

Raise Your Standards High!

How often have you heard somebody talk about their standard of living? You may even have had one or two conversations on the subject yourself. Chances are, however, that the standards you referred to were more about material possessions in your life than they were about your personal actions and behaviors.

As coaches, when we talk about standard of living, we refer to your way of being - those actions and behaviors you're willing to hold yourself to. Like boundaries, standards are not optional. We all have them whether we're aware of what our standards are or not . . . and they are what other people judge us by.

Think about it this way: You want to make plans to have lunch with a friend. There are two people you enjoy spending time with. One of them is always on time for appointments, usually early. The other can be counted on to arrive 15 to 30 minutes late. One of your friends has high standards about arriving on time to appointments, the other does not. All other things being equal, which do you prefer to make a date with?

Our job as coaches is to support clients in their growth and to bring focus to their lives and the choices they make. What we often find with new clients is that they've never given much thought to their personal standards. They live their lives based on old patterns, "should" messages from long ago, or ignorance, ie, not knowing there's another choice. They know what they like or don't like about how others act yet don't look at how their own behaviors reflect on them or affect the people around them.

A key concept regarding your standards: They are YOUR choice for how you want to live your life. Standards are not about "getting" something nor are they about what others want or expect of you. Standards are a reflection of YOU and what's right for you.

A great way to begin getting in touch with your own standards is to look at the people you admire. What is it about them you admire? How do they act? How do you feel when you're around them? What would you have to change about your own behavior to be more like the people you admire?

You're attracted to people by their way of being - how they behave, treat others, and take care of themselves. People with very high personal standards are naturally attractive - they live according to their own rules, have more peace in their lives and are non-judgmental. It's what most of us strive for in our own lives. People with high standards have what we want.

Now look at your own life and how you act - the "rules" you hold yourself to. Identify at least 5 personal standards. What makes them important to you? What



difference do they make in your life? What would happen if you did not hold yourself to these standards? What would happen if you raised your standards higher?

Some Examples of Standards:

- Arriving 10 minutes early for all meetings
- Always keeping your word
- Fully completing tasks you set for yourself
- Treating people well regardless of how they treat you in return
- Keeping your workspace organized

As you begin this process of raising your standards be easy on yourself. You've got a lifetime of learning that you'll be changing. It won't happen overnight. Be aware of what you're doing. When you find yourself slipping, stop what you're doing and start living your new standard. Don't be tough on yourself when you slip. It happens, is expected and is part of your growth process. You're creating a new habit for yourself - a new way of being. It takes a minimum of 21 repetitions of a behavior before it becomes a habit. Be kind to yourself on your journey.

One of the things that we want for you is an effortless, attractive life (from the inside out). When you raise your standards, people around you will respond to you differently. Some people will leave your life, others will stay. New people will enter your life, attracted by your new standard of living. The quality of people around you will change as you raise your standards. The quality of your life will increase as your being-ness changes. The quality of the choices you make for yourself will change as a result of higher expectations.

High standards are one of the corner stones to a strong personal foundation. Define your personal standards, raise them higher and experience the change. The possibilities for you are endless.

