

Learning Healthy Boundaries

Tools for Healing &
Self-Discovery

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About Tara Coyote, Founder of Wind Horse Sanctuary




INTRODUCTION

Boundaries: What are they and why do we need them?

Boundaries help create a safe container in which to operate within ALL of our relationships: friends, family, co-workers and in the everyday world. Having clear boundaries with others can help us flourish within our relationships as we are clear what our needs are and how to get them met.

Once we learn where our boundaries are and how to set them, it teaches us how to operate in the world in a healthier manner. We become clear on where we stand with ourselves and others. The world becomes a safer place and we're empowered to stand strong, yet aware, within ourselves in a whole new manner.

A photograph of a brown horse with a white blaze on its face, looking over a white fence. The horse is in profile, facing left. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with green grass and a fence line. The entire image is framed by a black border.

"Boundaries are a
part of self-care.
They are healthy,
normal and
necessary."
- Doreen Virtue



EXPLORATION

How do you know when your boundaries are being crossed?

1. You take responsibility for other people's thoughts, feelings, and actions or make them responsible for yours.

You believe that you can somehow “make” other people like you by doing what they want or that you can somehow save yourself from the judgment of others.

The truth is that other people's thoughts, feelings, and actions are about them.

Your thoughts, feelings, and actions are about you.

If you don't set boundaries because you fear what other people are going to think and feel, you are fighting a losing battle.





EXPLORATION

How do you know when your boundaries are being crossed?

2. You are angry and pissed off all the time.

Anger, frustration and rage are your clearest indicator that your boundaries have been “threatened” or crossed.

If you are harboring a lot of anger and tend to step into rage easily (flipping people off in traffic, yelling at people, or worse!) this is an indication that you have lost touch with your boundaries . . . and most likely believe that it isn't OK to set them.

Your feelings of anger are in deep service to you. They are showing you exactly what your boundaries are and what you need to do to get back into alignment with yourself.





EXPLORATION

How do you know when your boundaries are being crossed?

3. You feel resentful towards people you would otherwise care about.

Perhaps you resent your clients, your boss, your partner or your children. You do things for them but, damn, do you hate it.

Resentment lets you know that you are repeatedly letting someone cross your boundaries. Likely, you haven't established any boundaries to start with, which can eventually lead to ultimatums.

Resentment is simply a cousin of anger and shares the same message.

It is inviting you to see what the boundary is so that you can establish and honor it.





EXPLORATION

How do you know when your boundaries are being crossed?

4. You allow poor behavior at the expense of your own well-being.

You let people walk all over you and you rarely, if ever, stand up for yourself. You might even stay in relationships and jobs that just aren't a match for you and your needs.

The bottom line: your needs must come first.

This doesn't mean that their needs aren't important, but simply that your needs are equally as important.

This is YOUR life and therefore, it is your responsibility to ensure that your needs are met. You are not responsible for others . . . that is their life and their responsibility.





EXPLORATION

How do you know when your boundaries are being crossed?

-
- 5. The only way you know how to get what you want and need is to be manipulative, abusive, and/or passive aggressive.**
-

Perhaps you lie or use self-depreciating humor as a way to get compliments or maybe you are the martyr and proud of it.

As I mentioned above, this isn't a moral judgment. It's about being human.

If you've been putting your needs on the back burner your whole life, these may be the only way you know how to get your needs met.

By understanding, and taking responsibility for your needs and wants, the manipulation will fall away on its own.





"Having clear boundaries with others can help us flourish within our relationships."

~Tara Coyote



JOURNAL PROMPTS

Starting a practice of setting boundaries

**Do you recognize yourself in any of these signs?
If you do, I invite you to consider starting a practice
of setting boundaries. Your relationships will begin to
thrive and so will you.**

1. Which of the above signs do I resonate with?
How do I know my boundaries being crossed?

2. Where and with whom can I set stronger
boundaries in my life?

3. How would it serve me if I was able to create and
maintain healthy boundaries?

I CREATE AND
MAINTAIN
BOUNDARIES
THAT PROTECT
AND SUPPORT ME.





TAKING STOCK

Life Pie Exercise:
Exploring boundaries in all areas of your life

On the following page is a life pie, broken up into different life categories.

