

SETTING BOUNDARIES WITH AN ADDICT

- A boundary shows where you end and someone else begins.
- Read the following verses from Galatians in the Bible:
 - » 6:2 “Carry each other’s burdens, and you will fulfill the law of Christ.”
 - » 6:5 “Each one should carry their own load.”
- The original Greek words for “burden” and “load” give important insight into these two verses. Burden means “excess burdens,” boulders that we need help carrying. Load means “cargo” or “the burden of daily toil.” You could liken the idea to a knapsack. A knapsack is possible to carry, and we are expected to carry our own. We are expected to deal with our own feelings, attitudes, and behaviors, as well as the responsibilities that God has given us, even though it takes effort. In addition, we are not to carry the “knapsacks” of others.
- Setting limits and separating ourselves protects love because we are taking a stand against things that destroy love.
- Keep in mind that the most responsible behavior possible is usually the most difficult.
- Addicts who use guilt messages are trying to make you change your choices. God says that we are to give and not be self-centered. He doesn’t say that we have to give whatever anyone wants from us. We are in control of our giving. We are free to make choices, and we are to take responsibility for their impact on us and other people.

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- Forgiveness takes one; reconciliation takes two. We do not open ourselves up to the other party until we have seen that she has truly owned her part of the problem. True repentance is much more than saying "I'm sorry"; it is changing direction. Do not think that because you have forgiven that you have to reconcile. You can offer reconciliation, but it must be contingent upon the other person owning her behavior and bringing forth trustworthy fruits.
- Growth in setting emotional boundaries must be at a rate that takes into account your past injuries. So, it is wise to start small and practice saying no in comfortable situations. Ask your support group or your good friends if you could work on boundaries with them. True intimacy is only built around the freedom to disagree.
- Remember that the conflicts and disagreements that appear already exist. Boundaries simply bring them to the surface.

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