

Progressive Boundary Setting System™

Train the Trainer Manual



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What is Boundary Setting?

It is an action by an individual, entity, or society that controls unwanted behaviors. In order for it to be effective, the behavioral limit must be **communicated** and **enforced**. And people must **respect** the limits imposed upon their behavior.

Example: No. No. No.

What is *Progressive Boundary Setting*?

It is a strategy of using escalating step-by-step boundary setting as a method to respond to violations of behavioral limits. Escalating boundary setting uses higher level responses to each violation of a lower level boundary as a means of enforcement.

Example: No. No! **No!!!!**

What is the *Progressive Boundary Setting System*[™]?

It is a tool for conveying, comprehending, and carrying out the concepts of *Progressive Boundary Setting*.

It provides common language and a blueprint for systematically promoting the concepts of **respect**, **communication**, and **enforcement** of behavior limits to individuals and society.

Goldilocks and the Three Villages

Once upon a time there was a young woman named Goldilocks. One day, Goldilocks decided it was time for her to learn more about life and move to one of three villages.

Goldilocks first visited *Toolittleville* also known as the *Village of Fear and Submissiveness*. The first thing Goldilocks noticed was how quiet it was in the village. People walked silently down the street with their eyes downcast and shoulders slumped.

No one greeted or talked to each other on the sidewalk. It was as if they were all afraid of interacting with each other. When someone appeared to need some type of help, the residents of *Toolittleville* would simply walk on by without acknowledging the situation or offering assistance.

Goldilocks felt herself becoming fearful and passive as time progressed in *Toolittleville*. She was happy to leave.

The next day Goldilocks hiked down to visit *Toobigville* also known as the *Village of Anger and Overreaction*. *Toobigville* was loud and noisy. Well before Goldilocks arrived at the outskirts of the village, she heard cars honking and people yelling.

The people of *Toobigville* walked around with aggressive facial expressions and body postures. They were quick to take offense at any provocation or perceived slight. As a result, it was common to see men and women arguing and fighting on the street. Goldilocks was happy to leave.

On the third day, Goldilocks entered *Justrightville* also known as the *Village of Progressive Boundary Setting*. She instantly realized that she had found her new home. People were either purposely going from place to place or engaging in friendly conversation. The villagers were all very clear and direct with each other. Conflicts were resolved quickly and without yelling.

Having been raised by her parents to communicate assertively, enforce her behavioral limits, and to respect other people, Goldilocks felt perfectly at home in *Justrightville*. She vowed never to leave.

The **goal** of a civilized society is to **promote responses** to conflict and confrontation that are **appropriate** for the situation. **Appropriate responses** are not too aggressive nor too submissive. **They are just right.**

Just Right Responses are **created** by step-by-step **Progressive** (escalating) **Responses** to situations of conflict and confrontation.

Progressive Responses are the result of **employing the strategy** of *Progressive Boundary Setting* to situations of conflict and confrontation.

The ***Progressive Boundary
Setting System™***

makes the concepts of

***Respecting,
Communicating, and
Enforcing***

Behavioral Limits

easier to

***Convey,
Comprehend, and
Carryout***

Let's take a look at the perils and dangers currently facing today's citizens, particularly youth:



The majority of these problems have names which describe the behaviors such as:

- Youth Violence
- Bullying
- Street Harassment
- Sexual Assault
- Dating Violence
- Domestic Violence
- Drug & Alcohol Abuse
- Hate Crimes
- Drinking & Driving
- Peer Pressure
- Teen Pregnancy
- Gang Violence

But, if we were to describe the basic nature of these problems, we would say that these problems stem from the:

- **1. Lack of respect** for personal behavioral limits and boundaries, other people's behavioral limits and boundaries, and for societies' behavioral limits and boundaries.
- **2. Inability to effectively communicate** behavioral limits and boundaries to others as bystanders to, or as subjects of unwanted behavior.
- **3. Inability to enforce** behavioral limits and boundaries as bystanders to, or as subjects of unwanted behavior.

This multitude of problems can not be solved by self-defense, bullying classes, and the like. These problems are the result of a cultural lack of self-policing.

Specifically, these problems arise from individuals and a culture that is missing both individual self-respect and respect for others. Is missing the ability to effectively communicate behavioral limits. Is missing the ability to effectively enforce behavioral limits with a response that is not too passive and not too aggressive. In summary, people are missing the ability to set and enforce boundaries as both bystanders and subjects of unwanted behavior.

Progressive Boundary Setting is designed to build **respect**, and promote **communication** and the **enforcement** of the behavioral limits in society.



The majority of behavior based problems would be eliminated if people:

1. Respected themselves and others.

2. Communicated effectively to others about what they did or did not want to happen.

3. Enforced their wishes and demands with responses that were appropriate to the situation.

Individuals lack the ability to self-police because the culture as a whole is uneducated on the basic concepts of how to set, communicate and enforce boundaries and behavioral limits.

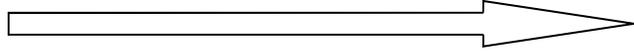
These basic concepts are not taught in school, and they are not passed down from parents to children. As a result, most citizens are effectively illiterate on how to keep themselves and their families safe and out of trouble.

Societal improvements are brought about when people are able to advance upon fundamental concepts and observations. Without understanding these fundamentals, there will be limited advancement.

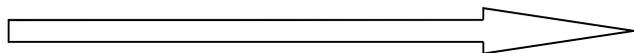
The 1st fundamental concept of a civilized society is the existence of rules and laws. These rules and laws must be ***respected***, they must be ***communicated***, and they must be ***enforced***.

