

# 5 Steps from Doormat to Doorkeeper



(How to set effective boundaries)

*Caithe Cameron*

Are you feeling exhausted, powerless and unheard even before you start your day? Are you feeling you have lost yourself? You may need to set some boundaries in your everyday relationships – for work, family and friends.

# Contents

1. Know your boundaries .....	3
2. Yes it is about YOU .....	3
3. Refuse the Blame Game.....	4
4. Delineate, don't Manipulate .....	5
5. Simple and Direct .....	6
Be the best Doorkeeper you can be .....	7
30 basic Human Rights .....	9
Other Titles from Celtica Publishing .....	10
About the Author .....	10

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Here are five steps to stop you from feeling like a doormat to acting like a door keeper.

*“We change our behaviour when the pain of staying the same becomes greater than the pain of changing. “ ~ Henry Cloud*

## 1. Know your boundaries

Feeling drained, anxious, lost and unheard are emotional signs of broken boundaries. You may also feel heavy - physically, mentally, emotionally and spiritually. Feeling shameful or unworthy are also common signs. These indicate a lack of self-esteem and feeling you are not good enough to receive love and respect – basic human rights. At its core, disempowerment means you feel unworthy. Anxiety rises because your true self KNOWS you ARE worthy. The cycle then repeats itself.

It is quite simple to become bogged down in these feelings. Remember - emotions are not the definition of YOU. They are merely signs to help you CHANGE – they are like the alarm going off for a security breach.

When boundaries are breached, you begin to take on the energy and baggage of others while letting your energy go. Reclaiming your empowered self means owning and respecting yourself. Are you ready to reclaim YOU? Let's set some border controls!

Spend some time to answer these three questions. Add or change them through honest reflection.

- I have a right to ask for:
- How does being empowered feel:
- Boundaries I wish to set are:

Choose one or two of these boundaries to become your goal for the next month.

## 2. Yes it is about YOU

Boundaries create a space of protection so you can take care of yourself. It provides a limit to unacceptable behaviour. You not only have the right but a

duty to yourself to be protected and empowered. Unfortunately, from childhood, you have been taught and trained to be concerned about what others think about you and your actions.

If the feelings of resentment and hopelessness come up by another's behaviour. There are some questions you can ask yourself to identify whether a boundary is required:

- How much of this is true about me?
- How much of this is about the other person?
- What do I need to do (if anything) to regain my personal power or stand up for myself?

*“Not my Circus, Not my Monkeys.” Polish Proverb*

Effective boundaries means stating feelings out loud; feelings you may have kept suppressed for a very long time. Give yourself permission to be the fullness of you. There is no need to justify or defend those feelings. None at all. They are yours. Own them and use them as tools to create change in your daily living.

At first, you may feel incredibly guilty, worried and anxious as you set and enforce boundaries. This is normal. The doormat locked inside is beginning to turn into a Guardian – a Doorkeeper. Speaking your boundaries out loud may feel self-serving and selfish. It isn't. It creates ownership, enforces your right to be heard and gives strength to your desire to change.

You may fear confrontation and 'losing' a relationship. Avoiding confrontation and disempowering yourself to keep a relationship actually weakens your boundaries even further. Your true self becomes even smaller and harder to find. Are you worth losing a friendship, family member or business associate or job to protect and empower yourself. Hopefully, you have answered YES!

### **3. Refuse the Blame Game**

You have identified your boundaries. Be ready to enforce them and make some tough choices. You will need to exercise the 'empowerment muscle' regularly.

Imagine you are sending out the guards to do their check of the internal security. Each time a boundary is enforced, it becomes stronger and so do you.

It's important to tell people your priorities have changed. This will prepare them to meet the empowered you. You will also be preparing yourself for change. When guilt and resistance rears its head, not if – when, know this is a sign of being on the path to empowerment.

When boundaries are set and enforced, you are asking someone else to change their behaviour so they may respect you. This places responsibility for their own actions back in to the other person's realm of choice. People will continue to try and knock your boundaries down. This is a given. It may feel unfair however the responsibility of choosing change belongs to each individual. You cannot change another. Your boundary-setting creates a space where you can let go of the outcome because you are aware YOU have choice.

If at first you do not succeed, try again. Exercising the empowerment muscle takes time and effort.

## **4. Delineate, don't Manipulate**

You have learnt to look to others for signs and statements of acceptance and approval. Behaviour has been adapted and changed to receive those signs and statements. You feel your behaviour impacts on other people's feelings and their behaviour impacts your feelings. Others are now responsible for the way you feel. This is manipulation; if I act this way/say this then you WILL like me.

By setting boundaries, you begin to state the truth of you. You reclaim the responsibility for your own emotions. Some people will claim you are attempting to control them through your boundary settings. This is their choice and their manipulation.

As stated earlier, boundary setting releases the outcome. It also removes blame. Stating your boundary and the consequences of having it breached, gives you responsibility for yourself. You can choose to stay or go. Manipulation removes choice. It is abusive and centred on being right. Manipulation blames someone else for feeling unworthy. The difference between boundaries and manipulation lies within the language used.

