

# BOUNDARIES AND MYSELF

Gleanings and Extracts from  
Cloud and Townsend's "Boundaries"; "Boundaries  
for Dating"; "Boundaries for Leaders"

Page 1 of 52

*(Pro. 4:23) Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

Issues: truth-telling, responsible, free and loving God and people.

*(Pro. 4:23) Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.*

It is when to say Yes  
and how to say No,  
to take control of my life.

Page 2 of 52

**(1) The concept of boundaries comes from the very nature of God.**

- A. God is the distinct, separate from us.
- B. The Trinity are distinct persons with their own boundaries.
- C. He sets limits what He allows into His presence. He confronts sin and allows consequences. He guards His House and He does not allow evil to go in.

Page 3 of 52

**(2) Spiritual boundaries like those that are physical, define that I am the owner of my life and my responsibilities.**

- A. They define what is me and what is not me.  
*(Pro. 14:10) The heart knows his own bitterness; and a stranger doth not intermeddle with his joy*
- B. I am responsible to others and for myself.  
*(Gal. 6:2) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*  
*(Gal. 6:5) For every man shall bear his own burden (daily toil).*

Page 4 of 52

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (1) FOOD

Over-eaters may use food to avoid intimacy by gaining weight and becoming less attractive. Bingers may use food to get false closeness, less scary than the prospect of real relationships, where boundaries would be necessary.

(1 Cor. 10:31) *Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (3) TIME

Strugglers at the last minute for meetings, deadlines and bills.

Causes may include: sense of omnipotence, lack of realistic anxiety and rationalization.

They end up frustrating others and themselves.

(Eph. 5:16) *Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.*

(Heb. 3:15) *While it is said, Today if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation.*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (2) MONEY

Careless budgeting of spending, saving and giving.

(1 Tim. 6:10) *The love of money is the root of all kinds of evil.*

(Pro. 22:7) *The rich rules over the poor, and the borrower is servant to the lender.*

(Lk. 6:38) *Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again.*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (4) TASK COMPLETION

This deals with finishing well.

Causes include: resistance to structure, lack of follow through, easily distracted, inability to delay gratification, inability to say no to pressure.

(2 Tim. 4:7,8) *I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:*

*Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing.*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (5) WORDS

Words can be a blessing or a cursing (Jas. 3:9-10; Prov. 10:19; 17:27; 18:21).

Curses include: hiding from intimacy by talking non-stop, dominating to control and manipulate, threatening to express hostility and giving the silent treatment.

(Pro. 18:21) *Death and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (6) SEXUALITY (*continued*)

- D. The drive becomes a tyrant, demanding and insatiable. The desire only deepens and the inability to say no drives a person deeply into despair and hopelessness.
- E. Individuals will feel deeply isolated, shameful and betrayed. It prevents love, integration and healing and guarantees relational problems (1 Cor. 6:16).

*What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith He, shall be one flesh.*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (6) SEXUALITY

- A. Issues: compulsive heterosexual or homosexual relationships, pornography, molestation and rape.
- B. The needs that drive passionate lust: for intimacy and connection, power, to feel admired and desired, free from others' control, to avoid working through relationships, pain and loss and to overcome shame about self.
- C. Some hazards: physically tired, emotionally discouraged, mentally bored, spiritually depleted, relationally cold, internally insecure and deeply wounded.

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (6) SEXUALITY (*continued*)

- F. God forbids fornication.  
Keeping boundaries will let you know that sex has a very high purpose, great value, dignity and esteem.  
It will let you know of the other person's self-control, delay of gratification, ability to love sacrificially and the willingness to submit to God.  
(1 Thes. 4:3) *For this is the will of God, even your sanctification, that ye should abstain from fornication:*

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (7) DATING

- A. Friendship is a non-romantic relationship that is attachment based while dating gives the opportunity to learn about themselves, others and relationships in a safe context and support.
- B. Some kinds of limits for freedom and responsibility:
  1. Words: saying no and being honest about disagreement.
  2. Truth: bringing reality to the problem.
  3. Distance: allowing time and space to protect against irresponsible behavior.
  4. Other people: to support and protect and help set a limit.

