

Friendship:

- Intimacies/Closeness
- Sharing
- Companionship

“A non-romantic relationship that is attachment-based rather than function-based.”

- People we want to be around for their own sake and not because of a job, task, or function we do.

## **Common Boundary Issues Between Friends:**

Apply the following checklist:

1. What are the symptoms?
2. What are the roots?
3. What is the boundary conflict?
4. Who needs to take ownership?
5. What do they need?
6. How do they begin?
7. How do they set boundaries with each other?
8. What happens next?

## CONFLICT #1: Complaint / Compliant

- Both friends want to make the other happy.
  - Hang out and do a lot together, but have a difficult time saying ‘no’ to the other.
- At some point, both become discontent with what they are doing.
  - Let’s do “x.” Why are we doing “x?” We’d both rather be doing “y.”
    - Where to go for lunch.
    - A fun day being together.
    - Taking a shared vacation.
- Both find it difficult to have a “I really don’t want to \_\_\_” conversation.
  - The result of two compliants is that neither does what they want and both have a difficult time speaking their mind to the other.

1. *What are the symptoms?*
  - Dissatisfaction—a sense that you allowed something you shouldn't have.  
I let my friend choose for me when they suggested and I didn't push back
2. *What are the roots?*
  - A learned history of avoiding saying 'no' to keep others happy.
  - Since both people have similar avoidance issues, neither person can help the other.
3. *What is the boundary conflict?*
  - Compliant people politely deny their own feelings to keep the peace.
4. *Who needs to take ownership?*
  - Each person needs to take responsibility for being honest with the other.
  - Both need to admit they each control the other by being nice.
5. *What do they need?*
  - Their fear of hurting the other person makes it difficult for them to set boundaries on their own.
  - To have supportive relationships to plug into.
6. *How do they begin?*
  - Both should practice setting limits on small things. (restaurants, music)
7. *How do they set boundaries with each other?*
  - Talk face-to-face, telling the truth and revealing limits they'd like to start setting.
  - Commit to better boundaries with each other (permission to say 'no').
8. *What happens next?*
  - Both should admit that they are not as 'alike' as they thought.
  - They may need to separate from each other for a bit.
  - Different friends for different activities?

## CONFLICT #2: Compliant / Aggressive Controller

- The most identifiable of friendship conflicts.
- Compliant feels intimidated and inferior.
  - "If you insist."
  - The give in to providing time, treasure, or talents
- Aggressive Controller dominates and feels irritated at being nagged.
  - "I needed it."
  - Took without asking
- The compliant is on the short end of the stick...must take action.

1. *What are the symptoms?*
  - Compliant feels controlled and resentful.
  - Aggressive Controller feels good, except for the nagging.
2. *What are the roots?*
  - Compliant probably grew up learning to be conflict avoidant.
  - Aggressive Controller never learned delayed gratification and being responsible for taking responsibility for self.
3. *What is the boundary conflict?*
  - A) The inability of the Compliant to set clear limits.
  - B) The inability of Aggressive Controller to respect friend's limits.
4. *Who needs to take ownership?*
  - Compliant needs to see (s)he is not a victim of Aggressive Controller but rather giving his/her power away willingly. Giving up power is a form of control...hoping to appease Aggressive Controller and see behavior change.
  - Aggressive Controller needs to own difficulty listening to and accepting the 'no' and limits of others. Needs to take responsibility for her need to control the friend.
5. *What do they need?*
  - Compliant needs to plug into a supportive group of people to help with the conflict.
6. *How do they begin?*
  - In preparation to courageous confrontation, compliant needs to practice letting limits with support group.
  - Aggressive Controller could get honest feedback from faithful friends.
7. *How do they set boundaries with each other?*
  - Compliant confronts when issue arises (Matt 18).
  - Compliant explains how control hurts and wounds.
  - Compliant holds ground.
  - Aggressive Controller feels the pain of the consequences of actions.
  - Aggressive Compliant takes responsibility for wounding...repents.
8. *What happens next?*
  - Both renegotiate terms of friendship...new ground rules.
  - Friendship terminates.

### CONFLICT #3. Compliant / Manipulative Controller

- No matter the intensions, when in a jam the Manipulative Controller asks friends to help (bail out).
- Compliant feels taken for granted.
  - Favors are fine... but to always have to jump because my friend doesn't not plan ahead is another.
- Compliant goes along stifling resentment.... "That's just how \_\_\_ is."

#### 1. *What are the symptoms?*

- Compliant feels resentment at feeling put upon, especially last minute or un-necessarily.
- Compliant feels friendship is being taken for granted.
- She begins to avoid her friend.

#### 2. *What are the roots?*

- Growing up, Compliant didn't like the disappointment others displayed when she said no.
- Compliant afraid of hurting others.
- Compliant learned to over-function when others under-function.
- Growing up, Manipulative Controller was always being rescued.
- Nice people, authorities, always helped her out.

#### 3. *What is the boundary conflict?*

- Manipulative Controller doesn't take responsibility for personal choices.
- Finds compliant friends who will help when called.

#### 4. *Who needs to take ownership?*

- Compliant needs to own feelings and act in response to prevent in the future.
- Compliant needs to stop feeling like the victim and take responsibility for saying 'no.'

#### 5. *What do they need?*

- Compliant needs to connect with others who will support her and help her learn to say 'no.'

#### 6. *How do they begin?*

- Compliant practices saying 'no' to supportive friends.
- Compliant learns, with supportive friends, to disagree, state her opinion, and confront.