These actions are always accomplished by the use of ***Progressive (escalating) Responses*** from individuals all the way up to policing agents.

The concept of *Progressive* (higher level) *Responses* is the foundation of the *Use of Force Continuum* used by law enforcement everywhere.



The *Progressive Fence* is an example of Progressive Responses. It is used by individual law enforcement officers to create **respect**, and to **communicate** and **enforce** behavioral limits among citizens in the community.

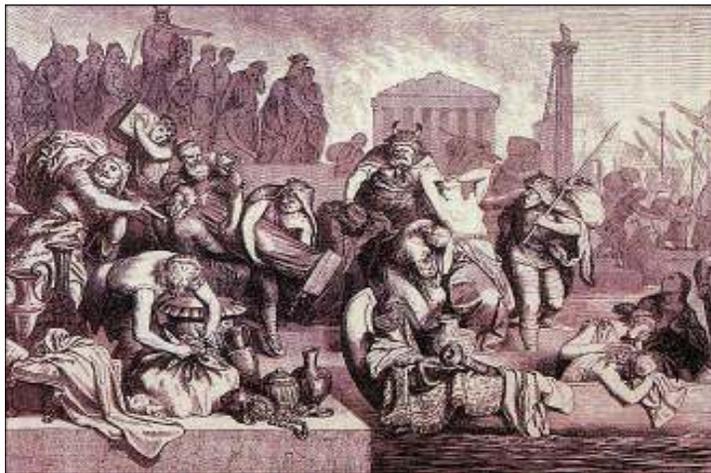


The *Progressive Fence* as used by Law Enforcement

Visual Fence *Verbal Fence* *Physical Fence*

The *Progressive Fence* begins with the law enforcement concept of *Command Presence* and ends with *Officer Survival*.

When societies do not use *Progressive Responses*, or when individuals and communities are unable to create the higher level response, there is mayhem, disorder, and chaos.



Mayhem, disorder, and chaos arise when there are no behavior limits on individuals and society.

The 2nd fundamental concept of a civilized society is that responses to unwanted behavior must be *Just Right (appropriate)*. They must not be too harsh and they must not be too permissive. In terms of individuals, there is a *Just Right Response* that is not too aggressive and not too passive. It is *Just Right*.

Using *Progressive (escalating) Responses* determines the *Just Right (appropriate) Response* for any situation. The *Just Right Response* is created through using the steps of *Progressive Boundary Setting*.



When individuals and societies do not understand the concept of the *Just Right Response*, they tend to either over react or under react to situations.

An over reaction by government



An under reaction by individuals



Individuals in society can learn personal responsibility and self-policing through the use of *Progressive Boundary Setting*.

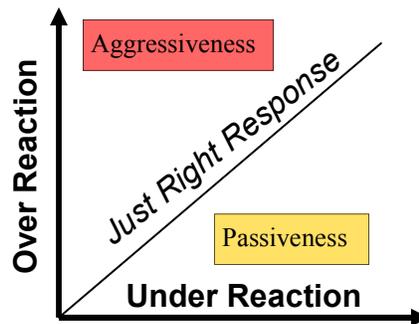
The *Just Right Response*™ of the Progressive Boundary Setting System™

is a calculated response designed to bring respect, communicate your boundaries, limit unwanted behavior, and to de-escalate and deter the onset of aggression.

Under Reaction

You are walking down the street. You notice someone nearby who gives you a “creepy feeling”.

- You immediately look down and hunch your shoulders.
- You hope he doesn't see you.
- You think he might be following you, but you are too afraid to look.
- You want to run, but you keep walking in order to not appear afraid.
- You don't know what to do next.



Over Reaction

You are walking down the street. A man looks at you and says something you feel is “offensive”.

- You become infuriated, and glare at him aggressively.
- You tell him to “shut up”.
- You call him an “%\$#@&”.
- You give him the “finger”.
- You yell and scream at him.
- You throw your coffee in his general direction.

It is not enough to just protest and talk about the problems of society.



What these protesters need is to learn and pass on a system that:

1. Promotes respect for women.
2. Teaches women to more effectively communicate behavioral limits to others.
3. Teaches women to more effectively enforce behavioral limits upon others.

Awareness of a community behavioral problem is not enough to bring about a lasting cultural change.



These children need to be educated on the importance of:

1. Respect for themselves and others.
2. How to effectively communicate behavioral limits to others.
3. How to enforce behavioral limits upon others in a manner that is appropriate to the circumstances.

Who will teach them these skills?

Through history, mankind has not always used the most efficient methods to accomplish tasks.

In 5,000 BC, they built this temple in Gozo,



but didn't use this:

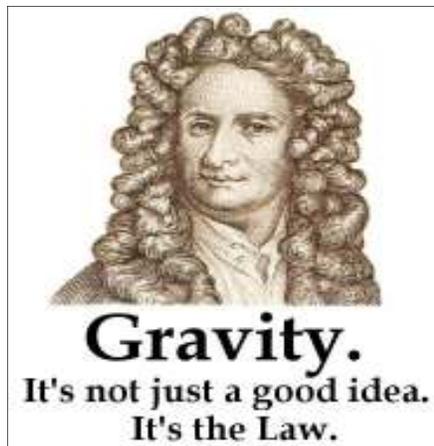


The Roman's built the coliseum, but



they didn't know about Algebra ($A + B = B + A$).

A millennium and a half later, Newton determined that "an object in motion stays in motion unless acted upon by another force" thereby discovering the Law of Gravity.



