

# INSPIRING LEADERSHIP CONVERSATIONS

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## BOUNDARIES



**INNOVATIVE**  
CONNECTIONS

# THE POWER OF CONVERSATIONS

The journey you are about to embark upon will **illuminate the power of conversations**.

Consider the conversations in your meeting rooms, at your kitchen table, on your neighborhood walk or at your favorite coffee shop. These rich conversations are generated by different perspectives, curiosity, and questions that matter. They become our catalyst for sharing our collective personal experiences that shape our future while supporting our human nature to stay in relationship with one another.

**This module ignites meaningful conversations.** Capture the richness of sharing perspectives and insights as you explore these conversations inside your organizations and throughout your community. Challenge yourself to use these conversations to propel your growth as an individual, leader, and/or leadership team.

**Rules for these conversations? There are none.** This concept is built on the assumption that people are naturally creative, resourceful, and whole. The answers are within each of us.

This activity is intended to widen your lens with additional perspective. As you talk with others or think about your experiences, capture your thoughts and reflections in the

space provided. Feel free to circle, highlight, or underline anything you are curious about or those words which resonate with you.

Next, find a partner, teammate, colleague, family member, friend, or leader to share your thoughts with and discuss your key takeaways. If possible, move the conversations to small groups/teams and then on to larger groups/teams. The format provides a consistent process for expanding your conversations and capturing what is on everyone's mind.

**Enjoy!**

**As you engage in your conversations, please remember to:**

- Listen deeply.
- Speak from your voice.
- Take a risk.
- Put it out there.
- Encourage contributions.
- Connect diverse perspectives.
- Listen together for patterns and insights.
- Capture the conversation with words, illustrations, symbols, or any other device possible.

