

Encouraging Your Wellness

Volume 1, Issue 1

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- Boundaries—A New Year is a great time to check on our boundaries. Are we sending the right messages?
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- Couple's Corner
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Positive Parenting—Do Your Kids Take You Seriously?

If you have attended one of my classes or seen me privately, you have probably heard me talk about the importance of making sure your kids take you seriously. They desperately need to trust that what you say is in fact, what you MEAN.

Think about it. If a friend or colleague of yours repeatedly says that they are going to do something, but they never actually DO that thing, we lose our trust in that person. We no longer actually believe what they say. Trust is established very simply by speaking the truth, and by following through on what we say.

If we tell our children that we will reward them in some way—for example that we will take them swimming when they get a good report card, hopefully we keep our word. But, it is equally important to keep our word when we use a consequence as a form of discipline. For example, “If you don’t get your chores done, you cannot go to the party on Saturday.” If kids test this limit, and don’t get their chores done, it is VERY important that as parents we don’t let them go to the party. If we do, we have just broken our children’s trust in us, and have taught them that they do not need to take us seriously. We may think we are being the “good guy” but we create long-term damage to our credibility. In other words, our kids learn NOT to listen to us, and not to take us seriously because we don’t really mean what we say.

Would your kids let you off the hook if you promised them swimming for a good report card? Probably not. So, remember to do them the same favor, and keep your word in all situations.

Now, for parents who are sometimes guilty of not keeping your word with your kids, listen up. The trick is (cont’d on pg. 2)



Boundaries—How are yours?

Webster’s Dictionary simply defines boundary as “the limiting line.” Psychologically speaking, our boundaries are the lines of limits between ourselves and others, both physically and emotionally. One’s psychological boundaries define appropriate behavior and expression of feelings. How much do we share,? How soon? How much do we act to please others rather than being true to ourselves? A client recently shared with me that it was her employer who, during her review, shared with her that he felt she had no boundaries. Although she was shocked, she was pleased that someone had brought this to her attention, so that she could be more aware and begin to establish some boundaries for herself.

If you feel too passive, have trouble saying “no” and feel as though you are a chameleon always

Dear Readers



I am so excited to be kicking off this inaugural issue of my newsletter [Encouraging Your Wellness](#). I hope you find it to be informative as well as inspirational in helping you be the person, parent, and partner you want to be.

Each quarter I will be addressing relevant topics that have come up in my practice, or in workshops or classes that I have instructed. As you all know, I love working one-on-one with clients and families, but I am hoping that this is a way to inform and encourage others, as well as reinforce information you might have heard previously from me.

My newsletter will include a Dear Pam column where I will answer a specific question that I have been asked via my website (pamelaboaz.com) or in a course I have conducted. If you have a specific question, feel free to email it to me, and I will choose a question that will likely have value to most readers.

Again, thanks for your interest in my newsletter. [Encouraging your wellness](#) is important to me!

“If you know you would never make your child miss a birthday party, DON’T USE IT!”

Do your kids take you seriously—continued from page 1

to be very careful that you choose consequences that you actually will follow through on. For example, if you know you would never make your child miss a birthday party, DON’T USE IT!! Find a consequence that is meaningful to the child that you WILL actually follow through on. We do ourselves a disservice when we jump to a consequence to get our kids’ attention, and then feel bad or sorry for the child and rescue them from the consequence. Kids learn very quickly that they really don’t have to take us seriously because we really would never do what we have said!

Here’s a tip. When you are not upset with your child’s behavior, make a list of consequences that you believe would be motivational to your child AND that you would follow through with. It should include approximately five to ten consequences that are minor up to more severe. When we are prepared as parents, we can take a consequence from the list instead of shouting out a consequence that we won’t actually do. Most importantly, when we actually earn a reputation with our kids of following through, they will begin to take us seriously. Good luck!

Boundaries—continued from page 1

changing to please others, it may be time to evaluate where you can begin to strengthen your boundaries.

Normally, boundaries are role modeled for us as children. But, if our families weren’t able to do this as well as we needed, we likely made a few blunders as we learned about boundaries. Possibly, we are still making them. Look over some of the following healthy vs. unhealthy boundaries, and see where your boundaries could use some fine-tuning. (Continued on the next page)

Unhealthy

Telling all

Healthy

I consider the other persons level of interest and caring before opening up to them.

