Personal Rights and Boundaries Control

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Within a relationship each partner has personal rights. A healthy relationship allows each partner to be an individual. They are together because they want to be together not because they NEED to be together. Each partner has their own personal boundaries and the right to respect and privacy. In a healthy relationship trust is automatic.

Sometimes, what gets in the way of our ability to trust and to be a part of a healthy relationship is our pattern of distorted thinking, irrational ideas, or mistaken assumptions.

RIGHTS

We may assume we do not have rights. We may think it is selfish to put our needs first or our views should be respected. We may think it bad to ever make a mistake. We may feel we must always be flexible and consistent and logical. We may feel our emotions are not as important as our partners. These are all mistaken assumptions.

Each person has rights; the right to make mistakes, the right to have feelings respected and honored, the right to a voice in what happens in the relationship, a right to privacy when and where they feel the need, a right to make mistakes, a right to put themselves first, a right to ask for emotional support, a right to ask for sex and a right to respect the answer, a right to change their mind, and a right to be wrong. In a healthy relationship these rights are honored and respected.

Irrational ideas

Irrational ideas can interfere with your relationship healthy functioning. These ideas may get in the way of good communication. They may keep you from experiencing the joy and happiness waiting for you.

Irrational ideas are beliefs that are not true. As in the following;

That there is a solution to all problems.

That your history determines your present behavior and you are not in charge of changing that behavior for the future.
The belief you can MAKE another person mad.

That happiness comes from the outside, from someone else, and you have no ability to be happy without help.

The idea that an adult person must be loved and respected by all other people.

That if you are not completely competent and successful or you are worthless.

The belief that if things are not the way you wish it is the end of the world.

The belief it is easier to avoid facing problems or difficulties and responsibilities.

The belief you are nothing without a partner.

**Distorted Thinking**

Distorted thinking patterns will also destroy your ability to have a healthy relationship. These thinking patterns interfere with direct clear communication. They even stop communication and any chance to come to a resolution of an issue.

“Should” interferes with you ability to be on the same page with your partner. YOU should.....means the speaker knows what you need and is not respecting your right to decide.

Taking everything personal is a form of distorted thinking. Sometimes things are just “not about us”. The program about Family of Origin issues talks about the issues in your basket vs the issues in other person’s basket. That theory helps you stop taking things personal.

The fallacy that you have control over anything but yourself is distorted thinking. The next section will explain more of this issue.

“Fair” is a form of distorted thinking. You have probably heard it said “life is not fair.” Well that is true and if you can come to terms with that concept you will be much happier.

The belief that other people will change if you complain, yell, manipulate enough is distorted thinking. People do not change when under attack.
Labeling is a form of distorted thinking. One race of people is not ALL bad or ALL good. People from each religion are not ALL good or bad. Blonds are not ALL airheads and sometimes people with other hair color can be airheads. Women are not ALL subservient and men are not ALL mean......you get the picture.

The belief -someone has to be right and someone wrong is a BIG fallacy. Two people can disagree and both be RIGHT. OH YES!! You read that correctly. Two people can attend the same event, spend a day in the same place, and have totally different experiences. The “truth” for each is TRUTH for that person or their reality. SO, they can both be “right.” If your thinking pattern is that someone must be wrong....you are thinking “distortedly.” Here is a good place to address the pattern of black and white thinking. Things are usually not all black and all white, there are gray areas too....in relationship this is also true. Not only does each partner have their own reality, but there are the gray areas to consider also.

Believing those who love you can automatically know what you want or need is definitely a distorted thinking form. Not many of us are mind readers. If you want your needs met and your wishes fulfilled, YOU need to communicate clearly those needs and wishes. CONTROL

Control comes in two dimensions...external and internal.

When we have “external locus of control,” our belief is that our life is controlled by the outside world and what ever we do has no influence on the outcome.

“Internal locus of control” mean we have control of our world and feel what we do will get our needs met.

Locus of control is formed the first months of life. If we are given help, when we cry and are in need, we form the belief that we have an influence on our world and power to get our own needs met. If we cry and no one responds-routinely-we form the belief that no matter what we do it will not make a difference on getting our needs met.

If you come from an abusive family of origin, control may be very important to you. Sometimes being abused means the victim is not in control of even their own body. As these abused people become adults “control” may be primary. Reviewing what we really have control over is one tool to help us
feel more in control of our lives. Ultimately the only thing we have true control of is ourselves. Control over others is not really possible. We can know the other persons triggers and buttons….but they are the ones to decide if they feel a certain way or if they will act the way we want or not.

**PERSONAL BOUNDARIES**

Personal boundaries are sometimes hard to comprehend. Sometimes we have no idea what boundaries we “should” have or what boundaries we want. Only you can make this decision. Personal boundaries are your personal rules about other people being with you or in your personal “world.” One personal boundary might be – people in my world do not call others names or my personal boundary is I don’t stay in a relationship that is not nurturing for me.

Let’s start with boundaries that are not nurturing. This type of boundary, or way of being in your world, will diminish your personal rights and may encourage the feeling of being “out of control.”

This way of “being” will diminish your feelings of self-worth.

Others direct your life, tell you what to feel and what to do.
Abuse is allowed, emotional or sexual or verbal or physical or all.
Trust is difficult….you trust no one or trust anyone.
There are no boundaries about what you talk about-you tell all.
First sexual impulses are acted upon, you fall “in love” immediately.
You don’t stay true to yourself, you please others before yourself.
You have sex to please a partner even when you don’t want sex.
People with poor boundaries don’t notice other’s poor boundaries.

