

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF IGNORED BOUNDARIES

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

OVER ENMESHMENT

This symptom requires everyone to follow the rule that everyone must do everything together and that everyone is to think, feel and act in the same way. No one is allowed to deviate from the family or group norms. Everyone looks homogeneous. Uniqueness, autonomy and idiosyncratic behaviors are viewed as deviations from the norm.

DISASSOCIATION

This symptom involves blanking out during a stressful emotional event. You feel your physical and/or emotional space being violated and you tell yourself something like: "It doesn't matter." "Ignore it and it will go away soon enough." "No sense in fighting it, just hang on and it will be over soon." "Don't put up a struggle or else it will be worse for you." This blanking out results in you being out of touch with your feelings about what happened. It also may result in your inability to remember what happened.

ALOOFNESS OR SHYNESS

This symptom is a result of your insecurity from real or perceived experiences of being ignored, roved or rejected in the past. This feels like a violation of your efforts to expand or stretch your boundaries to include others in your space. Once rejected you take the defensive posture to reject others before they reject you. This keeps you inward and unwilling or fearful of opening up your space to others.

EXCESSIVE DETACHMENT

This symptom occurs when neither you nor anyone else in the group or family is able to establish any fusion of emotions or affiliation of feelings. Everyone is totally independent from everyone else and there doesn't seem to be anything to hold you and them together in healthy union. You and they seem to lack a common purpose, goal, identity or rationale for existing together. There is a seeming lack of desire from you and the other members to draw together to form a union because you fear loss of personal identity.

VICTIMHOOD OR MARTYRDOM

In this symptom, you identify yourself as a violated victim and become overly defensive to ward off further violation. Or it can be that once you accept your victimization you continue to be knowingly victimized and then let others know of your martyrdom.

CHIP ON THE SHOULDER

This symptom is reflected in your interactions with others. Because of your anger over past violation of your emotional and/or physical space and the real or perceived ignoring of your rights by others, you have a "chip on your shoulder" that declares "I dare you to come too close!"

INVISIBILITY

This symptom involves your pulling in or over-controlling so that others even yourself never know how you are really feeling or what you are really thinking. Your goal is not to be seen or heard so that your boundaries are not violated.

COLD AND DISTANT

This symptom builds walls or barriers to insure that others do not permeate or invade your emotional or physical space. This too can be a defense, due to previous hurt and pain, from being violated, hurt, ignored or rejected. This stance is your declaration that "I've drawn the line over which I dare you to cross." It is a way to keep others out and put them off.

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SMOTHERING

This symptom results when another is overly solicitous of your needs and interests. This cloying interest is overly intrusive into your emotional and physical space. It can be so overwhelming that you feel like you are being strangled, held too tightly and lack freedom to breathe on your own. You feel violated, used and overwhelmed.

LACK OF PRIVACY

This symptom is present when you feel that nothing you think, feel or do is your own business. You are expected to report to others in your family or group all the detail and content of your feelings, reactions, opinions, relationships and dealings with the outside world. You begin to feel that nothing you experience can be kept in the privacy of your own domain. You begin to believe you don't have a private domain or your own space into which you can escape to be your own person.

YOU CAN TELL BOUNDARIES ARE BEING IGNORED IF YOU ARE EXPERIENCING ONE OR MORE OF SYMPTOMS MENTIONED ABOVE. DO ANY OF THE LIST OF IGNORED BOUNDARIES SEEM TO BE AFFECTING YOUR LIFE? WHAT WOULD IT LOOK LIKE TO BEGIN TO REMOVE SOME OF THESE CHALLENGES?