

# Healthy Boundaries And Codependent Extremes

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| Permeable-Healthy<br>(Appropriate)   | Too<br>Permeable-Boundaries<br>(Inappropriate)  | Impermeable-Rigid<br>(Inappropriate)   |
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| I reveal confidence over time as trust is established.   | I overwhelm strangers and first-time acquaintances with intimate details of my life.  | I never open up to anyone, even trustworthy people. I'm afraid they'll learn my "secret."  |
| I address the needs of others but don't regularly allow them to disrupt or interfere with my effective management of my life.                      | I regularly find myself overwhelmed by the task of continually trying to meet others' needs, even though my own needs go unmet.               | I don't let myself think of others' needs, even if I'm interested in them. I've got enough pain.   |
| Since relationships are based on respect, trust, and communication, I let these develop before committing to love.                                 | I fall in love at first sight and repeatedly latch on to strangers as if they were lifelong best friends. I want people to love me sooo much! | I don't let myself love anyone. It's safer to keep them at a distance. After all, you never know who might hurt you. Besides, what do they want from me anyway?  |
| I trust my perceptions and abilities to determine what is real and how to react. I can also test other people's reality to see if it's true.       | I don't know what is really true, so I let others decide what is real for me.   | I can't listen to others or be influenced by them. Not only can I not trust them, but I can hardly maintain my facade of having it all together, which I use to cover up reality.  |
| I make decisions for myself based on my values and my higher power's will for me.  | I let others determine what's important to me because I don't want to be rejected.  | I can't make decisions. Even the simplest ones are hard. I don't want to make a mistake.   |
| I take responsibility for my decisions. If I fail, I find out what I did wrong, ask for forgiveness, and then learn what I need to do differently. | I can't take responsibility for myself or follow through. So I depend on others to take care of me.   | I feel excessively guilty when things aren't absolutely perfect. If I can't handle the guilt, I blame others for my failures.  |
| I am wary of people who are overly helpful, who try to make decisions for me, and who don't respect my time and boundaries.                        | What's a boundary? Do I <i>really</i> have the right to stand up for myself? Well, I never imagined I could do that!                          | I reject all suggestions and never allow anyone to interfere or assist, even when it might be helpful and appropriate.   |
| Though I am approachable, my values are not negotiable. If people reject me for my values, I'm willing to pay that price.                          | I'll sacrifice anything to avoid abandonment, isolation, and rejection.   | I'll never do anything for anybody just to please them. People are such a bother and are always messing with my life.  |
| I consider requests appropriately, weighing their consequences. If I disagree or the request goes beyond what is reasonable, I will decline it.    | I'll say or do anything to be loved and accepted. I can't say "No" even if it hurts me.   | Because I am so indecisive, I will try to avoid decisions that make me look foolish. I'll either 1) isolate myself so as not to make myself available for requests; 2) be indirect with my "No" ("I'm busy", etc.). If threatened by the request, I will cut off all interaction possibilities. If I impulsively make a decision I regret later, I "escape." |