



**Be Brave.
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**Hi! I'm Coach
Margie**
I'm glad you're
reading the Brave
Space newsletter.
My newsletter is
written to share
information and
support.

Hello Margie,

Well, here we are halfway through October. What are your fall or autumn traditions? