN SOMETHING BOTHERS ME
- I FEEL GUILTY WHEN I PRIORITIZE MYSELF
- I OVERSHARE OR UNDERSHARE DEPENDING ON THE SITUATION

DESCRIBE A RECENT SITUATION WHERE YOUR BOUNDARIES FELT UNCLEAR OR CROSSED:

3. EMOTIONAL PATTERNS: GUILT, ANGER, WITHDRAWAL, AGGRESSION

GUILT

- WHEN DO YOU FEEL GUILTY FOR SETTING BOUNDARIES?
- WHAT THOUGHTS COME UP? (E.G., "I'M SELFISH", "THEY'LL LEAVE ME")

ANGER

- WHEN DO YOU FEEL ANGER RELATED TO BOUNDARIES?
- HOW DO YOU EXPRESS IT? (WITHDRAWAL, AGGRESSION, PASSIVE-AGGRESSION)

PATTERNS

- **DO YOU SWING BETWEEN SHUTTING DOWN AND REACTING STRONGLY?**
- **WHAT TRIGGERS THIS SHIFT?**

REFLECTION:

4. EXPERIENCES OF INVALIDATION AND DISRESPECT

- **DESCRIBE MOMENTS WHERE YOU FELT DISMISSED, INVALIDATED, OR DISRESPECTED**
- **WHO WAS INVOLVED?**
- **WHAT DID YOU NEED IN THOSE MOMENTS?**

IMPACT:

- **HOW HAVE THESE EXPERIENCES SHAPED HOW YOU RELATE TO OTHERS TODAY?**

PART 2: DBT SKILLS FOR AWARENESS & VALIDATION

5. UNDERSTANDING EMOTIONAL MIND, REASONABLE MIND, AND WISE MIND

- **EMOTIONAL MIND: REACTING BASED ON FEELINGS**
- **REASONABLE MIND: REACTING BASED ON LOGIC**
- **WISE MIND: BALANCE OF BOTH**

EXERCISE:

THINK OF A RECENT CONFLICT:

- **WHAT DID YOUR EMOTIONAL MIND SAY?**
- **WHAT DID YOUR REASONABLE MIND SAY?**
- **WHAT WOULD WISE MIND SAY?**

6. SELF-VALIDATION PRACTICE

WRITE A SITUATION WHERE YOU FELT HURT:

NOW VALIDATE YOURSELF:

- **“IT MAKES SENSE THAT I FEEL ____ BECAUSE ____.”**
- **“MY FEELINGS ARE VALID EVEN IF OTHERS DON’T UNDERSTAND.”**

REPEAT THIS DAILY WITH DIFFERENT SITUATIONS.

7. BUILDING SELF-WORTH AND EMOTIONAL PERMISSION

- **WHAT MESSAGES DID YOU RECEIVE ABOUT YOUR WORTH GROWING UP?**
- **DO YOU BELIEVE YOUR NEEDS MATTER? WHY OR WHY NOT?**

REFRAME:

- “MY NEEDS ARE IMPORTANT BECAUSE...”
- “I AM ALLOWED TO TAKE UP SPACE BY...”

PART 3: APPLYING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES (DBT INTERPERSONAL SKILLS)

8. IDENTIFYING YOUR BOUNDARY NEEDS

COMPLETE:

- I NEED MORE ____ IN MY RELATIONSHIPS
- I NEED LESS ____ IN MY RELATIONSHIPS
- I FEEL DRAINED WHEN ____
- I FEEL RESPECTED WHEN ____

9. DEAR MAN SKILL (ASSERTIVENESS)

USE THIS TO COMMUNICATE BOUNDARIES CLEARLY:

- DESCRIBE: WHAT IS HAPPENING?
- EXPRESS: HOW DO YOU FEEL?
- ASSERT: WHAT DO YOU NEED?
- REINFORCE: WHY IT MATTERS
- MINDFUL: STAY FOCUSED
- APPEAR CONFIDENT
- NEGOTIATE IF NEEDED

PRACTICE SCENARIO:

WRITE A REAL SITUATION AND SCRIPT YOUR RESPONSE:

10. GIVE SKILL (MAINTAIN RELATIONSHIPS)

- GENTLE
- INTERESTED
- VALIDATE
- EASY MANNER

EXERCISE:

HOW CAN YOU STAY KIND WITHOUT ABANDONING YOUR BOUNDARY?

11. FAST SKILL (SELF-RESPECT)

- FAIR
- NO APOLOGIES (FOR HAVING NEEDS)

- **STICK TO VALUES**
- **TRUTHFUL**

REFLECTION:

WHERE DO YOU TEND TO LOSE SELF-RESPECT?

PART 4: REGULATION & RESPONSE CHOICES

12. WHEN YOU FEEL TRIGGERED

- **WHAT DOES YOUR BODY FEEL LIKE?**
- **WHAT THOUGHTS APPEAR?**

PAUSE PRACTICE:

- **STOP**
- **BREATHE**
- **OBSERVE**
- **CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE**

13. CHOOSING BETWEEN SPEAKING UP VS. CREATING DISTANCE

SPEAK UP WHEN:

- **THE RELATIONSHIP MATTERS**
- **THE PERSON IS CAPABLE OF HEARING YOU**
- **YOU FEEL SAFE ENOUGH TO EXPRESS**

CREATE DISTANCE WHEN:

- **REPEATED DISRESPECT OCCURS**
- **YOUR BOUNDARIES ARE IGNORED**
- **YOU FEEL EMOTIONALLY UNSAFE**

EXERCISE:

LIST 3 RELATIONSHIPS AND DECIDE WHICH APPROACH FITS BEST

14. ANGER REGULATION

- **WHAT DOES YOUR ANGER TRY TO PROTECT?**
- **WHAT IS UNDERNEATH IT? (HURT, FEAR, REJECTION)**

HEALTHY EXPRESSION:

- **WRITE INSTEAD OF REACT**
- **DELAY RESPONSES**
- **USE ASSERTIVE LANGUAGE INSTEAD OF BLAME**

PART 5: INTEGRATION & PRACTICE

15. BOUNDARY ACTION PLAN

CHOOSE ONE BOUNDARY TO WORK ON THIS WEEK:

- SITUATION:
- WHAT I USUALLY DO:
- WHAT I WILL DO DIFFERENTLY:
- DBT SKILL I WILL USE:

16. AFTER-ACTION REFLECTION

AFTER TRYING A BOUNDARY:

- WHAT WENT WELL?
- WHAT WAS HARD?
- WHAT DID I LEARN ABOUT MYSELF?

17. FINAL REFLECTION

- HOW HAS YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF BOUNDARIES CHANGED?
- WHAT PATTERNS ARE YOU BECOMING MORE AWARE OF?
- WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIPS DO YOU WANT MOVING FORWARD?

REMINDER

YOU ARE ALLOWED TO:

- SAY NO
- TAKE SPACE
- HAVE NEEDS
- CHANGE YOUR MIND
- PROTECT YOUR PEACE

HEALTHY BOUNDARIES ARE NOT REJECTION OF OTHERS — THEY ARE RESPECT FOR YOURSELF.