1. Make a dot in each “pie”, indicating where you currently are with setting boundaries in each life area.

The closer to the outer rim signifies greatest fulfillment, closer to the center reveals displeasure in that area.

2. If a category doesn't apply to you, cross it out and write in one that does! The goal is to explore boundaries in areas you may never have thought of (i.e. with yourself – think of your relationship to food, exercise or self-care).
3. You can explore a life area in general or pick a specific person and write down their name (i.e. work in general or perhaps it is specifically your boss).
4. Connect each of the dots together.



TAKING STOCK

-Sample-

Life Pie Exercise:
Exploring boundaries in all areas of your life





TAKING STOCK

Life Pie Exercise:
Exploring boundaries in all areas of your life





TAKING STOCK

Life Pie Exercise:
Exploring boundaries in all areas of your life

Partner/Spouse

Parents

Siblings

Children

In-Laws

Exes

Work

Yourself (i.e. fitness, food, self-care)

Friends

Other



SELF-CARE PAUSE

Taking a moment to pause and cultivate our self-care practice

Exploring boundaries can bring up many emotions, uncomfortable memories, and often serve as a mirror in which we don't always like the reflection we see. Take a moment to step away and create some space for self-care and nurturing.

Here are some self-care suggestions . . .
Find what feels good to you!

1. Go for a walk or do some stretching.
2. Take a bath or give yourself a facial.
3. Spend time with animals and pets.
4. Do something creative.
5. Dance to your favorite song.
6. Goof around for a bit – let yourself be silly.
7. Eat/drink something nourishing.
8. Receive a hug from someone you love.



"Each time
you set a
healthy
boundary,
you say
"yes" to
more
freedom."

- Nancy Levin



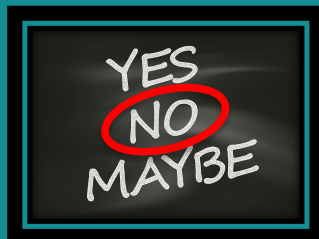


TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Tools for creating stronger boundaries

1. Start saying “No”.

To change your ways, you must always start small and in this scenario pick something minor to say “No” to. This will give you the necessary confidence boost to show you that people can manage without you and that they will not hold it against you.



- LET'S PRACTICE -

One thing/person that I can say “No” to is . . .





TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Tools for creating stronger boundaries

2. Trust your body instincts.

Your mind and body work very closely together to keep you functioning. Trust what it has to say.

If a favor makes you uncomfortable and weighty then say “No” to the request. If the favor asked doesn’t make you uneasy then consider saying “Yes”.

- LET’S PRACTICE -

Think back on a recent situation . . .

When I was asked to _____,

I felt _____ (describe in detail how it felt and where you felt it in your body).

This was an indication that I should have said _____.





TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Tools for creating stronger boundaries

3. Let go of what people will think.

People will always have an opinion about you. What is important is not letting every opinion matter.

It is normal to have concerns over what people will think. We often feel guilty or anxious that if you say “No”, people will not trust you or value your opinion.

What matters most is staying true to you. Eventually these feelings and fears will fade away and you will be glad that you set your boundaries.

- LET'S PRACTICE -

I am afraid that if I say “No” to _____
then they will feel _____.

But, if I do not set my boundaries and say “No” to
them, I will feel _____.





TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Tools for creating stronger boundaries

4. Stay firm. Don't be apologetic when your answer is "No".

Don't apologize if your answer has to be "No." Rather, start off with appreciation and then end the conversation with saying "No". This will be an effective way of communication without giving offense.

For example, *"I appreciate that you trust me enough to confide you problems; however, I am unable to help you in this regard."*

Remember, saying "No" is your right and you have nothing to apologize for as you have not done anything wrong.





TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Tools for creating stronger boundaries

5. Be short and confident in your “No”.

Be upfront and honest about saying “No”. Do not doubt yourself, as people will see that doubt as a window of opportunity, which they will eagerly exploit. You also don’t owe people an explanation for saying “No”. For example, “I cannot finish your report for you this week; please ask someone else.”





TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Tools for creating stronger boundaries

6. Be clear about what “Yes” means.

If you know what you want to say “Yes” to,
it becomes easier to say “No”.