Couple's Corner— Sincere Apologies

An interesting research study from Columbia University looked at what criterion were present for people to feel that they had received a sincere apology. 145 people aged 21-70 were given a hypothetical accident scenario. They were to assume that they were involved in an accident with a bicyclist. The cyclist was at fault, and offered a settlement that only covered their medical costs. The results showed:

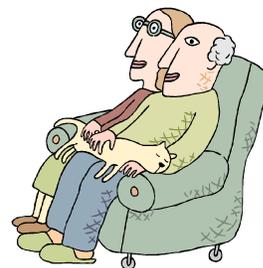
52% accepted the money when there was no apology

73% accepted the money when there was a full apology

35% accepted the money when the apology was partial with the bicyclist NOT taking responsibility for the accident.

I found it particularly interesting that no apology produced more results than what was perceived to be a forced apology—one where I'll say I'm sorry, but I will not really acknowledge that I did anything wrong. Think about that—no apology is better than an apology where you don't take responsibility for your actions. Of course, a full apology is always best.

It takes a mature person to say when they've messed up in a genuine way. How are your apologies?



Boundaries, Cont'd from page 2

Unhealthy

Talking on an intimate level on the first meeting

Falling in love with anyone who reaches out

Acting on first sexual impulse

Going against personal values or rights to others.

Healthy

I do not overwhelm a person with things about me. I trust step-by-step as I feel I am getting trust in return.

When someone reaches out to me, I ask myself whether this person has the qualities I need.

My feelings and my self-esteem decide whether I act on sexual impulses. "Will I feel good about myself" is my first question.

I have values which are not negotiable in a please relationship. I am not willing to "do anything"

When someone reaches out to me, I ask myself whether this person has the qualities I need.

Not noticing when someone else displays inappropriate boundaries.

Taking as much as you can get for the sake of getting.

Allowing someone to take as much as they can from you.

Letting others direct your life

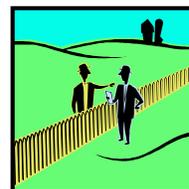
for a partner.

I am wary of someone who wants to get too close to me too soon. I notice whether someone I am beginning to relate to has values and opinions

I do not "test" in a relationship by keeping track of how much is given me as a way of measuring love.

I am aware of when I am being taken advantage of and I am willing to confront the other person about it.

I know what I want from life and have goals. I listen to opinions but make decisions for myself.



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If you are in need of individual, couple or family help, call me. Together with you, I will design a treatment plan that helps you achieve your goals and gets you on the road to feeling life more fulfilled. I specialize in working with teens, adults and children who are struggling with depression, anxiety, low self-worth, past experiences of abuse, and who are believing there must be more to life than what they are currently experiencing. I look forward to speaking with you.

Dear Pam,

I have suffered from low self-esteem most of my life. I choose relationships that seem to damage my self-esteem even more. Is there any way to overcome such poor self-worth? - A.R.

What a great question, A.R. Fortunately, there are many ways to overcome such poor self-worth. However, it will take hard work and changing many of the behaviors you have made habits of. I am going to explain one way in basic math terms.

First, I will explain that we all have both positive and negative self-talk; the talk that goes on in our heads. For people with poor self-esteem, their negative self-talk far outweighs their positive self-talk. Think of yourself as your own parent for a moment. As a parent, if you told your child repeatedly that they were dumb, ugly, fat, unmotivated, lazy, had poor social skills, or were not as good as others, it wouldn't be a hard leap to see why they didn't believe good things about themselves. If your own personal negative self-talk is saying things like these to you, you probably don't feel very good about yourself, either. In basic math terms, if you criticize yourself 50 times per day, but only think 10 positive things about yourself, you are quickly going to have a solid negative view of yourself.

When we believe such negative things about ourselves, we match ourselves with others we feel "worthy" of. So, often those relationships are poor ones, and reinforce that we are so bad, we don't even deserve that person. The cycle continues.

Step 1: Become keenly aware of your negative self-talk. LISTEN to how critical you are being of yourself. Then, start to challenge it. Step 2: *Intentionally* start to work on your positive self-talk. When we are looking hard for good things about ourselves, we just might find them!

