

Week 5 Boundaries: Speak Truth or Preferences

What are Boundaries? Ways to Love Yourself and Others

“Boundaries are not about separation. They’re the distance at which I can love you and me simultaneously.” [Logan Cohen](#)
https://www.instagram.com/p/ChTMOnlAc_a/

“The essence of a boundary is ‘here is what is ok with me, and here is what isn’t ok with me.’

Oftentimes boundaries are given a bad rap for being too aggressive, or not needed if you are loving and spiritual. You may have also been a child who had a parent or caregiver who did not have boundaries and expected you to take care of them emotionally or took your energy from you. So you may have learned that to speak up for what you needed would have punished you in some way, or to survive growing up, you had to accept what felt uncomfortable to you. You then learned to live with what felt uncomfortable for you in other relationships. If you never spoke important truths or established what you needed for yourself to live the life your soul wants you to live, at some point it will catch up to you. Your soul or inner guidance, during times of dark nights of the soul or other awakenings, may ask you to heal the parts of you that are stuck in these areas.

It helps to reframe what a boundary is, to define it in new ways, and to take the painful emotion out of what is a natural human need.

Boundaries as Preferences

[Nedra Glover Tawwab](#), author of [Set Boundaries, Find Peace: A Guide to Reclaiming Yourself](#) states that boundaries are a preference for us, to state about how you heal and grow so you can feel safe and thrive, and it may be different than what others need to feel safe and thrive.

Also, if you don’t state your preferences, others cannot know what they are, so part of this healing means practicing to speak aloud. Initially, you may feel uncomfortable doing so. It may come out jangly for a bit until you find your comfort level increase. Let yourself be jangly!

Over time, by practicing speaking what works for you, the emotions or fear of speaking them aloud lessens. Then you can be firm and clear, without internally feeling guilt, shame, or any pattern that you learned long ago. You may even bring a bit of humor or light-heartedness to what you say, yet still hold firm to what is true for you. If someone cannot hear you and what you need, you decide what level of connection to have with them (limit contact yet stay connected, walk away, let go of the connection without pursuing it, etc.)

Video with Nedra Glover Tawwab here, along with scenarios around different ways to handle boundaries:

<https://www.facebook.com/redtabletalk/videos/how-to-set-boundaries-and-change-your-life/349502650282587/>

Boundaries, Compassion, & Sources of Resentment:

“Compassionate people ask for what they need. They say no when they need to and when they say yes, they mean it. They are compassionate because their boundaries keep them out of resentment.” [Brené Brown](#)

- **Resentment can also be because you have not spoken a hard truth with someone. If you feel resentment that someone is not being there for you, or not listening to you, **ask yourself first if you have spoken what you need from them, or are you wishing that they would just know how you feel? By speaking those truths, sharing your boundaries, you can love others and yourself at the same time (see Logan Cohen’s quote above). Those who care about you will understand and accept what you need to thrive.****
- **You could also feel resentment because you keep betraying yourself in some way.** For example, you could be settling for some behavior that is not kind to you, or honors your self-worth in some way, and your body and inner self is feeling the repeated pain of that experience, waiting for you to change your own behavior or walk away from a pattern that is not helpful to you. The minute you speak truth or set boundaries, your inner self shifts. You are now backing yourself.
- **Finally, resentment may exist because a person cannot give you what you need, no matter what you may say or do, and you have**

not been giving what you need to yourself. It may be about your longing for connection where it cannot be, and learning to grieve and to accept the limitations of others, and also giving what you need to yourself. You can do so by going to the Divine within or those in your Spirit team for support, and nurture the parts of you that need love.

- **Being compassionate with yourself as part of the relationship, including your needs as well, allows you to be more available and loving to others in ways that you *can* give. It can allow your heart to be more present to others.**

Boundary Beliefs

Here are some examples of beliefs you may want to explore:

- **It is not my job to fix others.**
- **It is okay if others feel angry, but it's not okay for anyone to lash out at me.**
- **It is okay for me to say no.**
- **I'm not responsible for how others feel.**
- **I don't have to anticipate the needs of others if it makes me invisible.**
- **My needs matter.**
- **Nobody has to agree with me.**
- **I have a right to my own feelings.**

Boundaries scripts:

Saying No with Grace

- **Thank you for the invitation. Let me get back to you.**
- **I spent time thinking about what you asked. It is not a fit for me at this time, yet thank you so much for thinking of me.**

Ask for Consent

Sometimes things are just none of our business. Can we listen more, hold space for another, and not problem solve?

- **Would you like a suggestion? Or do you just want me to listen?**

Walk away when needed, yet stay connected

I had a friend whose mom was verbally dismissive during visits and when that happened, my friend would say,

- **“This doesn’t seem like a good time. When you are feeling up to having a visit, I will come back.”**

And then she would cut short the visit and not stay longer (yet she did not respond in anger back...just loving boundary). Yet if someone needs to be in your life to some extent, you decide the level of personal information or physical time you spend with them.

