

BOUNDARY BALANCE CHECK

1. Friends.

Having friends is healthy. Having frenemies not so much. Sometimes we have 'friends for a reason/friends for a season' and friendships move on. For example, many of your friends may have come from other parents at playgroup. Years later it may be that few are still around or have grown in the same way as you, so the friendship has drifted away. It is natural. Do not feel like you are disloyal or at fault if it dawns on you first that it has run its course. To help you assess it ask yourself:

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| 1. Is there reciprocity? Good give and take | YES | NO |
| 2. Do they criticise you and your actions much? | YES | NO |
| 3. Do you feel 'obligated' to them? | YES | NO |
| 4. Do they put you down, albeit 'jokingly'? | YES | NO |
| 5. Are they moody? Angry? Up and down? | YES | NO |
| 6. Is it your job to sooth their moods? | YES | NO |
| 7. Do you rescue them regularly or make excuses when they let you down? | YES | NO |

Add up the Yes vs No answers for a quick snapshot.



2. Family

The main part of this balance check is to ask yourself what tasks and responsibilities are falling to you (either unwittingly/through choice/just because.....)

To help you assess it, ask yourself:

Make a list of all the things you do regular in the home. Include actual tasks (e.g. empty the dishwasher, cook supper etc.), **things you take responsibility for** (e.g. organising holidays, choosing décor etc.) **and how you carry the weight emotionally for others** (e.g. pull your daughter out of her meltdown etc.).

Look down the list and see how each action feels. Does it fill you with dread? Pride? Excitement? Note it down

Ask yourself, do you do this thing because you are really good at it or is it just that no one else does it? Did you agree to do this or was it just secretly assigned to you by some unseen power?

Note how this realisation makes you feel.

Look at the ones that are making you feel negative in any way. Highlight them.

Can they be allocated to someone else? Could you let others help themselves more in these areas?

When you do delegate some of them what will you do with the time you gain that makes you happy? Note it down.

3. Work

It is said that at work having accountability without authority is a curse.

Look at Dilbert and you will see that the major frustrations of the madness of working life are that people are not heard, acknowledged, valued or allowed autonomy and that leads to frustration and resentment which leads to poor work performance, absenteeism or quitting.

To take a balance check note down over a week what leads to you feeling stressed or resentful.

What exchanges with others led to these feelings?

What processes are sapping your will to live?

When and where do you feel upset or disregarded?

How far away are these experiences from what you would want to be an ideal working environment?

What is causing the mismatch? Is it your behaviour? Is it another's behaviour? Is it a behaviour in another that you have allowed to become commonplace?

Thinking back to the exchanges or situations what could you have done differently? Perhaps it was down to what you said or replied or how you felt and buried the feelings after an email or instruction. In future what could you do differently?

One trick is the 24 hour email. Unless you are in a situation where an immediate response is a matter of life and death then responding to an email or following up an unsatisfactory exchange will always benefit from time. Write out your response and park it. Sleep on it. Revisit it the next day or later and then tone it down or mitigate it.

The best mitigation self-question is: 'What else could this mean?'

