

forgiving

**WHAT
YOU
CAN'T**

FORGET

Questions to consider when setting boundaries in complicated relationships:

- What kind of person do I want to be, not just in this relationship but consistently in all my relationships?
- What do I need to do in this relationship to stay consistent in my character, conduct, and communication?
- What are some areas of my life where I have the most limited capacity? (Examples: at my job, in parenting, during the holidays.)
- Based on my realistic assessment of capacity, how does this relationship threaten to hyperextend what I can realistically and even generously give?
- Do I feel the freedom in this relationship to communicate what I can and cannot give without the fear of being punished or pushed away?
- What are some realistic restrictions I can place on myself to reduce the access this person has to my most limited emotional or physical resources?
- What time of the day is most healthy for me to interact with this person?
- What time of the day is the most unhealthy time for me to interact with this person?
- In what ways is this person's unpredictable behavior negatively impacting my trust in my other relationships?
- How am I suffering the consequences of their choices more than they are?
- What are their most realistic and most unrealistic expectations of me?
- What are my most realistic and most unrealistic expectations of them?
- What boundaries do I need to put in place?

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Remember this when setting boundaries:

- My counselor says, "Adults inform, children explain." I will state my boundaries with compassion and clarity. But I will not negotiate excuses or navigate exceptions with lengthy explanations that wear me down emotionally.
- I can mute someone's social media account that triggers unhealthy reactions when I see them. This may be a better first step than unfollowing them...but if unfollowing is more appropriate, then I can make that choice.
- I will not sweep lies under the rug or help another person cover up their bad behaviors. I will clearly communicate what my parameters are around this type of behavior that diminishes my ability to trust.
- I can say no. I must not confuse the command to love with the disease to please.
- I can be honest about what I can and cannot give. It doesn't make me a bad person to communicate the reality of my capacity. Dysfunction diminishes my capacity in every area. Boundaries increase my ability to function with more regularity within the capacity I have.
- When I sense their actions are constantly having a negative impact on my mood and reactions, I can reduce their access to my most vulnerable emotions and limited resources. I'm not just doing this for myself; I am also doing this for the other people I do life with. It is unfair for someone who isn't respecting my boundaries to constantly send me into a funk and risk me taking it out on others.
- I can choose not to engage in conversations that encourage the emotional spiral. Processing the situation with a few trusted advisors can be healthy. Processing with anyone who only wants the juicy details is slander and will take me into the pit of gossip.
- I will not crumble if the other person accuses me of wrong intentions when I set boundaries. Instead, I can firmly say, "Please hear me speak this in love. I will respect your choices. But I need you to respect my choices. Communicating my boundaries is not being controlling or manipulative. It is bringing wisdom into a complicated situation."

**These lists are excerpts from Lysa TerKeurst's book: *Forgiving What You Can't Forget*
It's available on Amazon and wherever books are sold.**