New concepts are only obvious in hindsight. Societies advance when observations are written down, passed on, and improved upon.

Progressive Boundary Setting is more than a good idea. It is the *Law of Civilization*. It has been used in different forms since the being of time by organized societies.

But no one defined it, wrote it down, and passed it on. Now it has been.

The Progressive Boundary Setting System™ consists of the concepts of:

1. *Progressive Responses™*
2. *The Progressive Fence™*
 - a. *Visual Fence™*
 - b. *Verbal Fence™*
 - c. *Physical Fence™*
3. *The Just Right Response™*

These three concepts are the foundation for promoting self-policing among individuals and by society. They are designed to advance people's ability to convey, comprehend, and carryout all aspects of self-policing and personal safety.

The are intended to be passed on from person to person as basic knowledge and cultural understanding.



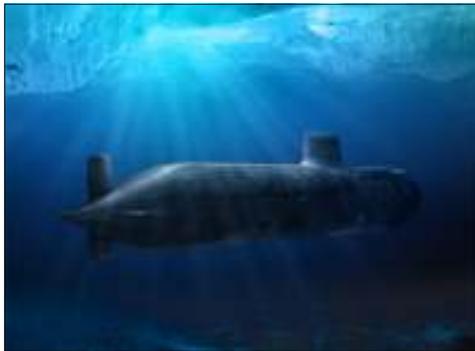
- Police can teach citizens
- Parents can teach children
- Teachers can teach children
- Friends can teach friends
 - Peers can teach peers

Because *Progressive Boundary Setting* consists of simple and clearly defined concepts that can be explained and instructed in steps.

If it is lighter than air it floats:



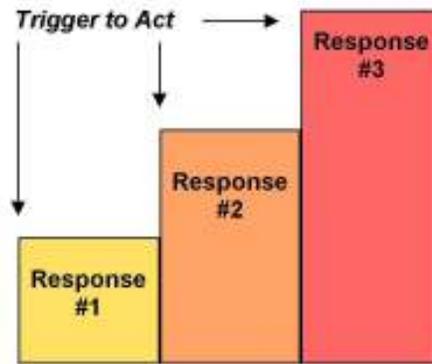
If it is heavier than water it sinks:



If you are lost, follow the river downstream:



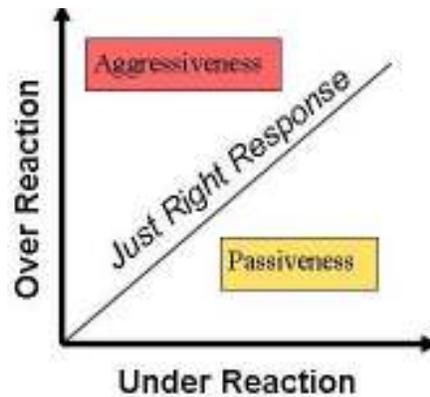
1. *Progressive* (escalating) *Responses* limit behaviors:



2. The *Progressive Fence* limits behaviors:



3. You must determine the *Just Right Response* that is appropriate for the situation:



I get it. You get it.



Now we need them to get it.



Talks on safety are inherently boring. Regardless of whether you are a senior in high school or college, or whether you are a senior citizen. Nobody enjoys being told what NOT to do. When audiences feel that the speaker's information is not relevant or is not useful to their situation, they become disengaged and stop paying attention.



The typical safety talk consists mainly of information in the form of tips and advice. The majority of this information is usually forgotten, ignored, or disregarded by the audience.

Therefore, this type of information is rarely passed on and does not become rooted in society.

It doesn't have to be this way. Presentations can engage and interest the audience. They can provide a means for speakers to connect with, and gain respect from the audience.



Progressive Boundary Setting System is designed to promote individual and cultural self-policing through community policing outreach talks and programs.

It provides Crime Prevention, Community Policing, School Resource Officers, and other law enforcement officers the means to connect with various community groups from youth to senior citizens. It transforms the standard “Safety Talk” of “Do’s and Don’ts into a deeper discussion about individual respect and societal responsibility.

It uses streamlined visual concepts to illustrate the effective use of *Progressive Responses* by individuals. These concepts are easily conveyed, comprehended, and carried out. The goal is to not only have the audience remember the presentation, but be able to pass on these important concepts to others.



Getting started with the *Progressive Boundary Setting System* is easy.

The simplest method is to start with baby steps and incorporate it into your existing talks and presentations.

Let's assume you are trying to convey personal safety information to a group of young women. One of the primary concepts, you want to convey is the importance of being assertive and setting boundaries with other people.

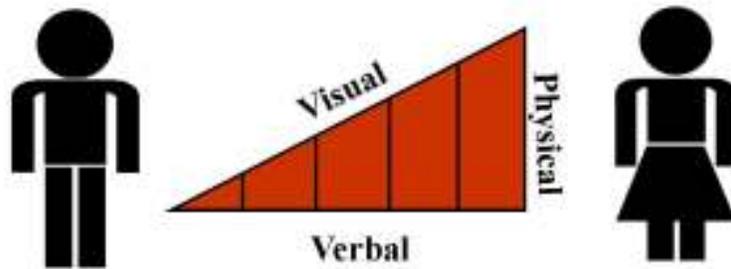
The typical method is to try to get the participants to forcefully state "No" or "Back off" or some other assertive phrase. The problem is that instead of assertiveness you are faced with giggles, half-hearted efforts, or angry screams. The problem is that "assertiveness" as a method of communication is not taught in schools, or by most parents to children, nor learned by peer example.