Page 13 of 52

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (8) SUBSTANCE ABUSE

From prescription drugs to street drugs, alcohol, tobacco, addiction can be destructive.

Fruits are divorce, job loss, financial problems, medical problems and death.

Addiction can be devastating to self and others at present and for eternity (2 Cor. 5:10).

*(1 Cor. 6:19,20) What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?*

*For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

Page 15 of 52

## OUT OF CONTROL

### (7) DATING (continued)

- C. Soul protection for God's purposes:
  1. Your love: your deepest capacity to connect and trust.
  2. Your emotions: the need to own your feelings and not to be controlled by others' feelings.
  3. Your values: your need to have your life reflect what you care about.
  4. Your behavior: your control over how you act in the dating relationship.
  5. Your attitudes: your stances and opinions about yourself and your date.

Page 14 of 52

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

God is on our team as an exhorter, encourager, and implorer (1 Thes. 2:11-12).

*(1 Thes. 2:11) As ye know how we exhorted and comforted and charged every one of you, as a father doth his children,*

*(1 Thes. 2:12) That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto His kingdom and glory.*

Page 16 of 52

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (1) What are the symptoms?

Look at the destructive fruit you may be exhibiting by not being able to say no to yourself.

You may be experiencing depression, anxiety, phobias, relationship struggle, isolation, work problem.

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (2) What are the roots? *(continued)*

- E. Unmet emotional hunger - This hunger for love is so powerful that if we don't find it in relationship with other people, we look for it in other places such as in food, in work, in spending money, or in sexual activity.
- F. Being under the law- Many Christians raised in legalistic environments are not permitted to make decisions for themselves. When they try to make their own decision, they feel guilty.
- G. Covering emotional hurt- disguise their pain by overeating, drinking too much, working too much.

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (2) What are the roots?

- A. Lack of training- never learned to accept limits, paying the consequences for actions.
- B. Rewarded destructiveness- family, alcoholic >> out of control behaviour.
- C. Distorted need- God-given needs in disguise. The pornography addict has diverted this good desire.
- D. Fear of relationship- overeating and overworking keeps others away.

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (3) What is the boundary conflict?

Take a look at the issues and ask God for insight into what other areas are out of control.

- A. Food
- B. Money
- C. Words
- D. Substance abuse
- E. Time
- F. Task Completion
- G. Sexuality
- H. Others...

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (4) Who needs to take ownership?

At this point, take the painful steps of taking responsibility.

(Ps. 32:5) *I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and Thou forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah.*

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (6) How do I begin?

#### A. You need to address the underlying need.

Self-worth – sense of value - infinite

Security – sense of belonging and being loved  
unconditionally

Significance – sense of meaning and purpose

Sufficiency – sense of being provided for

Satisfaction – sense of being connected and engaged

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (5) What do you need?

A. Developing safe, trusting, grace-and-truth relationships with God and others (Jas. 5:16).

B. Finding the right people is hard enough, admitting your need of others may be even more difficult.

(Eph. 3:17) *That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,*

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

### (6) How do I begin? (*continued*)

B. Allow yourself to fail. The recurrence of patterns is evidence of God's sanctifying, maturing, and preparing us for eternity. We need to continue to practice to learn things (1 John 1:9).

(Heb. 5:8) *Though He were Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered;*

C. Welcome consequences as a teacher- learning about sowing and reaping is valuable.

(Ps. 119:67) *Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept Thy word.*

## BOUNDARIES AND SELF

(6) How do I begin? *(continued)*

D. Surround yourself with people who are loving and supportive, but who will not try to rescue.

*(2 Tim. 2:22) Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*

1. Or others become critical and parental. "I told you so" attitude.
2. They become rescuers to save the person from suffering. Rescuing someone is not loving him. God's love lets people experience consequences. Rescuers hope to control the other person.

Page 25 of 52

## SELF-LEADING

- (4) Social support: Connecting with others and building supportive relationships can help to improve overall well-being and reduce stress.
- (5) Time management: Prioritizing activities and setting boundaries can help to reduce stress and increase productivity, allowing for more time to focus on self-care activities. Leave time for the unexpected or simple reflection.
- (6) Mindfulness, Meditation, and Prayer: Practicing these spiritual disciplines and being present in the moment can help to reduce stress and increase self-awareness.
- (7) Personal growth: Engaging in activities that promote personal growth, such as learning new skills or pursuing hobbies, can help to improve self-esteem and increase overall well-being.

