



A SELF-WORK CBT GUIDE, FROM THE SECURE BOND

# Boundaries That Bring Peace

How to stay close without losing yourself. Real boundaries, healthy limits, and the quiet peace they bring into a life and a relationship.



Esti Kedem · CBT-certified relationship & life coach · [thesecurebond.com](https://thesecurebond.com)

# Why boundaries change everything

Most exhaustion in relationships is not caused by the other person. It is caused by everything we silently agreed to carry, tolerate, or give away, without ever deciding to.

A boundary is not a wall. It is a door with a handle on your side. It says: this is where I end and you begin. This is what I can give with a full heart, and this is where my yes would secretly be a no.

When boundaries are missing, they do not stay quiet. They come out sideways: as resentment, as snapping over small things, as feeling invisible in your own home, as a tiredness that sleep does not fix. When boundaries are healthy, something surprising happens. There is less fighting, not more. Because nobody is silently keeping score.

*"Peace does not come from giving everything. It comes from knowing what is yours to give."*

*Esti Kedem*

## Part 1 · How the missing boundary feels

Check what is true for you these days. Honesty first, no judgment.

- I say yes when my body is already saying no.
- I feel resentful about things I never actually asked to change.
- I explain and justify my needs, as if I need permission to have them.
- I feel responsible for other people's moods.
- I have hobbies, friends, or dreams I quietly dropped, and I miss them.
- After giving all day, I have nothing left, and then I feel guilty about that too.

The place in my life where a missing boundary costs me the most right now:

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## Part 2 · Is it a real boundary, or is it control?

This is the question that confuses almost everyone. Here is the CBT-clear difference:

### A REAL BOUNDARY

- Is about me: my time, my body, my energy, my values.
- Sounds like: "I am not available for yelling. I will step out and we can try again calmly."
- Is kept by my own actions, not by forcing anyone.
- Leaves the other person free to be themselves.

### A CONTROL ISSUE IN DISGUISE

- Is about changing the other person: their friends, choices, feelings.
- Sounds like: "You are not allowed to..." or "If you loved me you would..."
- Is kept by punishment, guilt, or silence.
- Shrinks the other person so my fear can relax.

### The three-question check

- **Whose behavior does this rule?** Mine, it is a boundary. Theirs, it may be control.
- **What is underneath it?** Self-respect, boundary. Fear of losing them, look at the fear first.
- **Can I keep it myself?** A real boundary never needs the other person's cooperation to exist.

One rule I hold that might really be fear wearing a uniform:

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## Part 3 · What a healthy boundary sounds like

A healthy boundary is calm, kind, and specific. It does not attack, and it does not apologize for existing.

*"I need thirty minutes to myself when I get home. After that, I am all yours."*

*"I want to hear this, and I cannot listen well when it is shouted. Let us try again after dinner."*

*"Sundays with my sister matter to me. I am keeping them."*

Notice the pattern: I feel, I need, I will. No "you always". No "you never". A boundary spoken this way is not a rejection of the other person. It is an instruction manual for loving you well.

A boundary I need to say out loud this week, written in this calm shape:

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## Part 4 · How not to lose yourself

Love is not supposed to erase you. You were a whole person before this relationship, and the relationship is healthiest when you still are.

The CBT key: catch the quiet thought "keeping the peace matters more than keeping myself." Write it down, and answer it: "A peace that costs me myself is not peace. It is

disappearing slowly."

Signs you are drifting away from yourself

- You cannot remember the last time you did something that is only yours.
- Your opinions arrive after checking their face.
- Friends say "we never see you anymore" and they are right.
- You feel most like yourself when your partner is not home, and that scares you.

Three things that make me feel like me, that I am taking back this month:

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## Part 5 · What to give up on, and what is a keeper

Every good relationship asks for flexibility. The art is knowing what is negotiable and what is not. Bending on preferences is love. Bending on your core is losing yourself.

### THINGS YOU CAN GIVE UP ON

- Being right in every argument.
- Preferences: the restaurant, the movie, the color of the couch.
- Doing everything your way, on your schedule.
- Some comfort, some routine, some habits that only serve your ego.

### THE KEEPERS, NEVER FOR TRADE

- Your values and your self-respect.
- Your safety, emotional and physical.
- Your people: the friends and family who hold you.
- Your dreams, your growth, your own voice.

My personal list. Negotiable for me:

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My keepers, the parts of me that are not for trade:

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## A small daily practice

- **Once a day, notice one yes.** Before it leaves your mouth, ask: is this a full yes, or a fear yes?
- **Once a week, say one calm boundary sentence.** Small ones count. Small ones train the muscle.
- **Once a month, visit your keepers list.** If something on it has gone quiet, bring it back first.

Boundaries are not the end of closeness. They are what make real closeness possible, because the person showing up to the relationship is actually you.



## If this guide touched something

Boundaries are simple to read about and hard to live. If you want support finding yours, without losing the people you love, I would be glad to walk with you.

**Book your free 15-minute call**

**Or go deeper: book your Introduction Session**

75 minutes · on Zoom

WhatsApp: [wa.me/17285006027](https://wa.me/17285006027) · Instagram: [@the\\_secure\\_bond\\_](https://www.instagram.com/the_secure_bond_)