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THE
LITTLE
BOOK OF
BIG
BOUNDARIES

WELCOME, I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE.

My name is Meghann Birks and I am an AuDHDer, Certified Professional Coach, Certified Menopause Coaching Specialist, strength coach and embodiment educator (hard to believe I have ADHD, right?)

I have worked with hundreds of women (and a few good men) across a huge variety of backgrounds and the one thing that we always cover at some stage is boundaries.

Lemme just jump on my high horse for a second here. Ok, giddyup! You see, we are living in two dominant systems that not only count on women not having great boundaries but actually profit from it. Yup, I'm talking capitalism and patriarchy.

Just imagine if we all woke up tomorrow and demanded that our unpaid emotional and physical labour was...well, paid. Complete collapse! That's why taking responsibility for setting and maintaining boundaries matters.; nobody is gonna do it for you.

It's time to disrupt.

But even if you're not quite ready to get your Riot Grrrl on and are thinking more along the lines of respectfully requesting changed behaviour from others (or yourself) or telling someone to fuck off, this juicy lil' booklet will get you started,

As an AuDHD coach, especially for women in leadership and executive positions, I can also tell you that boundaries can be even trickier for neurodivergent brains, due to things like rejection sensitivity disorder (and what we'll do to avoid that feeling) and our seemingly inherent people pleasing (peace keeping!) tendencies.

So dive in, take notes and challenge yourself to some honest reflection.

Big love and even bigger boundaries,

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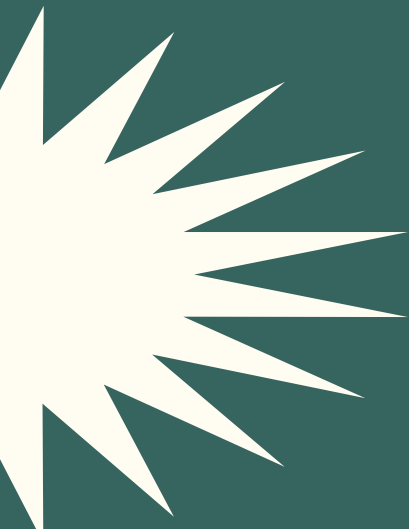
2 REALLY fucking important questions

REFLECTION

WHAT ARE BOUNDARIES?

A boundary is a limit.

If this limit is exceeded, there are consequences.



When we talk about **personal boundaries**, we are talking about a way to communicate **what we need or want from others**, what behaviours we will tolerate and what the consequences are if a boundary is violated.

Based ONLY on this definition, where in your life do you think you need better boundaries?

What people and places have already come to mind?

How do you feel when you think about them?

TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

PHYSICAL

EMOTIONAL

COMMUNICATION

TIME

MENTAL

RELATIONSHIP

PHYSICAL

- Personal space
- Who can touch you
- How and when they can touch you
- How you treat your body
- What you put into your body

EMOTIONAL

- Separating your feelings from others
- Not taking on others' emotional burdens
- Separating yourself from your feelings (I am vs. I feel)

COMMUNICATION

- How you speak to yourself
- How you speak to others and how they speak to you
- Words/phrases you will/ will not tolerate

TIME

- How much time you spend on certain tasks
- How much time you spend with others
- How people respect your time
- When you are/are not available

MENTAL

- Recognising it's OK to have thoughts that differ from others
- Not needing others to agree with you/ feeling pressure to agree with them
- Choosing when to engage in certain conversations

RELATIONSHIP

- What we expect from others/what they expect from us
- How others can treat us/how we treat others
- Different boundaries in personal and professional relationships

BOUNDARIES CAN ALSO BE...

FIXED

Absolutes. Things that people are NEVER allowed to do/say. Deal breakers.

FLUID

Situational, depending on context. For example, you may not work past 5 p.m., but if the shit hits the fan, you may make an exception.

INTERNAL

Boundaries with self. What behaviours, thoughts and words will you allow?

EXTERNAL

Boundaries with others. What behaviours, thought and words will you allow?

HOW DO WE KNOW WHEN A BOUNDARY IS BEING CROSSED?

WHEN IT'S SUPER OBVIOUS

We asked someone not to do or say _X_ and they've done it...

OR...

THERE ARE MORE SUBTLE ENERGETIC AND EMOTIONAL CUES...

Subtle signs that your boundaries are being violated can be things like justifying others' behaviour, doubting your decisions, blaming yourself for what's happened or feeling shame.

Are you abandoning your wants and needs to keep the peace?

WHERE DO YOU NEED BETTER BOUNDARIES?

**Where are you
repeating yourself?**

**Where are you
seething with resentment?**

Where are you creating stories?

**Where are you making excuses
(for yourself or others)?**

Where are you playing small?

Where do you feel unsafe?

COMMUNICATING BOUNDARIES:

In a perfect world, the boundary setting formula goes something like this...

- Ownership of our feelings (I statement)
- Clear statement of the boundary
- Clear statement of consequences if the boundary is violated

When you...

I feel...

I would like...

If you continue to...

I will...



2 REALLY FUCKING IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

- Instead of only asking “What is the risk of setting this boundary”, learn to ask “What is the risk of NOT setting this boundary”?
- If I say YES to this, what am I saying NO to?

REMEMBER:

Setting boundaries is a PRACTICE!

It takes time. It takes guts. It takes self-love.

Understanding WHY it is hard to set boundaries is key, so finding support and a safe space to explore this is crucial.

And finally ...

NO is a complete sentence.

~~I'd love to, but~~ no.

No ~~thank you.~~

~~I'm sorry,~~ but no.

REFLECTION:

Where do you need better boundaries?

What has stopped you from clarifying these needs?

If you've tried to set these boundaries and it hasn't worked, what do you think happened? Were they not clear? Did you use soft language? Was there no consequence? Is the other person an asshole?

How would it feel to establish boundaries in this area? What might change?

In which of the following areas are your boundaries currently being violated?

Physical (____ / ____)

Mental (____ / ____)

Emotional (____ / ____)

Time (____ / ____)

Communication (____ / ____)

Relationship (____ / ____)

Are they internal boundaries **(A)** or external **(B)**?

Is this because the boundary has not been clearly communicated **(C)** or because there is a lack of consequence **(D)**?

COMMITMENT TO SELF:

What boundary are you feeling kinda sick, but kinda excited, about setting?

Do you feel clearer on how to do this?

What are the potential consequences of doing this?

(Remember: when it comes to taking risks, women are great at thinking about what might happen if they do_____. But we also need to think about what will happen if we do NOT do_____.)

Get really specific and name one boundary you're going to set. Give it a by when date. Send me a DM!

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