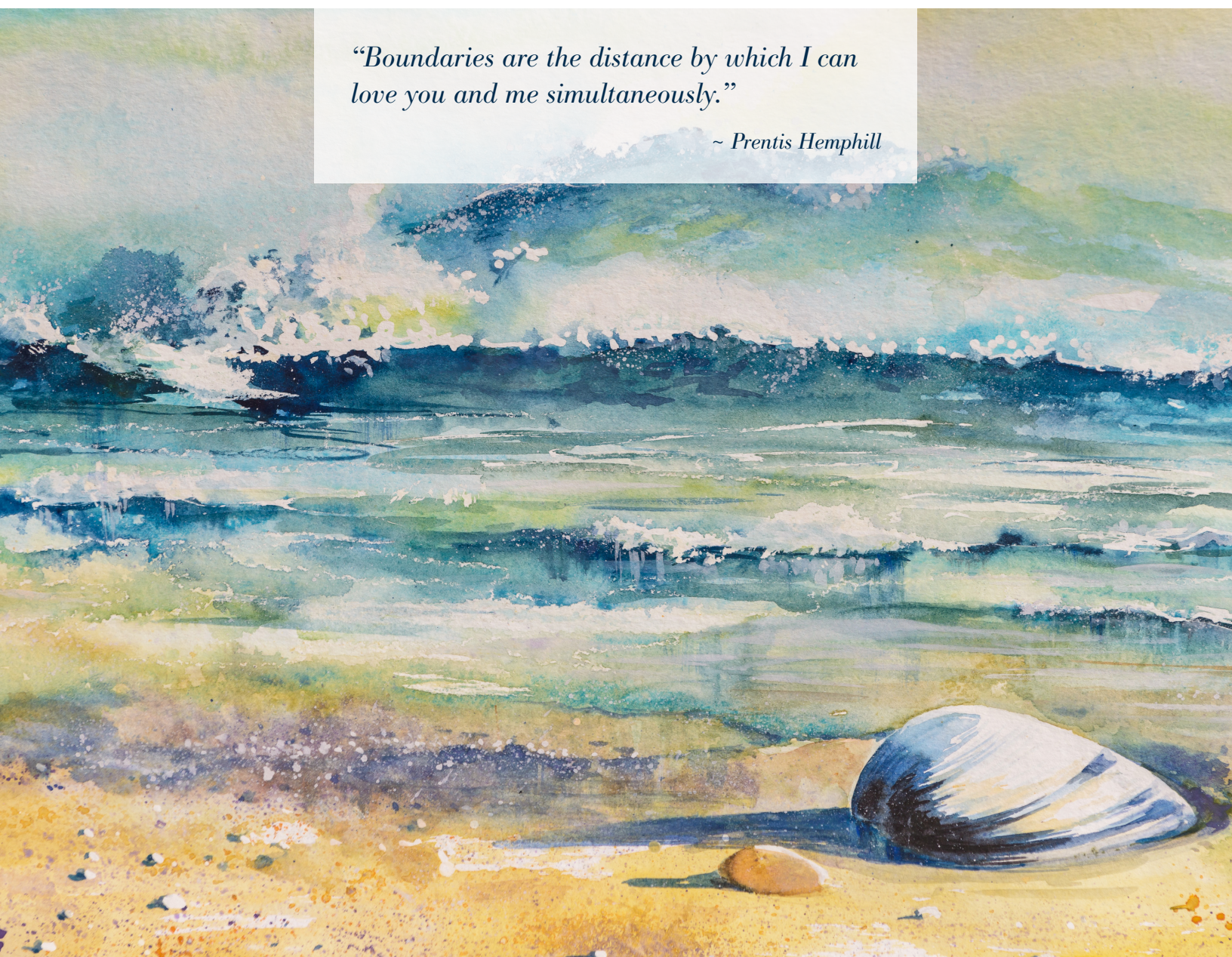


# BOUNDARIES

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We've all heard, maybe even to the point of exhaustion, that work-life balance is essential to both our personal and professional lives. This balance has perhaps become even more imperative – and more difficult – in our rapidly and constantly changing world post-pandemic. This is why setting boundaries becomes so important.

**The boundaries we set can directly affect our relationships with others.** An ability to create and communicate mindful, healthy boundaries allows us to remain true to our values while effectively managing how we impact others and how others impact us. However, it's important to maintain some flexibility as your boundaries may change over time. If they are too restrictive, too loose, or too blurred, it can result in increased stress and dysfunction, which helps no one in the long-run.



*“Boundaries are the distance by which I can love you and me simultaneously.”*

*~ Prentis Hemphill*

# TYPES OF BOUNDARIES

Take a moment to think about these different types of boundaries. On the lines provided, jot some thoughts on how you can build more effective boundaries for yourself. Include both negotiable and non-negotiable boundaries.

**Emotional Boundaries** deal with how others talk to and treat you, and how they make you feel. Establishing emotional boundaries can protect you from feeling responsible for other's emotions or taking them as your own.

Do you feel safe sharing what is on your mind, or are you fearful of others' critical reactions? Do you feel powerless when a co-worker takes credit for your work in front of senior leadership, or are you able to discuss it? When others treat you poorly, do you stand up for yourself or let it go?

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**Interpersonal Relationship Boundaries** are set with co-workers, managers, and direct reports to ensure you feel safe and respected at work. If you don't vocalize what is okay and what is not, people may not even realize they are overstepping.

Do you feel disrespected at work? Do you allow yourself to be taken advantage of?

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**Identity Boundaries** encompass who you are and what is important to you. Has "who you are" changed over time and, if so, have you updated agreements with others given the things that are now central to who you are?

Is it hard to fit in? Do you feel like you belong? Do you compromise your core values to meet others' needs or to be like others?

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**Physical Boundaries** draw a line regarding your level of comfort with things like personal space, shaking hands, having others hug or touch you, or how close they sit to you.

Do you set boundaries for yourself on touching, hugging, not sitting too close, drinking at company events, etc? If you travel do you set boundaries for the amount of sleep you need?

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**Time and Energy Boundaries** protect how you spend your time. They guard you from agreeing to do things you don't want to do, letting people waste your time, and being overworked.

How much are you willing to give to something or someone? Do you dedicate time for yourself and what is important to you? Do you overcommit? Do you say "yes" even when you're exhausted? (Burnout is often the result of boundary issues in this space).

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**Workload Boundaries** enable you to do your work during normal business hours. Setting workload boundaries requires you to understand the scope of work your job entails, and to say no when the task doesn't fit. When your plate is still too full, delegating tasks to others can help you stay true to your work schedule.

