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Business Serenity Through Wise Management & Professional Support

Brave Business Boundaries

We all know that having and protecting our personal boundaries is important to manage our sense of security and peace. When was the last time you gave some attention to your business boundaries? This checklist of issues may help you increase your business serenity!

How comfortable are you with the following boundaries?	Strong	Weak
Saying No. <i>Do you take on everything that comes your way, or do you think about whether the client is a good fit and whether you have capacity to complete the work in a timely manner?</i>		
Managing your time. <i>Do you stick to schedules, have defined working hours, automated processes and outsource areas of work that are not in your zone of genius?</i>		
Clear agreements. <i>Do you have clear agreements (contracts) with your clients and others you work with that define the scope of your tasks, the due date for deliverables, your expectations around payment and generally give you and your clients the advantage of clarity, consistency and certainty?</i>		
Terms & Conditions. <i>This follows on from the one above. Do your clients clearly know what to expect in relation to how you work and where your responsibility ends and theirs begins? Are your cancellation & refund policies clear and easily available to your clients?</i>		
Your Business is a separate entity. <i>Even if you are a sole trader, you need to make sure that your business is only part of your life, not your whole life. Do you keep your business and personal finances separate? What other cross-overs are there between your business and personal life and how comfortable are you with these?</i>		

How comfortable are you with the following boundaries?	Strong	Weak
Communication channels. <i>How do you communicate with your clients? Is it easy for them to contact you outside your defined work times and are you comfortable with this? Do you ever feel that client communication intrudes on your down time? Do you use autoresponders and FAQ pages to take some of the pressure off?</i>		
Your value. <i>Do you feel valued by your business? Does it respect the time and effort you put in? Is your work rewarding and enjoyable?</i>		
Your values. <i>Is your business in full alignment with the values that are important to you? Do you ever feel like you need to compromise your ethics in order to make a sale, keep a client happy or get more work?</i>		
Your vision. <i>Do you have a clear vision for the future of your business and do you check in regularly with this vision to ensure that your business is on the right track? Are your actions leading you towards your vision or are you allowing too many distractions?</i>		
Generosity. <i>Being in business doesn't mean you have to be hard and uncaring. However, you do need to think consciously about what generosity in your business means to you and where the limits are. Once you are clear on where you are drawing the line, don't cross it, otherwise generosity can very easily turn into resentment.</i>		
Consistency. <i>Do you have workflow processes in place that allow you to follow consistent, repeatable procedures with each client, or do you tend to make it up as you go along?</i>		
Flexibility. <i>Are you able to assess situations that arise on their own merits and make an executive decision about how to respond? Are your processes adaptable and able to accommodate unusual situations? Do you regularly review them with the intention of updating them to meet your changing needs?</i>		
Worries and fears. <i>Are there are whole pile of "what if" worries cluttering up your subconscious? How do you feel about risk? Do you regularly brain-dump your concerns and sort out the real-world dangers from the limiting beliefs – and create an action plan to monitor and deal with those fears that could hurt your business?</i>		

How comfortable are you with the following boundaries?	Strong	Weak
<i>Consumer Guarantees. Are you prepared to deal with customer complaints? Do you know what your obligations are under consumer law?</i>		
<i>Dispute Resolution. Regardless of how wonderful your service is, there is a good chance that someone, sometime, will be unhappy with their purchase from you or some aspect of working with you. Do you have a plan for what to do in this situation? Are you aware of what options</i>		
<i>Authenticity. Do your boundaries feel good to you? Do they feel right? Do they feel honest? Where are you doing things a certain way just because you feel like you should or because a coach told you to or because that's what a friend is doing? Do you have boundaries in place that don't fit with you being open and genuine in your business? How comfortable with your level of vulnerability in your business?</i>		

If you have completed this checklist and realised that many of your boundaries are weak, do not despair. Everyone has to start somewhere and you have just massively increased your awareness of what is causing you to feel uncomfortable in your business. If you have lots of strong boundaries, congratulations! Take a moment to pat yourself on your back and appreciate the thought and effort you have put into building a business that meets your needs.

For each weak boundary, feel into what is not working for you and what it would take to strengthen this boundary so it feels more protective. Being proactive about this is much better than waiting until something triggers you and then trying to set boundaries in a reactive state of mind. You can use each of these issues as a journaling prompt to really explore your business boundaries in detail. Once you are clear about what you want, make sure you write it down as simply and clearly as possible – and if appropriate – communicate your boundaries calmly and carefully to those who need to know about them. Finally, and most importantly, don't be your own worst enemy! No-one is going to respect your boundaries unless you do! Keep them somewhere close by and revisit them often to make sure you are complying with the promises you have made to yourself and your business – because that is what these boundaries are - promises of your commitment to turning stress into serenity. Any questions? Book a free 30 minute consultation: http://bit.ly/MMW_consult.