Boundaries that are nurturing. These boundaries are a way of being in your world. They will increase your feeling of control over your world and encourage your self-worth to grow.

Trust of others is not given immediately, but appropriately as they prove trustworthy.
You talk about yourself when you know it is safe and you reveal only what is needed and appropriate.

Falling in love is done in steps and with your thinking clear.

Self-pleasure is important to you in any sexual activity.

“No” is a part of your vocabulary and you use it when you don’t want to participate or accept something

Communication of your needs and wants are clear. You don’t expect others to fulfill those needs automatically, but you are clear in our asking. You know your friends and partners are not mind readers.

You stay in touch with your own values regardless of others needs

You ask permission before you touch others and ask for the same respect

You notice when others are displaying inappropriate and/or poor boundaries.

You notice when others are not respecting your personal boundaries

Relationship Boundaries

Relationship boundaries may be different and in addition to your own personal boundaries. They may include boundaries about how your partner treats your children, or your social life with your partner, or rights to personal privacy. Even though you are in a relationship, your personal boundaries are important and necessary. If you give up your personal boundaries your relationship becomes less healthy.

You give up your boundaries in a relationship when;

* You are unclear about you needs and your boundaries. * Allow abuse of yourself or children in your relationship. * Believe you have no personal rights of your own. * Believe you do not have a right to privacy. * Have trouble getting in touch with your anger, but you feel hurt and manipulated. * Allow behaviors in your partner you would not allow in other people.

* Your life is wishes and waiting and not acting on your dreams and needs. * You take care of your partner sexually without regard for you own wishes, for instance having sex when you just want to be held.

Your boundaries are clear and healthy in a relationship when;
*You give clear messages about your needs and wishes. *You are in touch with your feelings and know when you are sad, angry or happy. *You are only satisfied with you are on track to achieving your own dreams. *Only do sexual activities you are interested in sharing. *You are always aware you have choices and insist others are safe in your home. *You expect respect and your privacy honored without needing to hide anything or lie, *Your personal standard is defined and still flexible. *You have the ability to say NO when it is right for you. *You own feeling of security is not thrown by events around you. *You like change for the better and encourage growth in your relationship. *You have friends that are personal and friends that are a social circle for your relationship. You spend time just with your friends, without feelings of guilt or need to take care of your partner’s feelings.

**Check list for evaluation of your satisfaction in your relationship**

0-never 1-sometimes 2-most of the time 3-always
Communication is clear and honest. I feel heard. Conflicts are discussed and resolved without hurt. Fighting is productive and non-abusive.

0 1 2 3

Degree of affection is right for me. Sex is mutual and respectful. My needs and wishes are always considered in our sexual activity. I am clear about my needs.

There is a high degree of emotional intimacy. I feel safe being vulnerable and sharing personal feelings and wishes with my partner.

Our values and goals are similar. We are able to maximize our similarities and we accept and appreciate our differences.

You can use this to evaluate any relationship. Your score on this evaluation will tell you if the relationship is working for you. If it is not, only you can decide what to do with this information. If you are dissatisfied and your partner is also dissatisfied, you can decide to continue without change, take different roads, or get some help with changing your dynamics and create joy and ecstasy. YOUR in Charge!!!

Maximizing your similarities and appreciating your differences;

So what does all this mean?? We’ll let us explore. We sometimes choose partners because we are different from them. Their differences complement
our differences. If we understand how we are “different” some of the right/wrong issues are resolved.

A personality test may help you find your similarities and differences. A personality test tells you how your choose to be in the world. Your personality profile will change over time because you will change over time. A test I recommend in on the web. This test is about 70 questions and you are asked to pay a fee at the end (about $15). You will then get a printout telling you your degree of four different personality patterns. There are two books to help you understand the printout. The Website is www.keirsey.com. And the books are; Please Understand Me-Character and Temperament Types by David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates Gifts Differing-Understanding Personality Types by Isabel Briggs Myers

Now – time to make yourself some promises.

Repeat after me;............

I promise to remember I am in charge of my life. I am in control of my environment and I am in control of who shares my space. What ever happened in my past, I am in charge now.

I promise to confront anyone in my life who is abusive and/or does not express respect for my privacy. I promise to demand respect for myself and my children.

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I promise to notice my feelings and honor they are real, mine, and right. My feelings tell me what is going on in my world.

I promise to take responsibility for my emotional health and my actions and behaviors.

I promise to pay attention to the quality of people I let into my life.

Suggested Reading

Unfinished Business by Maggie Scarf

Intimate Partners: Patterns of Love and Marriage by Maggie Scarf

How to Listen so your Kids will Talk and How to Talk so your Kids will Listen by Adel Faber and Elaine Mazlish
101 Romantic Nights of Great Romance: Secret Sealed Seductions for Fun-Loving Couples by Laura Corn

Tantra Secrets for Men by Kerry Riley with Diane Riley

Nonviolent Communication-A Language of Life by Marshall B. Rosenberg Ph.D

Tantra – The Art of Conscious Loving by Charles and Caroline Muir

Hot Monogamy – Essential Steps to More Passionate, Intimate, Lovemaking by Patricia Love, MD and Jo Robinson

Co-dependant No More by Melodie Beattie

Please Understand Me-Character and Temperament Types by David Keirsey and Marilyn Bates

Gifts Differing-Understanding Personality Types by Isabel Briggs Myers

Suggested Websites; Go to “links” on www.marriagecounseling4u.com to find links for books, tantra, teaching videos and more