Page 27 of 52

## SELF-CARE

- (1) Physical health: Taking care of your body through regular exercise, healthy eating habits, and sufficient sleep is crucial for maintaining physical health. How healthy are you? BP? Cholesterol? Exercising regularly?
- (2) Emotional health: Practicing self-compassion, managing stress levels, and engaging in activities that bring joy and fulfillment are important for maintaining emotional health.
- (3) Mental health: Engaging in activities that stimulate the mind, such as reading or learning a new skill, can help to maintain cognitive function and prevent mental health issues. I also subscribe to short daily motivational or spiritual blogs.

Page 26 of 52

## SELF-LEADING

- (1) Self-awareness: Understanding your strengths, weaknesses, values, and motivations is essential to effective self-leadership. It allows you to identify areas where you need to improve and leverage your strengths to achieve your goals.
- (2) Self-motivation: Developing a sense of purpose and passion for your work is crucial to staying motivated and focused. This involves setting goals, breaking them down into smaller achievable tasks, and rewarding yourself for progress made. Have you a life mission or purpose?
- (3) Self-discipline: Maintaining a strong work ethic and committing to follow through on your commitments is essential for effective self-leadership. This involves developing a routine, prioritizing tasks, and avoiding distractions.

Page 28 of 52

## SELF-LEADING

- (4) Self-confidence: Having belief in your abilities and trusting your judgment is important for effective self-leadership. This requires recognizing your successes and learning from your failures, and developing a growth mindset.
- (5) Self-reflection: Reflecting on your experiences, decisions, and behaviors helps you to learn from your mistakes and make better choices in the future. This involves being open to feedback, seeking out learning opportunities, and continuously improving your skills and knowledge. Leave time and margin in your life for self-reflection and recharging.
- (6) Overall, effective self-leadership requires a commitment to personal growth and development, and the ability to take action towards achieving your goals.

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

- (1) LEADING – SELF (continued)
    - D. Do not be ruled by fear but grow past my fear. Feel it, name it, accept it, talk it over with trusted friends and then choose to do right no matter how it feels.
    - E. Put a boundary on my weakness and let my strength soar. Need a passionate commitment to team work in which strength thrives and weakness irrelevant.
- (2Ti 1:7) For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.*

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

- (1) LEADING - SELF
  - A. Set a boundary on my tendency to be a “closed system” and open myself to outside inputs that will bring energy and guidance.
  - B. To be the best, I must develop a hunger for positive feedback to help me to know how I am doing and how to do better.
  - C. I must embrace outcomes and own them but they do not define who I am. Ask if I am performing to my defined values, behaviours and activities to drive big-picture results.

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

- (2) SETTING THE STAGE
  - A. What is important is always being attended to – Attention  
What structures, disciplines and practices make sure that others are attending to what is important?
  - B. What is not important or destructive is not allowed – Inhibited  
What processes do I have in place that are inhibiting what is disruptive and irrelevant?



## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

### (2) SETTING THE STAGE (continued)

- C. There is ongoing awareness of all the relevant pieces for the task – Working Memory

How do I keep people conscious of what and how it all work?

How do I lead in a way that enables people to attend, inhibit and remember?

*(Ecc 12:1) Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;*

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

### 3. TRUST IS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RELATIONSHIPS – Building Blocks (continued)

- C. Character: trust grows when I display character and credibility, involving a “whole” makeup, well integrated. Attributes exhibited are courage, perseverance, team skills, discipline, sacrifice, kind and understanding – people will trust and believe in me.
- D. Ability and Capacity: Trust grows when we believe in someone’s ability and capacity to get the job done. There is a need to talk through issues of what we can do and cannot do. The team then can either develop one member or bring outside others into the team.
- E. Track Record: trust grows when someone has built a good track record and positive behaviour. The best predictor of the future is the past and we can make adjustment for future better results.

