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**Enabling: The Fine Line between Helping and Hurting**

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Hello! This is your worksheet to accompany you as you attend this workshop on The Fine Line between Helping and Hurting. This is an intermediate level workshop that offers you the opportunity to go beyond the definitions of enabling and develop within you an internal compass to help you help, not hurt, the people in your life.

Please print this worksheet. We will work on these questions together during the session, and I hope by doing so you will learn more about yourself and increase your skill base when it comes to this Fine Line of Helping not Hurting. Also, if you wish, bring colored markers or colored pencils. You will have the option of writing or drawing as you respond to some of the questions.

**You and this Workshop**

1. **What is your reason for choosing this workshop?**
2. **What do you hope to learn in this workshop?**
3. **As we begin, can you identify one person in your life who challenges your fine line between helping and hurting? This could be family, friend, client, or co-worker.**
4. **Does enabling pose any challenges for you? Do you find it difficult to say “no” or to stick with a boundary you are trying to set? What else about you may contribute to enabling?**
5. **Are you aware of these challenges within you when they are happening?**

**You and the Fine Line**

1. **Let’s go back and look at some of the clip art in this section on the Fine Line:**
   * **What feelings and thoughts come up for you as you look at those pictures of the under-functioning person?**
   * **What feelings and thoughts come up for you as you look at those pictures of the over-functioning person?**
2. **Draw a continuum in the space below placing Okay on one end and Going Too Far on the other end. Now, place your self on the continuum as it applies to you when it comes to:**

* **Doing more than your share**
* **Doing for others what they could do for themselves**
* **Thinking/problem-solving for others**
* **Taking over**
* **Violating your own boundaries**

1. **Looking at the picture at the end of this section where one individual is helping another over the wall:**
   * **What feelings come up for you as you look at this?**
   * **What challenges might exist as one individual helps another in this way?**

**You and Signs You are Near the Fine Line**

**The Fine Line is where our feelings, thoughts, and behaviors are becoming stronger and making it difficult for us to stick with the limits we want to live with. We say and do things we have sworn we do not want to do. We move down the continuum of helping into the realm of hurting.**

**Self-awareness is essential to managing our placement on this helping/hurting continuum.**

1. **Listen to the case example presented. In response to that:**
2. **Put yourself in the mother’s position:**
   * **What would you be feeling?**
   * **What would you be thinking?**
   * **What might you be doing in reaction to what is going on?**
3. **Now put yourself in the son’s position:**
   * **What is he feeling?**
   * **What is he thinking?**
   * **What is he doing or not doing?**
4. **What might you do if you were the mother who wants to help and not hurt?**
5. **What are signs within you that you may be about to let go of a boundary you have previously set with someone?**

**You and Strategies**

**For Staying on the Helping Side of the Fine Line**

1. **Of the 5 Core Skills which can help to calm us and connect with our self in healthy, productive ways, which skills appeal to you the most? Which ones work for you?**

**What are other ways you calm yourself?**

1. **As you consider the 3 Core Relationship Dynamics, are you more inclined toward one over the other: enmeshed, alienated, healthy/dynamic?**
2. **Thinking of the person you identified in question #3 who you feel challenged to help not hurt, what are your relationship dynamics like with that person?**
3. **What can challenge you when you are trying to interact in a healthy/dynamic way? Consider how your feelings and thoughts, fears and worries, and/or your reactions to the other person may cause you to back down or do more.**
4. **We have just studied 5 skill sets which can help us when we are trying to help not hurt, when we know we need to not offer more, when we know we need to let go and let the other person take responsibility:**

* **Detaching**
* **Frustration Tolerance**
* **Anxiety Management**
* **Boundary Setting**
* **Guilt Management**
* **In general, which 2 of these skill sets will help you the most?**
* **Looking at those 2 skills sets, identify 2 skills within each set which you want to remember and practice.**

1. **Who can support you as you make these changes which can benefit you and others?**

**You and Your Internal Compass**

1. **As we are coming to the end of our workshop, let’s put together what you have been studying and really attend to your Internal Compass.**

* **First, look back at your original reasons for participating in this session (Question #1) and what you hoped to learn here today (Question #2).** **How does what you have learned and experienced in this workshop match what you wanted? How might it help with what you seek?**
* **Now, think of the person you identified in Question #3 as someone who challenges your Fine Line between helping and hurting. With that relationship in mind and what you have learned in this workshop:**
  + **What will help you remember to connect with your Internal Compass when you are feeling like you want to keep offering and doing more for this person?**
  + **What are Signs within you and indicators from this person that you are near The Fine Line and may shift to doing more than your helpful share for this person if you do not stay mindful of you, them, and larger goals for each of you?**
  + **How can you learn to trust your Internal Compass, to trust your “true North”?**
  + **Which of the 10 Strategies can help you stay on your course of offering help and knowing when to leave the rest to this other person?**

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