Restatement + Boundary

“Setting boundaries can sometimes feel like you’re being dismissive of other people’s needs. To avoid that, and to help them feel heard, you can restate what they are asking and then state your boundary. You can care about a person and also say, ‘No, I can’t do that right now,’ ” Carrie Landin says.

- **I hear you saying _____ yet I won’t be able to do that.**

Sometimes we can hear another perspective and also honor our own perspective, both at the same time. There is room for both. Notice if you can stay curious with someone who lives differently from you, hear them out, stay opening to their experience. Yet you can still honor someone’s choices yet feel uncomfortable with their bringing that experience into your home.

- **I completely respect your choices, yet am not comfortable with that experience in my home.**

Boundaries: Forcing/Abusive behavior vs. Your Inner Circle

*“Our stories are not meant for everyone. Hearing them is a privilege, and we should always ask ourselves this before we share: **“Who has earned the right to hear my story?”** If we have one or two people in our lives who can sit with us and hold space for our shame stories, and love us for our strengths and struggles, we are incredibly lucky. If we have a friend, or small group of friends, or family who embraces our imperfections, vulnerabilities, and power, and fills us with a sense of belonging, we are incredibly lucky.” [Brené Brown](#)*

Sometimes we share more with people than we need to. We may include people in our inner circle that are not respectful of us and our tender hearts, or they just are not a compatible fit for our journeys. **Some do not know how to be there for you during a vulnerable time—it is just not in their awareness or ability, and it may not be intentional. You may try to tell them, yet they still cannot learn. You can stay neutral and kind while letting go of your need for them in your life.**

However, some people may be verbally abusive to you when you are vulnerable, when you do not do what they want, or pressure you in some way. If they are unable to hear your no with grace, you decide whether they should not be in your life at all. Forcing yourself to be around someone who cannot honor your yes/no and is dismissive of you may be a sign you are not loving yourself more fully. The first time someone yells at you in front of others or physically harms you is enough. You do not have to listen to an abusive voicemail, tirade, or enduring a living situation or a visit that tears you down. In this instance, speaking a boundary with them may be dangerous for you.

Love yourself by choosing loving people who are kind to you, who help you feel calm and invited when in their presence. It may feel difficult at first, to look for what you never felt to be a normal way to be. Over time, you will naturally attract, feel, or want to be with those who lift you up, support you, and help you be the best you can be. You will know what it is like to feel safe and calm for longer periods of time, and with people who match that.

Meditation and Collage

Do I need to internalize boundary beliefs, state boundaries, or back myself? Pick one area that speaks to you.

Meditation for the throat. It is safe to speak. It is safe to be fully me. My voice is needed in this world. Tune in to your inner wise self. Listen for messages of support and guidance around boundaries or the releasing of boundaries. **What does your wise Self want to tell you? Journal what you hear, feel, see, know.**

Listen to your body.

What do your body clues tell you?

Is the no you say needed for you to grow?

In collage, if you need a boundary or boundaries, create one(s) visually. Notice where things want to go. Write or find words or sentences that need to be on the page.

Create a collage that supports you in any way you need.

Journal Questions (Pick 1 or 2 that resonates, or more as needed):
Call in your Divine Guidance from within you.

- **Do I need to internalize boundary beliefs, state boundaries, back myself, let go of relationships that do not honor me or my journey, find a new inner circle, or stretch my boundaries in some way? Pick one area that speaks to you.**
- **Where have I not fully loved myself or do I cause myself unnecessary suffering (as part of my past choices or myself at a younger age, from long ago)?**
- **Is there an area of my life where I need to speak my truth or create healthy boundaries? If so, what are those truths? Write them out.**
- **Where in your life do you wish to express a healthy no or a healthy boundary? Write out the no and/or boundary in detail. Say aloud the no or other boundary and practice with someone. Notice the feelings that come up to be felt (if you feel guilt or shame for expressing a healthy boundary, for example.)**
- **What are some healthy boundary scripts that you can practice aloud or in front of a mirror? Put them in your own words and practice them until they feel comfortable for you.**
- **When is saying goodbye to a relationship what is most needed? Can you see it as something that no longer resonates or fits and not about judging yourself or the other person? Can you accept the situation or person the way they are, without a need for a particular type of ending or closure?**
- **Over time, with practice, grace will assist you in knowing what is a healthy no and what can become an easier yes... you will discern this in your heart.**

- **Notice if a boundary is no longer needed, and you are asked to stretch your heart to be more open to how you see others, whether you are no longer in relationship with them or being asked to connect with them in a new way.**
- **Are you being asked to loosen your armor? Let curiosity be a superpower to help you. Where can you bring more curiosity in your life? Where can you be more curious, risk more, and be less rigid in your life?**
- **What feels safe in receiving from Divine grace, today?**