

BUSTING BARRIERS

Toolkit

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PRAYER

Pray this daily, as needed. I wrote this for myself.

Dear Lord, anxiety and stress threaten to overwhelm me today. Though I try to shake them, I have lived in the pattern of chaos for so long that it has become my default mode.

Today, I lay my anxiety and stress in your hands. I breathe in your peace and comfort. While I know you are in control, help me see evidence of your power throughout my day. May I see you move so intricately today that when my body and mind want to place the mantel of anxiety and stress back on my shoulders, may my first thought be of you? Be the first place I turn when my body and mind want to keep me in the default mode of not trusting my ability to handle all situations, no matter how big or small.

Help me find something to be thankful for today.
Help me find someone to encourage today.
Help me keep my heart, soul, mind, and body tuned to your frequency today.

Knowing you are with me, let me live fully into this precious moment. Amen.

HOW TO ESTABLISH A DEVOTIONAL ROUTINE

Daily devotionals set the tone for the day, providing wisdom and guidance.

Set a Time and Place: Choose a specific time and quiet place to focus without distractions. Consistency is key.

Select Your Materials: Gather your Bible or any Christian reading material that inspires you.

Begin with Prayer: Start by talking to God. Share your thoughts, concerns, and gratitude. It's like opening your heart to a conversation with a close friend.

Read Scripture: Choose a passage or verse that resonates with you. Read it slowly, allowing the words to sink in. Reflect on its meaning.

Reflect and Meditate: Consider how the passage relates to your life. Think about its message and how it can impact your day.

Personalize Your Thoughts: Journal your thoughts, prayers, or any insights you gain during your devotional. This is like documenting your journey with God.

Pray Again: Talk to God about what you've read and your reflections. Share your hopes, concerns, and desires.

Listen and Be Still: Give God a chance to speak to your heart. Sometimes, it's in the stillness that you hear the most.

End with Gratitude: Close your devotional time with thankfulness.

Take Action: Consider how you can apply what you've learned daily. It's time to put your spiritual insights into action like an athlete training for a race. Remember, the key to a transformative devotional is your connection with God. Please don't rush through it. Take your time, and let your devotional time be a source of inspiration and transformation.

Here are some research-proven benefits of daily devotions: improved mental health, enhanced resilience, stress reduction, enhanced emotional intelligence, longevity, and health.

STEPS TO HELP YOU FORGIVE

Take it one step at a time, be gentle with yourself. Just keep working on it.

Reflect on the Wound: Take time to acknowledge the pain and hurt caused by the offense.

Prayerful Perspective: Seek guidance through prayer, connecting with your faith, and asking God for the strength to forgive.

Release Resentment: Understand that holding onto resentment only poisons your own heart. Release it, like a bird from its cage.

Seek Healing: Engage in self-care and healing practices to mend your own wounds, whether through therapy, journaling, or counseling.

Choose to Forgive: Forgiveness is a conscious decision. Choose to let go of the offense, as you have been forgiven by God.

Remember God's Forgiveness: Draw strength from the understanding that we are all sinners in need of God's grace and forgiveness.

Set Boundaries: Forgiving doesn't always mean forgetting. Set healthy boundaries to protect yourself from future harm.

Let Go of Control: Surrender the desire for revenge or justice, trusting that it's ultimately in the hands of a God.

Pray for the Offender: In your one-on-one conversations with God, lift up the person who hurt you in prayer, asking for their transformation.

Give It Time: Forgiveness is a process. Don't rush it. Time can heal even the deepest wounds.

Celebrate Freedom: As you forgive, celebrate the freedom it brings. It's like unlocking a door that's been holding you captive.

HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES

It is okay to set boundaries.