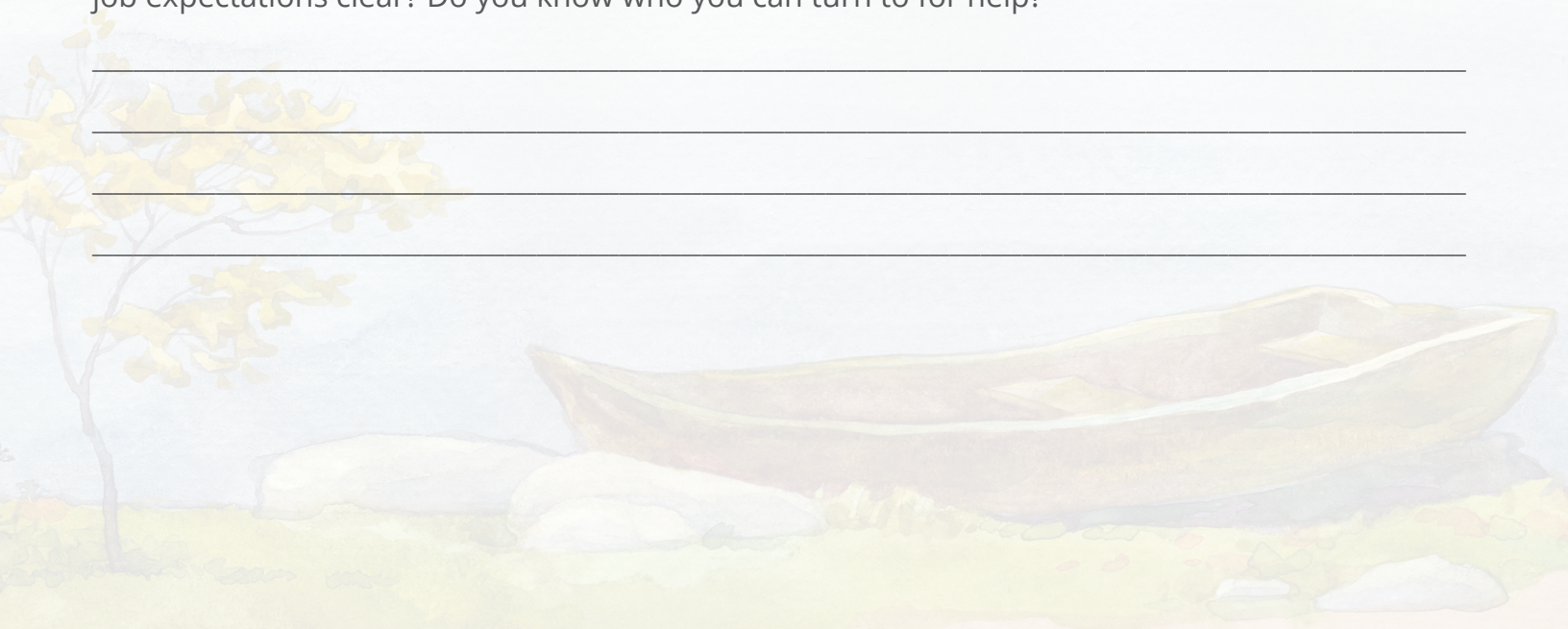
Do you accept tasks outside of your scope of work because you are afraid to say no? Are your job expectations clear? Do you know who you can turn to for help?

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# UNDERSTANDING YOUR BOUNDARIES THROUGH THE LENS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)

Examining boundaries through the lens of the four quadrants of EI can help you determine where you could benefit from stronger boundaries. If you disagree with any of the statements below, take a moment to consider what needs to change for you to answer yes.

**Self-Awareness:** I understand what motivates and influences my behavior in my relationships, and why I create the boundaries I do.

**Self-Management:** I pause and use emotional regulation before deciding to accept or decline in a situation.

**Social Awareness:** I am aware of the boundaries of others and understand how my boundaries impact theirs. I actively consider ways to manage my boundaries for a better outcome.

**Relationship Management:** I actively establish agreements when creating boundaries with others. I clarify and renegotiate agreements when necessary. I honor the boundaries of others.