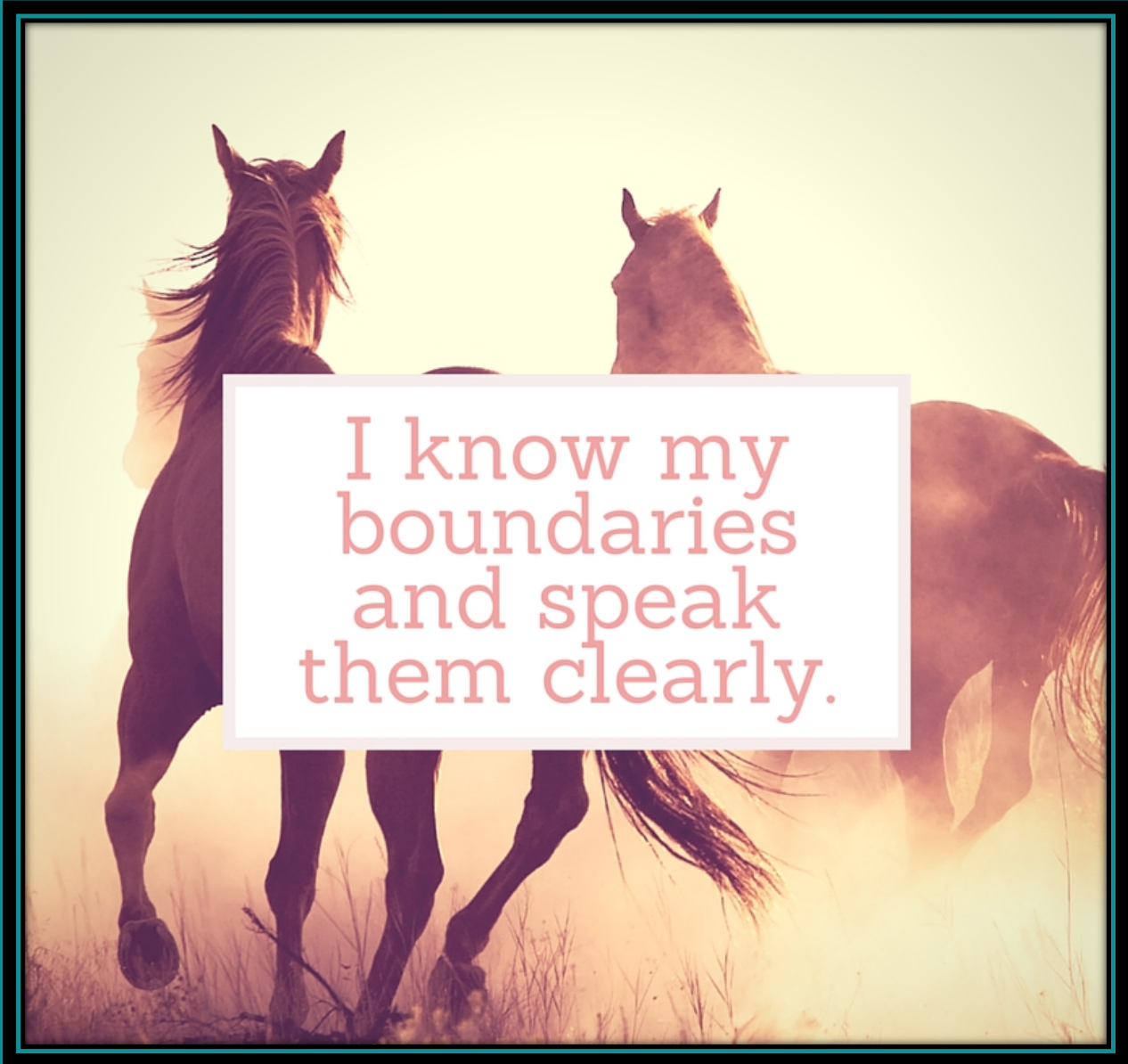
Take a step back and assess what you want, what
your priorities are, and then accept accordingly.

- LET'S PRACTICE -

What are my priorities this month?
Where do I want or need to focus my energy?

What else is being asked of me that doesn't fit into
the “Yes” category?





I know my
boundaries
and speak
them clearly.



TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Positive affirmations for boundaries

Retrain your thinking to work for you, not against you.

An affirmation is, simply, positive self-talk. It is a statement about ourselves or a situation, phrased in the present tense as if the statement is already true.

By bringing positive affirmations into our lives, we can learn to say “No” and empower ourselves to set the boundaries we need in order to stay aligned with our authentic selves.

-RECOMMENDATION-

Post this affirmation up in your home so you can say it out-loud at least twice every day. Getting into the regular habit of speaking this affirmation will help engrain the positive thought into your life and serve as a reminder when your boundaries are tested.





TOOLS FOR THE JOURNEY

Positive affirmations for boundaries

Pick an affirmation that feels empowering to you.

1. I set firm boundaries with others.
2. I am in touch with my needs.
3. I find it easy to set boundaries and to say 'No'.
4. I love to set and maintain my boundaries.
5. I am aware of my personal boundaries and the boundaries of others.
6. I can firmly, but politely, decline others when they make a request I cannot honor.
7. I am allowed to say "No".
8. I am always completely safe and protected. No one can hurt me.
9. I create and maintain boundaries that protect and support me.
10. I stand up for myself and my personal beliefs.



I AM AWARE OF
MY PERSONAL
BOUNDARIES
AND THE
BOUNDARIES
OF OTHERS.





ACTION ITEM

Creating new habits with tiny changes

Research shows that in order to make big changes in our lives, we need to start by creating tiny changes.

Shifting old habits and patterns doesn't happen overnight so be patient with yourself and take it step by step!

List 5 tiny changes you can take to create stronger, healthier boundaries:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.





"Boundaries help create a safe container
in which to operate within."
~Tara Coyote



THE POWER OF THE HERD

How working with horses can teach you
healthy boundaries

**Horses provide us with the perfect opportunity to
strengthen our boundary-setting skills.**

The greatest gift for me in learning about boundaries is through working with the horses. Due to the large size of a horse, being present with them helps us humans to be aware of our own needs and thus strengthen our own personal boundaries. When faced with setting a boundary with a dominant 1,500 lb. horse, one MUST learn how to truly stand in one's strength and assert one's needs. After learning how to properly set boundaries with a large animal, then in contrast, setting boundaries with a 160 lb. human, is a walk in the park.

-Tara Coyote, Cancer Warriress





THE POWER OF THE HERD

“Learning Healthy Boundaries”
A 4-month program

**Join Tara and the herd to learn the tools you need
to reclaim your power!**

PROGRAM INCLUDES:

- 3 weekend workshops (with catered lunch) at Wind Horse Sanctuary in Nevada City, CA
- 3 private sessions (one per weekend)
- 4 group calls in between weekend sessions
- Homework and ongoing support in between weekend sessions

WHAT YOU WILL TAKE AWAY:

- Know that you have a right to personal boundaries
- Recognize that other people's needs and feelings are not more important than your own
- Learn to say “No”
- Identify the actions and behaviors that you find unacceptable
- Trust and believe in yourself

FOR MORE INFO PLEASE GO TO:

www.windhorsesanctuary.com/boundaries-program

Horses carry the wisdom
of healing in their hearts
and offer it to any human
who possess the
humility to listen.





LEARN MORE

About Tara Coyote, Founder of Wind Horse Sanctuary

**Weaving together 25 yrs. of somatic experience
with my love of horses.**

I am an Eponaquest™ Equine Facilitated Learning Instructor. Developed by Linda Kohanov, Eponaquest has created a innovative human-equine approach for developing emotional intelligence, leadership and relationship skills. Linda is also the best-selling author of the groundbreaking book, 'The Tao of Equus'.

I run and operate Wind Horse Sanctuary, a 10-acre horse property in Nevada City, CA where I offer private sessions and group workshops in Equine Facilitated Learning and coaching.





LEARN MORE

Why I created the “Learning Healthy Boundaries” Equine program

It has been a lifelong challenge for me to maintain healthy boundaries from childhood to adulthood, which is why I am inspired to teach this program to help others with their boundaries. Being a giving person in my life, I have had to learn to assert myself in order to claim my own personal space and boundaries. I have had my own share of boundary violations in personal relationships, which ultimately led me to learn strong boundaries.



WANT MORE INFO?

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