7. *How do they set boundaries with each other?*
  - Compliant exercises Matt 18 principle and talks to Manipulative Controller.
  - Compliant institutes ‘no emergencies’ policy for a time.
  - Manipulative Controller takes responsibility for schedule, etc.
8. *What happens next?*
  - Both parties learn and appreciate the growth potential.

#### CONFLICT #4: Compliant / Nonresponsive

- Nonresponsive people are usually tone-deaf to the conflict and feelings of the other.
  - Compliant is frustrated and resentful.
  - The Nonresponsive is blissfully unaware of a problem.
  - The relationship does not appear to be important to the Nonresponsive.
1. *What are the symptoms?*
    - Compliant feels depressed, resentful, unimportant.
    - Nonresponsive may feel guilty or overwhelmed by friend’s needs or requests.
  2. *What are the roots?*
    - Compliant fears abandonment, so she over-performs for under-performers.
    - Nonresponsive is popular, in demand, and never has to work at friendships.
    - Nonresponsive has never been challenged or lost a friend, so unaware.
  3. *What is the boundary conflict?*
    - A. Compliant takes on too much responsibility within the friendship, not letting the nonresponsive carry his/her load.
    - B. Nonresponsive does not take responsibility because compliant is always willing to step up. Why work when other will?
  4. *Who needs to take ownership?*
    - Compliant needs to take responsibility for making the friendship too easy for nonresponsive.
    - Compliant knows her over-performing is an attempt to control love.

5. *What do they need?*
  - Both need support from friends. Neither can look objectively at the problem without one or more relationships of unconditional love.
6. *How do they begin?*
  - Compliant determines friends carry their own weight of responsibility.
  - Compliant practices setting limits with other supportive friends.
7. *How do they set boundaries with each other?*
  - Compliant talks to Nonresponsive about no longer over-performing an why.
  - Compliant prepares for loss of friendship and learns.
8. *What happens next?*
  - A relationship improves or is exposed as a non-friendship.

## **Common Issues:**

1. Assuming Friendships are Easily Broken
  - It assumes that institutions or proximity are what hold relationships together.
    - a. Church, Work, School, Neighborhood
  - It assumes friendships are fragile without commitment.
  - Friendships are not about commitments...they are about our attachments.
2. Boundaries and Intimacy
  - There are multiple types of intimacies.
  - Boundaries with the opposite sex require truth-telling and limit-setting.
3. Family as Friends
  - The Bible says we are to leave our families to be on on-mission with God in the world.
  - Staying emotionally locked in to our family of origin frustrates God's purpose.
    - No one can become a truly biblical adult without setting some limits, leaving home, and cleaving somewhere else.
    - Otherwise we never know if we have forged our own values, beliefs, and convictions.

- Otherwise we may never address our own healing from our family of origin issues.
- Yes, we can be friends with our family, but it requires setting boundaries as we get older.
- A healthy family will begin helping young adults set those boundaries.

#### 4. Limits with Needy Friends

- Ministries and friendships are not necessarily the same things.
- We don't find friends by finding people to help...this is what the 'rescuer' does.
- Friends serve to restore us from the drain of ministry.

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Material for this teaching/coaching week was taken from:

Cloud, Henry, and John Sims Townsend. *Boundaries: When to Say Yes, When to Say No to Take Control of Your Life*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Pub. House, 1992.

# Establishing Boundaries

# Removing Walls



## Boundaries and Walls: Week 4

*Boundaries in Friendships*

### Common Boundary Issues Between Friends:

Apply the following checklist:

1. What are the \_\_\_\_\_?
2. What are the \_\_\_\_\_?
3. What is the boundary \_\_\_\_\_?
4. Who needs to take \_\_\_\_\_?
5. What do they \_\_\_\_\_?
6. How do they \_\_\_\_\_?
7. How do they set boundaries with \_\_\_\_\_?
8. What happens \_\_\_\_\_?

**CONFLICT #1:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

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- At some point, both become \_\_\_\_\_ with what they are doing.
- Both find it \_\_\_\_\_ to have a “I really don’t want to \_\_\_” conversation.

*What are the symptoms?*

*What are the roots?*

*What is the boundary conflict?*

*Who needs to take ownership?*

*What do they need?*

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*How do they set boundaries with each other?*

*What happens next?*

**CONFLICT #2:** \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_ **Controller**

- The most \_\_\_\_\_ of friendship conflicts.
- Compliant feels \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
- Aggressive Controller \_\_\_\_\_ and feels irritated at being \_\_\_\_\_.
- The compliant is on the short end of the stick... must \_\_\_\_\_.

*What are the symptoms?*

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- Compliant goes along stifling \_\_\_\_\_.... "That's just how \_\_\_\_\_ is."

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- Friendships are not about commitments...they are about our \_\_\_\_\_.

### 2. Boundaries and \_\_\_\_\_.

- There are multiple types of \_\_\_\_\_.
- Boundaries with the opposite sex require \_\_\_\_\_-telling and \_\_\_\_\_-setting.

### 3. Family as \_\_\_\_\_.

- The Bible says we are to \_\_\_\_\_ our families to be on on-mission with God in the world.
- Staying \_\_\_\_\_ locked in to our family of origin frustrates God's purpose.
- Yes, we can be friends with our family, but it requires setting \_\_\_\_\_ as we get older.
- A \_\_\_\_\_ family will begin helping young adults set those boundaries.

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