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

### (3) TRUST IS THE FOUNDATION OF ALL RELATIONSHIPS – Building Blocks

- A. Connection through understanding – people trust me when they understand that I understand them, where they are coming from and truly connect with them. It takes time, space and attention.

Firstly, learn and appreciate their perception, communication styles and transparencies are all different. It helps to know how to give feedback and growth in lives. Finally, it helps to get them into a team operating value around trust.

- B. Motivation and Intent: trust grows when we know someone or the organisation intends to help us, the motive being for the “whole” and for the “others” and for oneself. They have to be “for” each other, “for” the team and “for” the enterprise to reach the overall goal.

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

### (4) PLANNING A TEAM TO TRUST

- A. Define Trust – connection, intent, character, capacity and track record
- B. Defined the Shared Vision for the Team – what it is trying to do together that takes all to do. What is it going to take from each one of them to get there?
- C. Define operating Values and Behaviour – what does the team looks like? What specific values are needed? How do we need to behave?

## BOUNDARIES AND LEADING

### (4) PLANNING A TEAM TO TRUST (continued)

- F. Develop measurement and accountability systems – how well are they behaving? What values are being cultivated. It is not just the results but the behaviour that drives them. Do not just expect but also to inspect.
- G. Put in Observing Structure – how did we do today in practising our values? Share testimonies. Make time and space to work on building the team.

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

### (3) CHECK ON MY MARRIAGEABLE TRAITS.

- A. Adaptability and Flexibility – adjusting to persons and situations with a minimum of rigidity, working toward a different life-style if necessary. A family must remain a team and must pull together.
- B. Empathy – to be sensitive to needs, hurts and desires (Rom. 12:15; Eph. 4:2).
- C. Ability to work through problems – accept, control, clarify, define and work together toward solutions.
- D. Ability to give and receive love.

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

### (1) WHAT MARRIAGE IS!

God created human sexuality, male and female, for companionship (Gen. 2:18), for meeting needs (help-meet), for another to feel a part and closely united to (Eph. 5:31), for love (Eph. 5:25) and for perpetuation of race (Gen. 1:28).

### (2) Some practical applications:

- A. Do I know and understand the general differences and potential of man and woman? (Woman to complement and to captivate; Man to contribute and to conquer)
- B. Do I know the role concepts of men and women as husband/wife and as father/mother and as parent/child?

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

### (3) CHECK ON MY MARRIAGEABLE TRAITS. (continued)

- E. Emotional stability – accepting and controlling emotions.
- F. More similar the family backgrounds and between couple itself.
- G. Communication: (a) talk more (b) convey right feelings (c) have wider range of subjects (d) keep channels open and be more sensitive (e) personalize language symbols and use non-verbal carefully.
- H. Commitment not to be taken for granted. Marriage is not as a status but as a dynamic process towards highest and eternal potentialities.

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

- (4) SET SOME BIBLICAL STANDARDS: (a) FOR MYSELF
- A. I will only date and marry a growing Christian (2 Cor, 6:14) else there is no spiritual and eternal union or basis for spiritual intimacy.
  - B. I will relate dating and marriage to God's purpose for my life (Col. 1:28,29), for without clearly defined goals, there is little basis for making important decisions.
  - C. I will not defraud the one I date (1 Thess. 4:6). Guilt and shame will be carried over and become the source of petty arguments and distrust.
  - D. I will be in harmony at home (Num. 14:18). The way I treat my parents may be the way I treat my spouse.

Page 41 of 52

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

- (4) SET SOME BIBLICAL STANDARDS: (b) FOR THE RIGHT ONE – SOME ESSENTIAL QUALITIES.
- A. Commitment to Christ and growing (Rom. 12:1,2).
  - B. Acceptance of Self in God's identity – thankful to God the Creator
  - C. Harmony with Authority (Sensitive, obedient and designing creative alternatives, if necessary, Daniel 1).
  - D. Clear Conscience – learning to confess, forgive and forget.
  - E. Spirit of Forgiveness – yielding rights and responding right.
  - F. Moral Freedom – self-discipline, accountability and dependability.
  - G. Purpose of Life – goals and priorities at different seasons of life.
  - H. Principles of Finance – dedication and diligence in work, spending and saving.

