

4 SIMPLE STEPS TO CREATE *Protective Boundaries*

Step 1: Raise Your Awareness

Awareness of yourself in the mix is always the first step to transform anything because you cannot change that which you are unaware. Your past experience and life experience can be playing a role in workplace conflict. To decode what is really happening whether it's an ongoing conflict with a co-worker or if you've found yourself in different jobs repeating the same scenario (bully boss, put upon by co-workers, overworked, etc.) there may be an unresolved past experience fueling your behavior. In therapy-speak, we call this having a transference experience, I call it having a Repeating Reality. To determine what you might be repeating that could be attracting this unwanted scenario please answer the questions below:

1. Who does this person remind me of?
2. Where have I felt like this before?
3. Why is this dynamic familiar to me? And another way of framing that question is looking at it from the point of view of who do I become and who do they become when the interaction starts to go south?

Step 2: Use Your Intention

Tapping into the mind-blowing power of your intention and changing your mind about the situation is your next step. One way to do this is to use visualization techniques. Do you realize that your expectations can be predictive? If you go into work every day bracing yourself for a shit show, it is likely that one will find its way to you. Imagine that your expectations and feeling state create the energy that emanates from you. It's like that energy has little hooks on the end and leaves your body and goes out to hook other like energy, bringing it back into your experience. That is the concept of the law of attraction. You can consciously decide that you will do your work, that you will protect yourself energetically and not get hooked into anyone else's drama and stick to it. More mindful responding and less reacting. Feel the feelings of having a peaceful, productive day. Don't underestimate the power of your intention to change your experience.

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“WHEN YOU CHANGE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT THINGS,
THE THINGS YOU LOOK AT CHANGE.”

Dr. Wayne Dyer

Step 3: Power Pose

Try a Power Pose experiment and see how it impacts your confidence at work. Amy Cuddy and fellow researchers at Harvard, conducted a controversial study that indicated that in as little as two minutes a day standing in one of the power positions (the easiest to describe is standing tall, arms high above your head in a V shape or victory stance with legs spread about hip distance apart) increases confidence and good feeling hormones released in the body. Participants reported feeling more confident, assertive and powerful. (For more on this watch Amy Cuddy's TED Talk) Even with the controversy around Amy's research being a 'pseudoscience' I think there is something to it and really, what do you have to lose?

Step 4: Speak Up

Sometimes drawing boundaries requires you to actually say what's on your mind. You can make a simple request to coworkers or your boss when it comes to your boundary preferences. And before saying something, get clear about what your body language is already broadcasting to make sure it is aligned with how you feel. For example, If you prefer to be quiet in the morning and you have a chatty co-worker who starts yakking the moment you walk in, you can consciously use body language as a powerful tool to communicate your preference. Use closed body language such as leaning into your computer

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screen, drinking a cup of coffee away from your door, not facing forward inviting conversation, etc. Doing so will give signals that are aligned with how you actually feel. If someone is in your space and talking, you can put your hand up and say, "Hey, can I make a simple request that we pick this up after 10:00 AM?" You can provide context, "I find myself most productive when I can work solo for the first hour of the day. Thanks," or not. When you draw boundaries, you have to understand people may not like it and you have to just be OK with that truth. The more you do it the better it gets.

with love Terri