

Week 1 - The Conditioning that Shapes our Boundaries

Where You Should Be Right Now:

- Have attended the first live class or reviewed the class replay
- Requested access to the [FB community group](#)
- Set your intentions and goal(s) for the next 8 weeks. Share them with the group.

Purpose of This Lesson:

- Explore how you identify as a giver, highly-sensitive person or healer and your attachments to that role
- Recognize the areas of your life where safety/security are the true driving forces behind your choices - even if you thought it was your intuition in the driver's seat.

ROOTS FORMING

Exposure

- Earliest impressions. Modelled, Highlighted and Rewarded, Trauma
 - Mother, Father or Caregiver
 - Overly Compassionate/Caring and rewarded for your behaviour.

Feelings of safety in your body

- Ability to feel, recognize and respond to physical body and needs
- Challenged Feelings of Safety/Security = Survival Pattern Formation and Response
 - Repeated response becomes habitual

SUBCONSCIOUS - DIALOGUE

- **Perceived Expectations** (negative, neutral, positive) = Nervous System Response
- Behavior that is **rewarded** vs consequences of not upholding expectation
 - Specific fears of not upholding expectation
- **Coping Mechanisms** — shape boundaries and energy hygiene

REINFORCEMENT / RATIONALIZATION

- **Cues, Triggers, Patterns, Reinforcement**
 - Example - overcompensating, overdelivering, not enoughness
 - Primary challenges to feelings of safety and survival
- **Foundation**
 - Stories, Beliefs and Mythologies
 - Mythologies = the illusions we uphold and operate under
 - Self-Worth Moulding

- Noticeable in how we orient ourselves in daily living and level of receptivity to intuition and support available

IDENTIFICATION

Ego, Self-Sabotage Tendencies, Identity Shaping

- How you **identify** with compassion/root of healer archetype
- **Upholding patterns** - maintain predictability + control = self-sabotage
 - Also maintaining predictability for those we serve (family, friends, clients etc).
 - *If we don't continue to show up in the way others expect us to, consider how that challenges your feelings around safety and security. Does this affect your need to be in control?*
- How much is compassion/caregiving/healer woven into your identity?
 - Who are you without these titles/labels? What is left when you aren't directly serving others?
 - Who do you WANT to be? Why?
- Compassion Inventory / Lack of Boundaries
 - Where are you prone or susceptible to serving others at the expense of your own needs or truth?
 - Why? What are you trying to uphold or maintain?

COMPASSION WITHOUT BOUNDARIES

Lacking boundaries in expressing compassion is a quick gateway to issues, such as burnout and emotional exhaustion (compassion fatigue). Here are some signs that you may be lacking compassion boundaries.

Overcommitting: Constantly say "yes" to requests for help, even when it's not feasible for you to do so, leading to an overwhelming workload.

Neglecting Self-Care: Putting the needs of others before one's own, often ignoring physical and emotional well-being.

Difficulty Saying No: Finding it challenging to decline requests or set limits, even when it's in your best interest to do so.

Personal Sacrifice: Regularly sacrificing your own time, resources, and personal goals to help others, often at your own detriment.

Rescuer Complex: Frequently feel the need to "rescue" others from their problems or take on responsibilities that aren't yours. AKA - minimizing the pain and discomfort of others.

Feelings of Guilt: Experiencing guilt or anxiety when you can't meet others' expectations, even if those expectations are unrealistic.

Lack of Emotional Boundaries: Absorbing the emotional distress of others, taking on their feelings and making it difficult to maintain your emotional well-being.

Burnout: Experiencing physical and emotional burnout from constantly giving and neglecting your own needs.

Difficulty in Receiving Help: Struggling to accept assistance or support from others, as you're accustomed to being the caregiver.

Strained Relationships: Lack of boundaries can strain personal and professional relationships, as others may feel overwhelmed or suffocated by your constant giving.

Pay close attention to situations in which you tend to assume the role of a compassionate giver and feel an excessive responsibility to alleviate others' distress. In these instances, take a moment to evaluate whether your actions genuinely stem from compassion or if they are driven, at least in part, by your own discomfort when witnessing someone else's distress. Consider if you might be trying to minimize their discomfort not solely for their benefit but also as a way to soothe your own unease about their situation.

SEPARATING EMPATHY FROM RESPONSIBILITY

Detached Empathy Script

Which Emotions Am I Experiencing?

Reflect on the specific emotions that you're currently feeling in this situation. What is the emotional landscape you're navigating?

How Do I Typically Manage These Emotions?

Consider your usual coping mechanisms for handling these emotions. What strategies do you typically employ to manage your feelings?

How Do I Want to Respond to These Emotions?

Contemplate how you'd like to respond to your emotions in this situation. What constructive and healthy ways can you address and process these feelings?

What Is My Role in This Person's Healing Process?

Clarify your role in the individual's healing journey. What responsibilities do you have, and what are the boundaries of your involvement?

Which Aspects Are Beyond My Control?

Identify the elements of their healing process that you cannot influence or control. Recognize the limitations of your role.

How Might My Response Affect My Own Well-being?

Envision the potential consequences on your own physical and emotional well-being if you respond in a certain way. How can your actions in this situation impact your overall health and self-care?

Why Am I Struggling to Set Appropriate Boundaries?

Explore the specific reasons why you find it challenging to establish the necessary boundaries in this context. What internal or external factors contribute to this struggle?

How Can I Extend Self-Compassion Inwardly?

Investigate how you can offer yourself the same compassion and understanding that you extend to others. How can you prioritize self-care and well-being in your responses and actions?

DEEPER INQUIRY

- What steps can I take to recognize these signs early on and prevent burnout?
- How might discussing these challenging situations/cases with other like-minded peers help me gain perspective and maintain professional boundaries?
- Are there specific situations or clients where I struggle to set appropriate boundaries? Why?
- How can I differentiate between feeling empathy for my clients/family/friends' struggles and feeling responsible for their well-being?
- Technique: Identify techniques that help you detach from work when you leave the office or close down your practice. What activities or rituals can help you shift your focus to your personal life or tend to your personal needs?
- Are you overextending yourself or taking on too many requests?
- How do your experiences with clients enrich your life and understanding of humanity?
- What steps can you take to ensure you have a sustainable and fulfilling career in the healing profession?