Youth learn about confrontation from poor role models such as Snooky, the Situation, and other reality TV stars.



What this illustrates is that the participants don't understand the basic concept of assertiveness as a method of communication and enforcement, as opposed to an emotional reaction. They don't understand that actions do not need to be driven by emotion. In this case, it is not necessary to be "angry" to be assertive. And they don't understand that the use of assertiveness as a tool, as a *Progressive Response*, and part of *Progressive Boundary Setting*.

Therefore, teaching assertiveness is an opportunity to illustrate the concept of *Progressive Responses* and the concept of the *Just Right Response*. This can all be done by teaching the use of the *Progressive Fence™*.



The Visual Fence™ - Body language designed to communicate behavioral limits.

The Verbal Fence™ - Assertive phrases designed to communicate and enforce behavioral limits.

The Physical Fence™ - Bodily movement and actions designed to communicate and enforce behavior limits.

*** *The Institutional Fence™* is the use of institutional authority to create respect, communicate, and enforce behavioral limits. It is used by law enforcement.

The *Progressive Fence*™ of the Progressive Boundary Setting System™



The *Visual Fence*™

The use of **strong body language** to respect, communicate and enforce your limits of unwanted behavior.

The *Verbal Fence*™

The use of **assertive verbal phrases** to respect, communicate and enforce your limits of unwanted behavior.

The *Physical Fence*™

The use of **bodily actions** to respect, communicate and enforce your limits of unwanted behavior.

“Tell me I forget, show me I remember, involve me I understand”.

This quote summarizes the methodology behind PBS presentations. Teaching the *Progressive Fence* allows presenters to involve the audience by creating memorable role playing scenarios and using illustrative story telling.

The scenarios and stories are customized to the relevant interests of the audience. For school children examples may focus on bullying, for college women it maybe street harassment or date rape, for seniors it maybe predatory scammers and door to door solicitors.

It all starts with body language.

We can talk to the audience about the importance of walking with purpose, being alert and aware of our surroundings, and projecting confidence. But that is not what really happens, especially among women.

They look down, away, and avoid eye contact. They pretend to be busy by being on the phone, texting, or listening to earphones. This type of behavior will not change. It is done for a reason. It is done to communicate to others to not engage or talk to them. And most of the time it works. That is why the behavior will not change. Because it works most of the time.

The problem occurs when it doesn't work.

They do it for a reason. They don't want to engage.



Most of the time it works.



It is the *Visual Fence* that is designed to communicate that the person does not want to be talked to, or interacted with in anyway.

A *Visual Fence* uses body language to send a message. It is highly efficient. Everyone who sees it knows what it means. But it can be easily disregarded or purposely ignored.

This fence depends upon respect to be effective. It communicates the message of “stay out of the garden”. Anyone can step over it. It works because the message is respected.



Police use the *Visual Fence* to limit unwanted behavior on a regular basis. It succeeds when citizens respect the message.



The *Visual Fence* is a simple, but extremely powerful visual concept. And unlike verbal assertiveness, people employ and respond to some form of the *Visual Fence* everyday.

Therefore, the first part of teaching the *Progressive Fence* is to get the audience to become aware of how the *Visual Fence* is commonly used by people and in all aspects of society.



The next issue is to get them to understand what to do if and when the *Visual Fence* is ignored.



The *Visual Fence* is a powerful concept because it represents the first response to a potential confrontation. It is engaged by body language that conveys a message of “I am not interested in engaging with you.”

The *Visual Fence* is so widely used because it is a passive response that is universally understood and recognized. It is generally thought to be a non-confrontational response. The problem is that most people don't know what to do when the *Visual Fence* is violated. Typically, they simply repeat the same body language over and over. The problem is that they do not understand that they need a *Progressive (escalating) Response*.

Teaching the *Visual Fence* will allow you to engage the audience.

Because the *Visual Fence* is universally used, it is easy for the audience to demonstrate and/or role play. Usually, there are a few willing people who are happy to show how they “ignore someone else”.

In the event no one volunteers to demonstrate, you will find that the audience is employing the *Visual Fence* against you. Therefore, you can simply point out their “uninterested” body language to emphasize your point. Either way you will begin to engage them.

All women and girls know how to ignore the “creepy” guy. They have learned from experience.

The next step is to show how the police actively use the *Visual Fence* to limit behavior. The point is to illustrate that the *Visual Fence* need not only be passive and submissive. **The *Visual Fence* can also be strong, confident body language too.**



We can talk about the importance of confident body language but most people can not demonstrate it without practice. Therefore, it is most realistic to focus on practicing an assertive version of being “Not interested!”



The concept of the *Verbal Fence* is introduced naturally as a *Progressive* (escalating) *Response* to a violation of the *Visual Fence*.



An assertive verbal phrase is needed because the *Visual Fence* has been violated. The violation breaks the visual boundary that has been set. Therefore, a high level verbal boundary must be created, this is the *Verbal Fence*.

The *Verbal Fence* consists of assertive verbal phrases such as "Not interested", "Leave me alone", "Back off!" These phrases are the natural escalation of the emotion and desire of not wanting to engage with someone. Therefore, using a "Not interested! scenario" is the easiest method for illustrating or role playing the *Verbal Fence*.



A willful violation of the *Verbal Fence* leaves no doubt as to the bad intentions of the violator. A *Progressive* (higher level) *Response* in the form of some type of physical action is required. This action is the final stage of the *Progressive Fence*. It is the *Physical Fence*.

