

THE BALANCING ACT OF MARRIAGE



Apostolic Christian Counseling And Family Services
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Building and Balancing Healthy Boundaries in the Marriage Relationship.

First word(s) that pop into your head as you read this session title....

Our Goal

The “I Do” phrase also opens up many other issues/opportunities for husbands and wives to navigate. Our spiritual walk, job demands, kids, in-laws, family and friends, homes, etc. can all demand a balanced juggling act. This session will examine the principle of boundaries for keeping that which is good in and the harmful out.

Today: more than a time mgt. talk





STRENGTH and LIMITS?




Boundaries Abound?

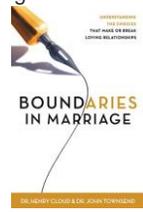
What are some possible boundary issues that can surface in a marriage?

(not about ourselves or our spouse of course, but more like that one neighbor down the street!)



What is a Boundary...

In the simplest sense, a boundary is a property line. It denotes the beginning and end of something.

Boundaries in Marriage
By Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend

***Power of Holy Spirit + Prayer+ Word of God**

Quiz Time

Your mother invites you to come over for dinner, but you have other plans. Would you:

- Tell her that you are busy and suggest a more convenient time.
- Change your plans to avoid upsetting her.
- Feel obligated to try and do both dinner with your mom and your other plans too.



Quiz Time

Your spouse wants you to apologize for something you did. But, you don't think you've done anything wrong. Would you:

- Avoid the discussion and cry on the shoulder of a friend or parent.
- Apologize to maintain peace in the relationship.
- Decline to apologize and ask for clarification instead.



Quiz Time

Your spouse has a habit of spending too much money and going into credit card debt. Would you:

- Suggest developing a spending plan together.
- Hide the credit cards from the other person.
- Try to drop hints that you're upset with the current level of spending.



Quiz Time

Your spouse hates to clean the home, so you have been doing more than your fair share of the housework. Would you:

- Let the dirty dishes and laundry pile up as a signal of your dissatisfaction
- Talk about the housekeeping issue and ask to make a fair plan.
- Keep cleaning for both of you because it's easier than creating an awkward situation or hurt feelings.



Quiz Time

Your spouse has the habit of saying sarcastic things or joking about your faults in public. Would you:

- Ignore the situation and try to let the comment roll off your back.
- Feel hurt but believe the best in your spouse.
- Pull your spouse aside and explain that you didn't appreciate what was said.



Why Healthy Property Lines?

Marriage is first and foremost about “_____”.

It is bound together by the care, need, companionship, and values of 2 people, which can overcome hurt, immaturity, and selfishness to form something better than what each person alone can produce.

Love is at the heart of God Himself

(1 John 4:16)

Is Love Enough?

The marriage relationship needs other ingredients to grow and thrive. They are:

FREEDOM and RESPONSIBILITY.

True or False:

“when two people are free to disagree, they are free to love?”

Is Love Enough?

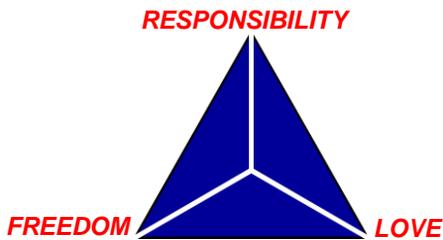
TRUE: If not true, then two people can live in fear and love can even die (wax cold).

(1 John 4:18 perfect love does what?).

When two people together take responsibility to do what is best for the marriage, LOVE can grow.



The Triangle of Boundaries



The Triangle of Boundaries

God created us Free.

He gave us responsibility for our freedom.

AND

As responsible free agents, we are told to love HIM and each other.



The Triangle of Boundaries

Wow...something incredible happens as these three ingredients of relationship work together.

As love grows, spouses become more free from things that enslave: self-centeredness, sinful patterns, past hurts, and other self-imposed limitations.

Then they gain a greater and greater sense of self-control and responsibility.



The Triangle of Boundaries

As they act more responsibly, they become more loving! And then the cycle begins all over again.

As love grows so does freedom, leading to more responsibility, and to more love.



Why can couples married 50+ years say their marriage gets better?

The Triangle of Boundaries

They become more free to be themselves as a result of being loved, and the love relationship deepens.

(Intimacy: closeness with confidence)

Love can only exist where freedom and responsibility are operating.

Love creates more freedom that leads to more responsibility, which leads to more and more ability to love.

Questions for Reflection

1. When two people together take responsibility to do what is best for the marriage, love can grow. When they do not, one takes on too much responsibility and resents it while the other does not take on enough and becomes self-centered or controlling. What, if anything, do you see about yourself and/or your marriage when you look through the lens of the preceding statement?

Questions for Reflection

2. Think about a current problem in your marriage. What can you do to take ownership rather than blaming your spouse? If you haven't already, state the problem in such a way as to reflect your ownership of it.

3. What issues in your marriage do you need to be dealing with? Put differently, what issues are you choosing to ignore or what are you afraid to address?

Prayer

Lord God, I'm a bit nervous as I set out on this journey toward a healthier marriage, and I'm feeling more than a little vulnerable. I know that you will be with me each step of the way, and may your presence give me hope and the willingness to proceed. And, as I submit myself to your transforming touch, I ask you to be at work in my mate even as you work to make me more like Christ—in whose name I pray.

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