Principal Name: Amy Harrington
School Name: Johnston Elementary
Principal Email: aharring@highland.k12.in.us

- Background Information:
  - ⬚ My "base" and "phase," according to PCM, are both 100% Harmonizer.
  - ⬚ I am a people-pleaser and say "yes" to everything. The problem is that I take everything on myself for everyone.

- Purpose:
  - ⬚ I want to set better boundaries instead of taking it all on myself. What are my "non-negotiables"? Is this something I can delegate?

- Question (Wondering): Can I maintain my boundaries to better care for myself?

  - ⬚ Subquestions:
    - ▪ Do I have defined boundaries, or do I need to create more?
    - ▪ How often am I "pausing" daily (creating a boundary)?
    - ▪ Can I identify current or aspirational boundaries?
    - ▪ Can I narrow down and prioritize the boundaries I set for myself?

- Method (What will we be doing?):
  - ⬚ When a problem arises, when I pause to decide, this is a defining moment when I place my boundary. If I say "yes," I'm creating a boundary, which I will do. If I say "no," I am creating a boundary that is not something I will do.

- Data Collection: I will reflect on each day for two weeks to see whether I stayed within my boundaries. Did I have noticeable "pauses"? If so, what happened? How did I feel when I stayed within my boundaries?

- Examples:
  - ⬚ The secretary asked me a question that had already been addressed in our weekly newsletter.
    - ▪ Old Self- look up the answer to give to the secretary (likely looking at my newsletter)
    - ▪ New Self- Ask the secretary to refer back to the newsletter to find her answer
  - ⬚ A student was just expelled, and I had a 504 meeting
    - ▪ Old Self: try and get paperwork ready for the expulsion and make it to the 504 meeting (resulting in me not giving 100% attention at the meeting.
    - ▪ New Self: I will ask my counselor to sit in for me during the 504 meeting so I can finish up the necessary things that go into an expulsion.

- Teacher wants me to check the student's t-shirt to see if it is school-appropriate.
    - Old Self: Stop what I am doing and go down to the classroom to check the student's t-shirt
    - New Self: Ask the teacher if the t-shirt is disrupting the learning environment. If so, ask her to send the child to the bathroom to turn the shirt inside out.
- Teacher is having problems with a student's behavior in class.
    - Old Self: Call home and schedule a conference with parents and teacher
    - New Self: Ask the teacher what things she has tried and ask her if she has met with parents. If she has not, I would ask her to schedule a conference.

- Noticings:
    - I make SO many decisions in a day!
    - My staff feels more empowered to make their own decisions.
    - No one is upset with me for creating these boundaries
    - I am more present in the decisions I make because I have prioritized better
    - I see where others can create boundaries for themselves
        - For example, my counselor just told me how full her plate is when a teacher approaches her and asks if she can give a student that was absent their spelling test that they missed. She and I then had a discussion about why she would respond either way. Where are her boundaries?
        - When I give staff permission to say "no", they often seem relieved.
- What Next?
    - I will continue trying to notice my "pauses" and creating AND sticking to my boundaries.
    - I will continue to vocalize this with my staff so that they can create boundaries for themselves.
- Bibliography:
    - Lakshmin, P. (2023). *Real Self-Care: A Transformative Program for Redefining Wellness*. New York City, NY: Penguin Life.
    - Whitaker, T. (2012). *Shifting the Monkey.* Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.
    - *Regier, N. (2020). Seeing People Through: Unleash Your Leadership Potential with the Process Communication Model.* Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.
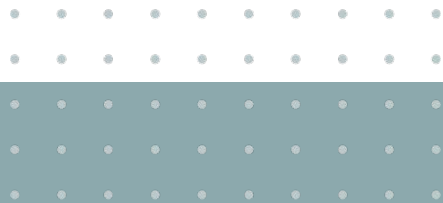
THE BOUNDARY IS IN THE PAUSE

By Amy Harrington

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

My Base and Phase are both 100% Harmonizer according to the "Process Communication Model".

I am a people-pleaser and say "yes" to everything. The problem is that I take everything on myself for everyone.

For one week, I kept a tally of how often people were coming to me and I instinctively said, "No problem, I'll take care of that for you" It was staggering-my to do list never got smaller and I was feeling overwhelmed.