The *Physical Fence* is any type of bodily movement or action that is designed to limit behavior. It is most effective when it incorporates the body language of the *Visual Fence* and the assertive voice of the *Verbal Fence*.



The *Physical Fence* is used by law enforcement regularly to control and limit behaviors. It is part of the Use of Force Continuum and represents a wide variety of responses.

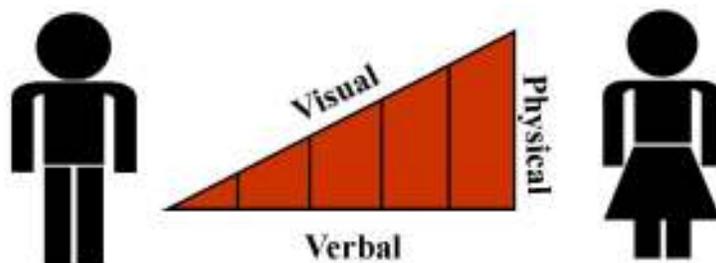


In summary, the *Progressive Fence* is made up of the:

1. *Visual Fence*
2. *Verbal Fence*
3. *Physical Fence*

It is used by individuals as a *Progressive* (escalating) *Response* in order to create respect, communicate, and enforce behavioral limits.

It begins with body language, escalates to assertive phrases, and finalizes with bodily movements and actions.



The *Progressive Boundary Setting System*™ is designed to promote and provide citizens with an understanding of the fundamental concepts of community responsibility and self-policing.

It is a blueprint for:

- systematically conveying the importance of respecting, communicating and enforcing behavioral limits in society.
- conveying a concrete strategy individuals can employ in order to limit unwanted behaviors.
- passing down fundamental concepts of personal safety and personal responsibility between the members of the community.

Progressive Boundary Setting



Example Role Playing Scenarios for the Progressive Fence

You are walking down the sidewalk. In front of you is a street promoter handing out flyers.

If you are not interested in receiving a flyer, you would engage your *Visual Fence*. You use body language to communicate that you do not want the flyer. If the promoter, ignores your signal and approaches, you engage the *Verbal Fence* by stating "*Thank you, but I am not interested.*" If he thrusts his arm in front of you blocking your path, you assertively brush it aside with your hand while repeating "*Not interested!*".

Your "brush off" was your *Physical Fence*. You have used the concept of the *Progressive Fence* to communicate your feelings in an escalating manner as the situation warranted.

You are waiting at the bus stop. A man attempts to "catch your eye".

You engage the *Visual Fence* and confidently occupy yourself with tasks (reading, texting, etc) in order to convey that you are not interested in interacting with him. He approaches you and attempts to start a conversation. You engage the *Verbal Fence* and state that you are "*not interested in conversation.*" He ignores your statement and comes closer. You engage the *Physical Fence* by raising both your arms in front of you with palms forward. You firmly state "*I am not interested! Step back!*"

The actual phrases used are less important than the progressive nature of your responses. Your actions in both these scenarios are examples of using the *Progressive Fence* of PBSS in order to create *Just Right Responses* in situations of confrontation.

Progressive Boundary Setting Responses to Common Scenarios and Situations.

1. You are at a party, you don't want to dance.
What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage the **Visual Fence** in the form of body language to communicate to people that you are not interested in dancing.

2. Someone ignores your body language and comes over and asks you to dance. What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage the **Verbal Fence** in the form of assertive phrases such as "No thanks", "Not interested", "Not now", etc to communicate that you are not interested in dancing.

3. The person grabs your arm and pulls you towards the dance floor. What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage your **Physical Fence** in the form of knocking the person's grab off while repeating your assertive phrase at a higher verbal level.

4. Your date/friend/stranger is sitting next to you on the couch. You are not interested in physical contact with him or her. What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage the **Visual Fence** in the form of body language to communicate you are not interested in being touched by him or her.

5. The person ignores your body language and moves closer. What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage the **Verbal Fence** and use an assertive phrase to tell him or her to give you space.

6. The person ignores your request/command and puts his or her arm around you. What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage your **Physical Fence** and push the person away, while repeating a verbal command such as “Back off”, and you physically exit the situation.

7. You are the Person who is trying to get physically closer to another. That person engages a **Visual Fence**, or **Verbal Fence**. What do you do?

PBS Response: You respect the person’s wishes and limit your behavior as communicated.

8. You observe someone else trying to take advantage of another. What do you do?

PBS Response: You engage your **Visual**, **Verbal Fence**, or **Physical Fence** as the situation warrants to communicate and enforce the limiting of the behavior.

Scenarios that Illustrate Progressive Responses

Opening Scenario #1: A girl is walking down the sidewalk, she is approached by a boy. The boy makes an unwanted and disrespectful comment. Depending upon the exact circumstances this scenario could be:

Bullying, sexual harassment, street harassment, or the beginning of youth violence, a sexual assault, a hate crime, or dating violence.

It doesn't matter.

Response #1: The Girl uses body language communicate her disapproval.

Escalating Scenario #2: The Boy approaches the Girl.

Progressive Response #2: The Girl uses an assertive phrase to warn him away.

Escalating Scenario #3: The Boy disregards her phrase and reaches out to grab her.

Progressive Response #3: The Girl physically intercepts his hand. She pushes it away and flees.

Escalating Scenario #4: The Boy chases.

Progressive Response #4: A passerby sees the Boy chasing the Girl and he tells him to stop.

Escalating Scenario #5: The Boy catches the Girl and tries to strike her.

Progressive Response #5: The Girl fights back.

Escalating Scenario #6: The Passerby physical intervenes and grabs the Boy. The Boy draws a knife and tries to stab the Passerby.