*"No" IS a complete sentence.* ~Anne Lamott

## 5. Simple and Direct

Take notice of your own language over the coming days and weeks. Look for the language of manipulation. Notice how many times you say "I have to (do this or that)." This is a statement of feeling a victim or being without choice. You do have a choice. If you are thinking, but I have to go to work. You choose to go to work to earn money, you don't have to do so! Changing your 'have to' statements into 'choose to' statements begins to reclaim your power and help you feel in control of your life once again.

You are blessed with the ability to use language to remove the doormat and reclaim your boundaries. Language can help you ask for respect, be assertive and loving. You can do this by learning to express your feelings and your boundaries without blaming or manipulating another.

Boundary statements have four components.

1. "When you..." This is a descriptive and specific statement of the behaviour which is causing you to feel unworthy, unwanted or unheard.
2. "I feel..." This is the expression of your emotions. Be specific so you can fully own the emotion. By expressing the emotion, you strengthen your throat chakra.
3. "I would like you to..." This is another descriptive and specific statement of the behaviour you wish to see.
4. The consequence. This component outlines exactly what you will do if the boundary is breached.

For example: When you are yelling in an angry voice at me, I feel threatened and scared. I would like you to use a moderate tone so I may hear your concerns. If you are unable to do this, I will leave the room until we can speak in a moderate voice.

Be assertive yet gracious. Use direct and simple language. Be aware of your choice of consequences – what will these mean for you in the future. For

example, if you take away a child's driving rights to the car, you may be stuck with driving them around for a month.

Some great examples of boundaries being set:

To set a boundary with an angry person: "You may not yell at me. If you continue, I choose to leave the room."

To set a boundary with personal phone calls at work: "I take all personal calls in the evening so I finish my work. I will call you later."

To say no to extra commitments: "Although your request is important, my family is as well. Thank you for asking, but no."

To set a boundary with someone who is critical: "Your comment about my weight makes me feel unwanted. I'd like you to stop."

To buy yourself time when making tough decisions: "I'll sleep on it, I have a policy of not making decisions right away."

To set a boundary with an adult child who borrows money: "I won't be lending you money anymore. I love you and you need to take responsibility for yourself."

## **Be the best Doorkeeper you can be**

Honour yourself. Using the boundaries and the language of empowerment can be assisted with feeling grounded and centred in your day to day living. A one minute grounding and releasing meditation, completed morning and night, creates the space for you to gather your boundaries, reaffirm your strength and 'call back' those parts of you lost during the day.

Grounding and meditation can be as simple or as complex as you personally prefer. Some ideas include a simple prayer or affirmation, chanting or visualisation. Find what works best for you.

By choosing to become your own Doorkeeper, you acknowledge the only person you can change is yourself. You also acknowledge you have the gift of free will and of choice. Loving yourself is owning yourself and allowing yourself to become a conscious co-creator of your life.

People with authentic boundaries not only receive respect, they demonstrate how much they respect and value themselves. Be willing to risk a relationship or partnership – YOU are worth it.



# 30 basic Human Rights

Did you know there are 30 basic Human Rights according to the United Nations?  
Here is a summary:

- Right to Equality
- Freedom from Discrimination
- Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
- Freedom from Slavery
- Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
- Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
- Right to Equality before the Law
- Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal
- Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
- Right to Fair Public Hearing
- Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
- Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
- Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
- Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution
- Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It
- Right to Marriage and Family
- Right to Own Property
- Freedom of Belief and Religion
- Freedom of Opinion and Information
- Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
- Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
- Right to Social Security
- Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
- Right to Rest and Leisure
- Right to Adequate Living Standard
- Right to Education
- Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community
- Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document
- Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development
- Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

# Other Titles from Celtica Publishing

These resources are available from the Celtica Website ([www.celtica.com.au](http://www.celtica.com.au)) and independent stockists.

**21 Day Reiki Journal** (2013) – to assist with Reiki Attunement Integration

**Pendulums** – clear raw quartz pendulums for dowsing energy

**Pendulum Playtime** – Module One (2011), Caithe Cameron

**Spirit Speak and Other Weird Noises** (2012), Caithe Cameron

**A Wiccan's Walk in Oz** (2014) – Rebecca Major and Caithe Cameron

**Elemental Goddess Meditation CD** – Featuring the music of Renieca, spoken by Caithe Cameron

## About the Author

**Caithe Cameron**, The Celtic Mystic, not only senses energy, auras and other things to make you go “Oooh”, she has been reading palms since the age of 7. Her beekeeping father taught her to appreciate Mother Nature.

Now, as a teaching Reiki Master and Solitary Wiccan Practitioner, her connection with nature has helped her to self-heal and embrace her ‘luna-tick’ tendencies fully. When not outside in her garden, moon-bathing, broadcasting on Mixler, or on Facebook, Caithe writes inspirational poetry and breaks glass at ten paces with her singing.