PURPOSE:

I want to set better boundaries instead of taking it all on myself. What are my non-negotiables? Is this something I can delegate?

WONDERING

I wonder if I can maintain my boundaries to better take care of myself.

Do I have defined boundaries, or do I need to create more?

How often am I "pausing" daily (creating a boundary)?

Can I identify current or aspirational boundaries?

Can I narrow down and prioritize the boundaries I set for myself?

METHOD-LISTEN TO MY "PAUSES" TO DECIDE IF IT NEEDS A BOUNDARY.

When someone brings something to me, a problem to solve, a task to do, something to fix, when I pause to make a decision, this is a defining moment on where I am placing my boundary. If I say "yes", I'm creating a boundary that that is something I will do. If I say "no", I am creating a boundary that is not something I will do.
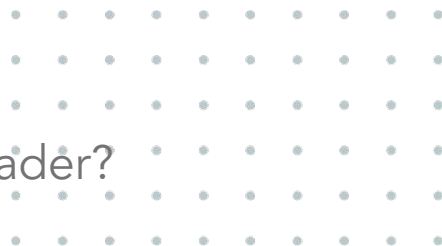
I have always been a "yes" girl, hence, creating no boundaries at all.

I looked for these three things:
1. Is this a chance to empower someone?
2. Is this something that I need to be involved in?
3. Is this a small problem or does it need a building leader?

Data Collecting

I will reflect on each day for two weeks to see whether I stayed within my boundaries or did not. Did I have noticeable "pauses"? If so, what happened? How did I feel when I stayed within my boundaries?

Examples after data collecting:

1. Secretary asks me a question that was already addressed in our weekly newsletter.
   a. Old Self-look up the answer to give to the secretary (likely looking at my newsletter)
   b. New Self-ask the secretary to refer back to the newsletter to find her answer
2. A student was just expelled and I had a 504 meeting
   a. Old Self-try and get paperwork ready for the expulsion and make it to the 504 meeting (resulting in me not giving 100% attention at the meeting.
   b. New Self-ask my counselor to sit in for me during the 504 meeting so I could finish up the necessary things that go into an expulsion.
3. Teacher wants me to check student's t-shirt to see if it is school appropriate.
   a. Old Self-stop what I am doing and go down to the classroom to check the student's t-shirt
   b. New Self-ask the teacher if it is a disruption to the learning environment. If so, ask her to send the child to the bathroom to turn the t-shirt inside out.
4. Teacher is having problems with a student's behavior in class.
   a. Old Self-call home and schedule a conference with parents and teacher
   b. New Self-ask teacher what things she has tried and ask her if she has met with parents. If she has not, I would ask her to schedule a conference.

NOTICINGS
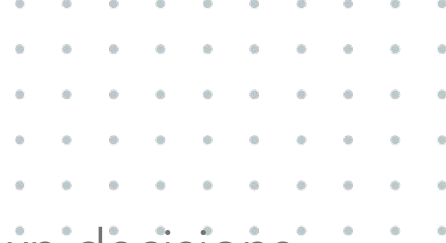
1. I make SO many decisions in a day!
2. My staff feels more empowered to make their own decisions.
3. No one is upset with me for creating these boundaries
4. I am more present in the decisions I take on because I have prioritized better
5. I see where others can create boundaries for themselves
   a. Example-my counselor just told me how full her plate is when a teacher approaches her and asks if she can give a student that was absent their spelling test that they missed. She and I then had a discussion about why she would respond either way. Where is her boundary?
   b. More times than not, when I give staff permission to say "no", they seem relieved.

NEXT STEPS

1. I will continue trying to notice my "pauses" and creating AND sticking to my boundaries.
2. I will continue to vocalize this with my staff so that they, too, can create boundaries for themselves.
3. If I'm still feeling overwhelmed, asking myself if my boundaries need to be more defined, or do I need to "pause" longer?

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES

Lakshmin, P. (2023). Real Self-Care: A Transformative Program for Redefining Wellness. New York City, NY: Penguin Life.

Whitaker, T. (2012). Shifting the Monkey. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree Press.

Regier, N. (2020). Seeing People Through: Unleash Your Leadership Potential with the Process Communication Model. Oakland, CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.

I