Progressive Response #6: The Passerby pushes the Boy away. A neighbor sees what has happened and dials 911.

Escalating Scenario #7: The Boy sees the Neighbor and runs away.

Progressive Response #7: The Police arrive, spot the Boy and tell him to stop.

Escalating Scenario #8: The Boy verbally taunts the Police.

Progressive Response #8: The Police draw Tasers.

Escalating Scenario #9: The Boy draws his knife.

Progressive Response #9: The Police draw their firearms.

Escalating Scenario #10: The Boy dives behind a wall and draws a semi-automatic handgun.

Progressive Response #10: The Police go to cover and retrieve a shotgun.

Escalating Scenario #11: The boy starts to shoot.

Progressive Response #11: The Police shoot back and call for SWAT.

Escalating Scenario #12: The Boy throws a home-made bomb from his hiding place.

Progressive Response #12: The Police retreat and SWAT calls for an armored vehicle.

Ending Scenario: The Boy sees the Armored Vehicle and surrenders.

The *Progressive Responses* of the Girl and the Passerby were part of the entire continuum of *Progressive Responses* that ultimately limited the unwanted behavior of the Boy.

***Progressive Boundary Setting* can be used to make common personal safety concepts easier to convey, comprehend, and carryout.**

Typical Advice - “When walking, always be alert and aware of your surroundings, especially at night.”

PBS Concept - “When walking, employ your *Visual Fence* as a means to limit unwanted people from approaching you. You must always be aware of your next level response to unwanted behavior.”

Typical Advice: “If you are being followed, walk into a store or knock on a house door. Do whatever it takes to attract a witness. If you feel threatened, scream fire.”

PBS Concept: If you think you are being followed, engage your *Visual Fence* and *Verbal Fence* to communicate to the potential aggressor that you are not a victim, and to bystanders that you may need help. If you feel physically threatened engage your *Physical Fence* to ward off the Aggressor and get away.

Typical Advice: “If you are assaulted, assess the situation first, then react. Do whatever you believe necessary to keep yourself safe.

PBS Concept: If you face aggression, use the *Progressive Fence* as a pro-active strategy to deter aggression and to determine the *Just Right Response* to the situation. Unwanted behaviors are deterred and limited by the use of Progressive (escalating) Responses.

Typical Advice: “The Circle of Safety is an imaginary boundary extending from your body outward to approximately 7 to 10 feet. By being aware what is approaching your Circle of Safety you can potentially avoid a dangerous situation.”

“If you were alone and a stranger enters your circle of safety, you should attempt to distance yourself from that stranger. In order for the stranger to grab you, they must be able to touch you. If you maintain a circle of safety of the 7 to 10 feet than the stranger will not be in reach to grab or touch you.”

This advice is typical of how the “Safety Circle” is taught. What is missing is the reality of how to deal with a common situation such as when someone walks up and breaches the circle perimeter. Life and street situations are not simply a game of tag, where you run away whenever someone approaches you.

It is impossible to maintain the Safety Circle without understanding and having a definite strategy that consists of both communicating and enforcing the circle perimeter through the use of the *Progressive Responses*.

The *Progressive Fence* is a step-by-step strategy that enables people to enforce the Safety Circle. It does it through body language, assertive phrases, and bodily actions.

McDonald's Beating

On April 18, 2011, a transgender woman was attacked and beaten at a McDonalds by a 14 year old girl and an 18 year old woman. One of the male McDonald's employees made a minimal effort to intervene while the other employees did nothing. He soon gave up and the beating continued.

The assault was finally stopped by the actions of a 55 year old woman who physically intervened and helped the transgender woman. She first witnessed the attack from outside the restaurant. The entire episode was video taped by a McDonald's employee.

It is easy to read this story, and shake your head, and wonder, "Why did this attack happen? What is the world coming to?" These questions provide no solutions. Society needs solutions.

In terms of *Progressive Boundary Setting*, this incident reveals the following:

- The Attackers lacked self-policing of their behavior. They lacked respect for the Victim and for the consequences of their actions.
- The Victim lacked the ability enforce her own physical safety. She lacked the ability to obtain an higher level response from the employee Bystanders to aid her.
- The Bystander employees (who made no effort help her) lacked respect for the Victim and the consequences of their inaction.

- The male employee (who ineffectively attempted to intervene) lacked the ability to enforce his intentions. He lacked respect for the Victim and the consequences of his minimal actions.
- The woman (Vicky Thoms) who intervened understood the concept of *Progressive Responses*. She realized that under the circumstances, it was up to her to provide the higher level response necessary to limit the unwanted behavior of the attackers.
- She began by verbally demanding that the Employees intervene and that the Attackers stop their actions. This action was the *Verbal Fence*. When this method did not succeed, she engaged a *Progressive Response* in the form of physical actions (the *Physical Fence*) in order to stop the unwanted behavior.

Why did she intervene?

She stated in an interview after the attack “I was taught never to let anyone get hurt like that.” In other words, she was brought up in a family (culture) that **respected** behavioral limits. She knew that violations of behavioral limits are first **communicated**, and then **enforced** by body language, assertive phrases, and finally by bodily actions.

Vicky Thoms was the only one who successfully used the concepts of *Progressive Boundary Setting*. She did it because of her childhood upbringing.

Instilling these fundamental concepts into youth is the solution.

Three Bullies in a Bathroom

A recent video surfaced of three school boys attacking a fourth in a bathroom in a Massachusetts middle school. The attack lasted a few seconds and the victim was left on the floor after being assaulted by all three boys. The entire incident was videoed by a fifth student who had concealed himself in behind a wall.