Page 43 of 52

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

- (4) SET SOME BIBLICAL STANDARDS: (a) FOR MYSELF (continued)
- E. I will wait for God's timing (Gen. 29:20). Impatience is a sign of self-love and immaturity. Dangerous stress will be added.
  - F. I yield my right to date and marry to God (1 Cor. 7:32; Matt. 6:33; Lam. 3:24-40) while I am busying myself with relating to Him and His work.
    1. Learn to enjoy being a single.
    2. Stay busy for the Lord and His purpose.
    3. Work on your career.
    4. Essential training and experience will be lost when pre-mature dating crowds out significant activities.
    5. I being in the way, the Lord leads me (Gen. 24:27; 1 Cor. 7:36).

Page 42 of 52

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

- (5) TRUST GOD TO PROVIDE HIS BEST
- A. Test of Faith – God is in control. Just as He cares and saves me from sin and hell, He will take care of one of the most important decisions (Rom. 8:32,33). In His time, He will provide the right one at the right time (Eccl. 3:11).
  - B. Test of Truth – Set some biblical standard and growth for self and dating partner before any commitment to date. Do these before emotion sets in.
  - C. Test of Companionship – Who is my best friend? Pray, worship, serve, think and play games together.

(Ecc 3:11) *He hath made everything beautiful in His time:*

Page 44 of 52

## BOUNDARIES AND DATING

### (5) TRUST GOD TO PROVIDE HIS BEST (continued)

- D. Test of Impression – not earthly, sensual (feelings), confusion and evil work with envy and strife but pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated with good fruits (James 3:15-16).
- E. Test of Time – Do not choose too soon. Love takes time. Am I drawing closer to the Lord and to His purpose? Is he/she?
- F. Test of Separation – a good way to measure love. There are other relationships, works and ministries. Is there over-protectiveness and over-obsessiveness?
- G. Test of Intimacy – There is a growing intimacy in physical, emotional, intellectual and spiritual areas – the holistic growth. Beware of only physical intimacy. True love waits but lust cannot.

## REFLECTION

Please check:

- Depression
- Compulsive disorder
- Impulsive disorder
- Sense of purposelessness
- Inability to trust others
- Inability to form close attachments
- Inability to set limits
- Poor judgement in relationships
- Further exploitation in relationships
- Deep sense of pervasive badness
- Shame
- Guilt
- Chaotic Lifestyle
- Isolation
- Panic attacks
- Phobias
- Rage attacks
- Suicidal feelings

## REFLECTION

WHICH ISSUE AM I OUT OF CONTROL AND HOW AM I GOING TO MANAGE IT?

- A. Food
- B. Money
- C. Words
- D. Substance abuse
- E. Time
- F. Task Completion
- G. Sexuality
- H. Others...

## A PRAYER

Lord, when I consider these symptoms, the only cry I have is, "Lord, be merciful to me, a sinner." Thank You, Lord, that I stand before You in Your own righteousness, not my own. I pray that You would not simply heal these symptoms of what is not right in my life, but also You would surgically remove all that does not belong to You. Pour light over the things that are hidden and bring them under Your Cross. May I see Your Face clearly as You hold me tenderly. In Jesus' Name and for His sake. Amen.

## WORDS FROM THE LORD

(Pro 1:7) *The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.*

(Pro 12:15) *The way of a fool is right in his own eyes: but he that hearkeneth unto counsel is wise.*

(Pro 3:7) *Be not wise in thine own eyes: fear the LORD, and depart from evil.*

(Pro 14:15) *The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going.*

## ASSIGNMENTS

- (1) Please go through the audio twice and share three blessings that you have received. Be specific and in detail. What are the blessings? Why are you blessed? How do you apply them to stretch and grow?
- (2) Please share three ways how you can use the teaching in your ministry. Please give examples of the issues and your plans to resolve them and to grow. Use the what, why, when, who, where and how you will be sharing with others. Think through and be specific.

## WORDS FROM THE LORD

(Pro 29:11) *A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.*

(Pro 14:29) *He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly.*

(Pro 13:20) *He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.*

(Pro 27:12) *A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.*



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