*Be aware  
Of what is  
Unacceptable  
Normalize saying no  
Do what is best for you  
And know that it's not your  
Responsibility to sacrifice  
Yourself for others*

*~ OurMindfulLives.com*



## BENEFITS OF HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

We are social creatures who crave and require connection with others. However, it's necessary for these connections to be managed thoughtfully. **Setting clear expectations around our boundaries helps reduce the possibility of misunderstandings and increases engagement, satisfaction, and productivity in the workplace.** This helps to support our psychological health.

Clearly communicating healthy boundaries keeps others from unwittingly overstepping our wishes and/or violating our preferences for what amount of ourselves we are willing to share. **It takes introspection and social awareness to understand and create balance between our needs and the needs of others to best serve the relationship.** In achieving that balance, these boundaries allow us to maintain our self-esteem, our happiness, and our relationships.

**Boundaries are instrumental in dealing with stress.** They bolster our resilience by helping us effectively navigate and cope with challenges. Part of this ability allows us to ask for help when appropriate (and in the right ways), but it also gives us self-efficacy in knowing when to say "yes" and when to say "no".

When we communicate a clear delineation between what we will do and what we won't do, we minimize potential conflicts in our work, and personal lives, and people know what to expect from us. This, in turn, **helps us create and maintain a healthy work-life balance.**

# GUIDE TO SETTING BOUNDARIES

**Determine if the boundaries you've set are effective and where you may still need to set boundaries.** Ask yourself:

- Do interactions with others leave you feeling taken advantage of and resentful?
- Do you feel guilty for making requests or saying no when necessary?
- Do you avoid directly communicating your expectations to others?
- Do you feel your values and goals are disrespected by others?
- Do you accept blame for things you didn't do or couldn't control?
- Do you struggle to say no for fear of making others mad?
- Are you afraid of the consequences if you stand up for something you feel strongly about?
- Do you frequently feel overscheduled or tired?
- Do you feel you are treated poorly by others?
- Do you wish you had more time for self-care?
- Do you feel you lack quality time with people you care about or pursuing your interests outside of work?

If you answer yes to any or all of these questions, these are the areas where you need to set and enforce appropriate boundaries to maintain your well-being.

## **Setting, communicating, and enforcing your boundaries.**

- Decide what you will accept and what will not be tolerated. You may find that you have some boundaries that you are willing to negotiate and others that are non-negotiable.
- Establish and communicate very clear boundary expectations as well as consequences for overstepping those boundaries.
- If a boundary or boundaries are consistently ignored, it is time to re-evaluate the relationship. Sometimes this means letting go of a personal or professional relationship to maintain your well-being.
- Remain true to yourself. Don't let others manipulate or guilt you into changing your mind. While it can feel awkward to say "no" when you first begin, it becomes easier over time, and you will reap the rewards in the long run.
- Be aware of situations that warrant new boundaries, or adjustment of current boundaries. Change them as needed to serve your needs as well as the needs of the relationship.



## REFLECTIVE QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER CONVERSATIONS:

How can you better honor others' boundaries?

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What can you do to establish and enforce more effective boundaries for yourself?

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What is one boundary you are committed to establishing today?

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*“Healthy boundaries are not walls. They are gates and fences that allow you to enjoy the beauty of your own garden.”*

*~ Lydia Hall*



## TAKEAWAYS

What new insights did you get from having your conversations?

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What do you think you should be paying attention to now?

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What is one takeaway you want to remember from your conversations?

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# NOW IS THE TIME TO MAKE YOUR MOVE

If you are experiencing difficulty achieving strategic outcomes, disharmony or fear among employees, poor team dynamics, trouble recruiting the right talent, or other team or organizational issues, we will help you unleash new possibilities and potential that result in sustainable change.

Through our processes and programs, you will find your voice, see your vision, and imagine what the right action for the future could be for you, your team, and your organization.

You will realize profound, sustainable transformation—both individually and organizationally—that starts now, and remains for years to come.



**REQUEST AN OBLIGATION-FREE CONSULT TODAY!**

[admin@InnovativeConnectionsInc.com](mailto:admin@InnovativeConnectionsInc.com)