The student attackers in the video have been suspended. Ronald Pacy, the School Committee Chairman stated the following: “I don’t condemn the students involved,” said Pacy, “I think it’s mostly their unawareness, reacting to the situation. But it’s not acceptable. Our parents, teachers and administrators have to make that very plain that it’s not acceptable.”

In terms of *Progressive Boundary Setting*, the incident can be broken down as follows:

- The Bullying Boys lacked respect for the Victim. They lacked respect for the consequences of their actions.
- The Victim lack the ability to physically enforce his own safety.
- The boy who made the video, lacked the ability physically aid the Victim. His response was to help the Victim by communicating what had happened to a higher level authority. In this case, that authority was his mother.
- His mother, in turn, communicated what had happened to the school and local news outlets. These actions are *Progressive Responses*.

- The school department informed the local police. The police are now investigating the incident.

These series of responses demonstrate how *Progressive Responses* are used to create the *Just Right Response* to incidents of unwanted behavior.

The School Superintendant is being harshly criticized for his comments. What his comments seem to demonstrate is his lack of ability to effectively communicate on the subject of bullying. Most likely, he was trying to say that the Bullies were not inherently evil. But they lacked the ability to control their own behaviors (self-police) and to deal with conflict and confrontation in non-violent terms. That, they need to be taught that their behavior was unacceptable.

In terms of *Progressive Boundary Setting*, all of the people involved in the school need to learn:

Respect for other people
Respect for controlling their own behaviors
Respect for the consequences of their actions.

The ability to effectively **communicate** behavioral limits during confrontations to aggressors, bystanders, and authorities.

The ability to **enforce** behavioral limits upon others by using *Progressive Responses* to create the most appropriate response to the situation.

The school needs to set and enforce boundaries to limit unwanted behavior. And teach these skills to the students.

Safety Precautions vs. Critical Thinking

Safety precautions save lives. There is no doubt about that. Here are some basic physical ones:

Fasten your seat belt.
Wear a helmet when riding a bike.
Look both ways before crossing the street.

A few personal safety precautions are:

Don't talk to strangers.
Don't walk alone at night.
Don't give directions to strangers.

But there is a fundamental difference between these two groups of safety precautions. The first three require no critical thinking. You do them automatically, then you forget about it.

Personal safety in terms of human interactions require interpretation and decision making in order to be effective. Blindly following personal safety precautions will not keep you safe.

Keeping safe requires the critical thinking in order to assess situations and determine appropriate responses. These skills are not learned from following safety precautions. They are learned from continually setting and enforcing boundaries in all types of social situations and confrontations.

The *Progressive Boundary Setting System* encourages critical thinking and decision making.

Summary & Wrap Up

This manual has been designed to enable you to present the concepts of *Progressive Boundary Setting* to others during presentations, safety classes and workshops.

Most likely you are already teaching these basic concepts in one form or another. But you are using different names and methods to describe the concepts and behaviors.

The idea behind the *Progressive Boundary Setting System* is to provide easy to remember terminology that describes easy to visualize concepts.

Having a standard set of terms will enable and promote deeper discussions and thinking on the fundamental ideas of **respect, communication, and enforcement**.

People should leave your presentation with a new appreciation for the role that *Progressive Responses* plays in their lives and the lives of others. They should be able to identify the use of *Progressive Responses* by individuals and society as they go about their day.

Finally, they should understand how there are no absolute right responses. Every situation requires determining the most appropriate response. And this is effectively done by the step-by step process of ***Progressive Boundary Setting***.

Getting Started by Talking about Fences

The audience is seated in a circle in front of you. They could be any age from elementary school through college and beyond. They are ill at ease and quiet. Most likely, if you try to get them to talk about the concepts of personal safety, you will get minimal responses and blank stares.

You need to engage the audience and convert them into participants of an active discussion. In order to do so, you will need to break the ice and warm them up by talking about a subject they know and understand. That subject is: *Common Fences*.

Fences are designed to control people's behavior through the use of respect, communication, and enforcement. Fences depend on the majority of people *respecting* them. They *communicate* a message of "Don't cross this boundary". Sometimes, they also *enforce* the message with sharp points, barbs, and electricity.

If a low fence doesn't work to communicate and enforce the boundary, a progressively higher fence is needed. A fence also needs to be appropriate for the situation. It shouldn't be too big or too small for the job. It needs to be just right. A fence topped with razor wire is too much for a home garden. A white picket fence is not enough for a prison.

Talking about fences as they are used by people and society is a lead-in to all the concepts of the *Progressive Boundary Setting System™*.

Sample Fence Questions

- What is a fence?
- What does a fence do?
- What are fences made of?
- What do fences look like?
- What are the difference types of fences?
- What are fences for?
- What do you do when a fence doesn't work?
- Where do you see fences?
- Where are there no fences?
- Why do people use fences?
- Why do fences work?
- Why are there many types and sizes of fences?
- When do fences not work?

