

Instructions for “Boundary & Overwhelm” Exercise

Goes with Video

By Barbara Moon

This exercise works on more than one brain skill. It helps practice giving a boundary or a “no” to someone. It helps practice stopping when asked as well as noticing overwhelm non-verbally. It helps notice how one’s body feels when anger is moving towards them, and it helps practice loving an enemy.

The video background is in my home, and it’s cluttery, so try to look at the faces of the people in the practice. This exercise can be fun when done in a group that is not trying to be taped. It can be difficult but eye-opening. I have done the exercise with just one other person and myself to help them feel and notice what is going on in their mind and body. It is a good practice tool.

Stand facing each other in two lines about 8-10 feet apart. (or just two people can do it)

1. Persons A will walk towards Persons B with a neutral face. *Person B will think of someone they are not fond of.* As Person A walks towards them, Person B will notice how their body feels and say, “Stop,” and/or put up their hand, when they begin to feel overwhelmed and do not want the person closer. It is OK to not want them to take more than one or two steps. Person A will stop. Everyone can back up and do this two or three times, then switch to Person B walking towards Person A to say “Stop.” It is great to discuss with your partner how you felt to give the stop and to receive the stop. Did one feel guilty, rejected, was it difficult, etc.? Did you want to sooner but did not?
2. This time Person A walks across with a neutral face, but the *person walking* has to “read” and notice when Person B *wants* them to stop without words or hand. *Person B should be thinking about the person they are not fond of.* Person A looks for slight non-verbal cues such as eyes, body movements, etc. Do two or three times then switch. Let the person walking know if they read and stopped in a good place or not. Discuss how it felt in your mind and body.
3. Person A will walk towards Person B with a grouchy, angry face. Person B will say, “Stop” and/or put up their hand. Do three or four times and then switch. Discuss feelings and insights. It is OK if one says stop before they even take one step.
4. This time we will be loving our enemy. Person A will walk towards Person B with a neutral face. Person B will now be thinking *good thoughts/something they appreciate* about the person they previously were not fond of. Person B will still say stop and/or hand up, but will notice if they feel differently and are able to let the person come closer than before. Discuss feelings and insights. [During this exercise two ladies said they felt their brain shift in a good way about loving and enemy.]