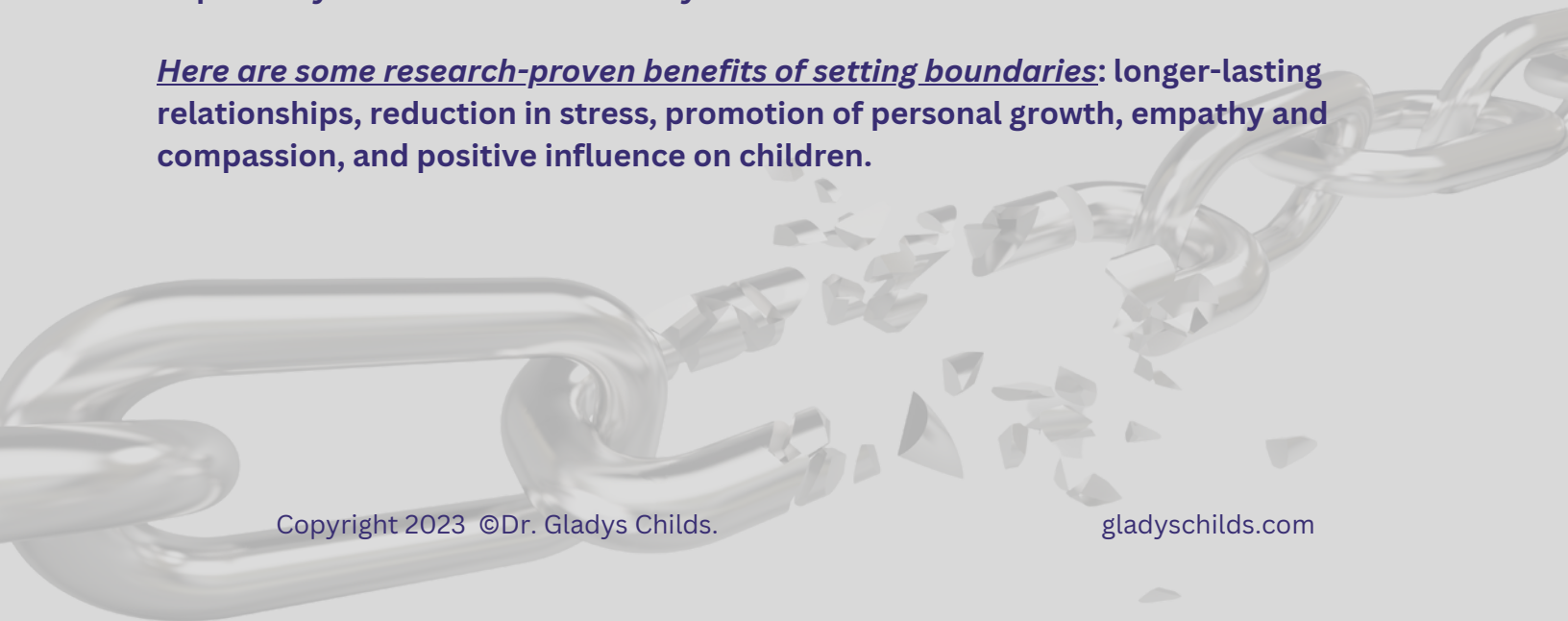
Open and Honest Communication: Communication is key to setting boundaries. Have a candid conversation with the people in your life about what you're comfortable with and what you're not. It's like drawing lines on a map and making sure everyone knows where they are.

Be Specific and Clear: Vague boundaries are easily misunderstood. To prevent confusion, be specific about your limits and expectations. It's like setting up signposts along a road, so everyone knows where the boundaries lie.

Consistency and Follow-Through: Boundaries must be consistently enforced. If you set a boundary, make sure to follow through with consequences if it's crossed. It's like maintaining a well-fenced garden to keep intruders out.

Self-Care and Assertiveness: Setting boundaries often requires assertiveness. Be kind but firm in asserting your needs. Remember that self-care is not selfish; it's essential. Think of it as putting on your oxygen mask before helping others on an airplane – you need to take care of yourself first.

Here are some research-proven benefits of setting boundaries: longer-lasting relationships, reduction in stress, promotion of personal growth, empathy and compassion, and positive influence on children.



WAYS TO CORRECT NEGATIVE SELF-TALK

Awareness: Start by recognizing when negative self-talk occurs.

Challenge the Thoughts: Question the validity of your negative thoughts. Are they based on facts or assumptions?

Replace with Positivity: Replace negative thoughts with positive affirmations or scripture.

Practice Self-Compassion: Treat yourself with kindness and understanding, just as you would a friend.

Focus on Achievements: Remind yourself of past accomplishments and successes.

Mindfulness and Meditation: Practice mindfulness to stay in the present moment. Meditation can help quiet the chatter of negative self-talk.

Seek Support: Talk to a trusted friend, family member, or therapist.

Journaling: Write down your negative thoughts and counter them with positive, rational ones.

Limit Self-Criticism: Set a boundary on self-criticism. Don't allow it to become a never-ending loop in your mind.

Gratitude Practice: Focus on what you're grateful for in your life.

Visualize Success: Picture yourself achieving your goals and conquering your fears. Visualization can be a powerful tool.

Self-Care: Take care of your physical and mental well-being. A healthy body and mind are more resilient to negative self-talk.

Celebrate Small Wins: Acknowledge and celebrate your daily achievements, no matter how small.

STEPS TO EMPOWER YOURSELF WITH SELF-REFLECTION

*It is okay to know who you are. Know your strengths and weaknesses.
This allows for the possibility of change.*

Identify Strengths: Take time to identify your strengths and talents. What are you naturally good at?

Embrace Imperfections: Understand that strengths can coexist with imperfections.

Learn from Weaknesses: Self-reflection allows you to learn from your weaknesses.

Set Goals: Use self-reflection to set specific, achievable goals that leverage your strengths. It's like charting a course that aligns with your inner compass.

Celebrate Achievements: Reflect on your past successes.

Cultivate Self-Confidence: Self-reflection can boost self-confidence. When you see your strengths clearly, you believe in your abilities.

Seek Feedback: Ask for feedback from trusted friends, mentors, or colleagues. It's like looking in a mirror held by others to see your strengths from different angles.

Learn and Adapt: Self-reflection helps you adapt and refine your strengths. It's like honing a blade to make it sharper over time.

Practice Gratitude: Reflect on your strengths with gratitude.

Set Boundaries: Self-reflection can help you recognize when to say no and set boundaries to protect your strengths from being depleted.

Overcome Challenges: Use self-reflection to find the inner strength to face and overcome challenges. It's like fueling your resilience with self-awareness.