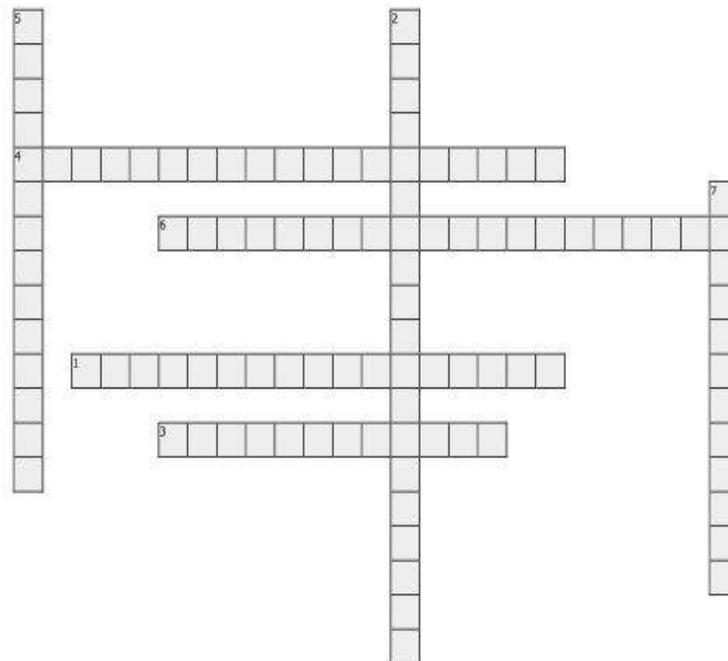
The exact order and use of the fence questions doesn't matter. Many of the fences questions will generate similar responses. The idea of the fence discussion is to use a non-threatening means to show that fences are used by individuals and society to set boundaries and control behavior. That fences work because the majority of people respect the message that they convey.

Fences also illustrate that some people willingly disregard the message of the fence. When this happens, fences need to use physical enforcement.

Finally, fences can be friendly white picket fences, or they can be deadly electrified fences. Regardless of the exact application, all fences rely on the concepts of *respect*, *communication*, and *enforcement* to get the job done.

The Progressive Boundary Setting System

Please complete the crossword puzzle below
(One block counts for a space between words)



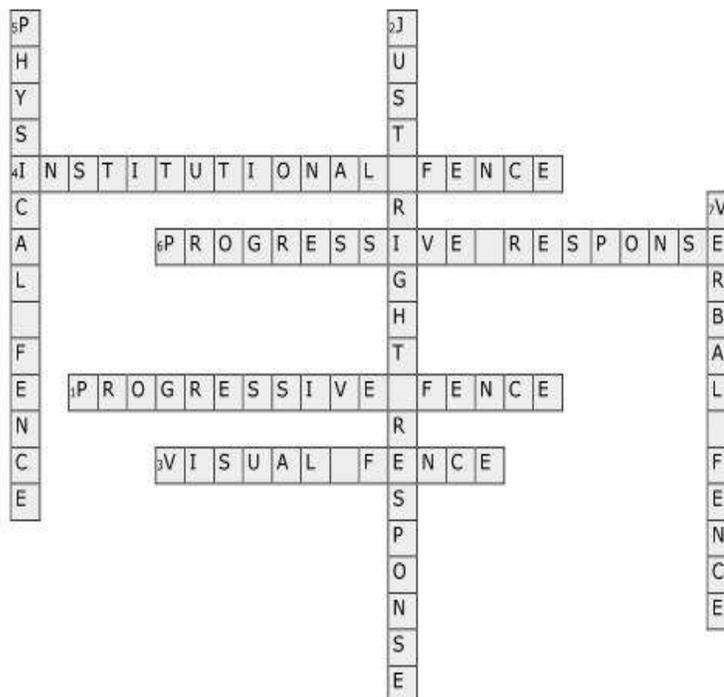
Across:

1. The visual concept that uses step by step Progressive Responses by individuals
3. The use of body language designed limit behaviors
4. The use of institution authority designed to limit behaviors
6. The concept used by individuals and society to respond to violations of behavioral limits

Down:

2. A response that is neither too aggressive nor too passive
5. The use of bodily movements designed to limit behaviors
7. The use of assertive phrases designed to limit behaviors

Progressive Boundary Setting System Answer Key



Across:

1. The visual concept that uses step by step Progressive Responses by individuals (PROGRESSIVE FENCE)
3. The use of body language designed limit behaviors (VISUAL FENCE)
4. The use of institution authority designed to limit behaviors (INSTITUTIONAL FENCE)
6. The concept used by individuals and society to respond to violations of behavioral limits (PROGRESSIVE RESPONSE)

Down:

2. A response that is neither too aggressive nor too passive (JUST RIGHT RESPONSE)
5. The use of bodily movements designed to limit behaviors (PHYSICAL FENCE)
7. The use of assertive phrases designed to limit behaviors (VERBAL FENCE)

Making the Progressive Boundary Setting System Work for You

The *Progressive Boundary Setting System*™ is a tool that is designed to be used by a wide variety of instructors and law enforcement officers to reach out to the community.

A PBSS presentation can be provided to a host of audiences in all sorts of locations. No special equipment or facility is needed. Because PBSS presentations can be made in classrooms to coed audiences, they are perfect for local schools. The audience can range from elementary to college students. PBSS presentations can also be made to senior citizens and community groups.

Unlike standard safety or sexual assault talks, PBSS presentations are not specific to gender. They do not assume that the audience consists of only potential victims. The audience is treated as potential victims, bystanders, and perpetrators of unwanted behavior.

Since PBSS presentations do not involve physical contact or explicit discussions on rape and sexual assault, they are much more acceptable to school administrations than self-defense classes. PBSS presentations teach the universal concepts of respect, communication, and enforcement. These concepts are central to police and all school administration's efforts against bullying and youth related violence.

PBSS presentations open the door for further involvement with the speaker. They are a networking opportunity. They can be used to build interest and awareness of the speaker's martial arts classes and/or self-defense training.