

## **Boundaries Case Study**

**Point of the Assignment:** 1) To give you an opportunity to identify situations where a hypothetical student needs to recognize when her boundaries are being violated (*or when she is violating someone else's boundaries*). 2) To brainstorm with group members to make sure all examples of boundary violations are identified. 3) To give you an opportunity to problem solve regarding boundaries violation situations.

As a group, you are going to apply what you have learned about boundaries to **one** case study. Each member of the group is to read the assigned case study and identify possible areas where the student in question is facing an issue of boundaries violation. Then as a group, you will submit **one** final document with **all** the participant names and all examples of boundary violations. The final submitted document will reflect a consensus opinion of solutions for boundary violations.

### **Case Study A: (14 examples of boundary violation)**

Brittney is a 20-year old college student who has a habit of not getting her work done on time. When her professor tries to probe as to why, he learns the following about her: Her parents were divorced when she was little, and now she lives with her mother and step father. **She blames them** (*hint*) when questioned about her irresponsible behavior, saying she knows she can be “a little flakey at times, but she can’t help it because she didn’t have two parents around when she was little to teach her.” In addition, her parents repeatedly tell her it is her fault they are miserable with their lives because they had to sacrifice their own happiness to take care of her. So she feels a drive to please them. Her alcoholic step-father just lost another job because his work found out that when her mom called in sick for him, he was actually just hung over. Since he doesn’t have job, mom needs to work overtime to pay the rent. So now Brittney needs to miss school to stay home and baby sit her little brothers and sisters.

Her boyfriend doesn’t let her get her homework done. He gave her very first cell phone so he can keep in constant touch with her. Now, he demands that she answer her phone 24/7. He usually calls when she’s trying to do her homework, and grills her about what she’s doing, wearing, and who she’s been talking to. She also says she’s really starting to resent him because she’s not happy, and he’s not doing anything about it.

Last week when she was working on her homework, her best friend, Katie, called again to talk for two hours because she had just broken up with her boyfriend (the third time this month). Also, her friend, Sophie, pressures her into going out drinking and partying with her because she doesn’t want to drink alone; but Brittney doesn’t like to drink or party.

She’s having problems with a couple of her male co-workers, which is really stressing her out. George, an older, but harmless, male co-worker is really friendly. He likes to greet her by hugging her tightly and kissing her and kissing her on the cheek. Also, Joe, who is married, constantly tells her that “She should loose weight so he can look at her more. She’d be really ‘hot’ if she dropped 20 pounds.” The stress of how these guys treat her is distracting her from doing her job. So now she’s on probation, and that stress is still there when she gets home and tries to work on her homework.

**Case Study B: (12 examples of boundary violation)**

Anne is a 50-year-old married student who is going to school for the first time in over 30 years. She's really motivated, and shows great potential. However she's really starting to stress out over problems in her life:

Her husband, David, admitted to her that he has been considering having an affair. **He blames her** (*hint*) for this, saying, "If you'd pay more attention to looking sexy for me than picking up my dirty clothes, I wouldn't need to look elsewhere to get my 'needs' met."

Her 25-year-old son, Jim, won't get a job, and screams at her to "get off his back" when she questions him about it. He also nags her because there is nothing to eat in the house even after she has just spent \$200 at the grocery store. Her 23-year-old daughter, Tammy, has a habit of unexpectedly dropping off her three-year-old child because she "has something to do" and not returning to pick up the child for over a day.

Her two sisters, Marge and Mary, call her at least three times a week expecting her to drop everything and come over because of some crisis. They will tell her that this time it is an emergency and needs to be done right now.

Her neighbor, Ellen, is extremely jealous of her husband, Tom, and glares at Anne if she ever says, "Hi" to him. Yet Anne finds that at least once a week, she needs to ask him to ask him to move his car because it's blocking her driveway.

Her boss, Steve, is a well-known philanderer who constantly cheats on his wife, Terry, whom Anne has known for a long time. When Terry (the wife) calls the office and gets a hold of Anne, she asks her if Steve ever gets calls or visits from women. After overhearing Steve make plans to spend the weekend with one of his girlfriends, he informs Anne that she needs to work overtime because he'll be busy and can't get his report done. So she needs to come in and do it for him. Susan, a co-worker, has recently admitted to her that she's been hostile to her and hates Anne because she looks like, and reminds her, of Susan's abusive mother.

## Boundaries Case Study

Self-Direction: Relationship Management

### Group Members:

Case Study #: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Team Members:

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<u>Item #</u>	<u>Issue:</u>	<u>WHO</u> <u>Is the Boundary</u> <u>Violator?</u> (Who is NOT respecting another person's rights)	<u>Type of Boundary</u> <u>Being Violated:</u> (Physical, Mental, Emotional Time*)	<u>Possible Solutions</u>
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2				
3				
4				
5				
6				

## Boundaries Case Study

### Self-Direction: Relationship Management

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<b>8</b>				
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<b>12</b>				
<b>13</b>				
<b>14</b>				

\*The professor added "Time" because students need to not allow others to misuse their time.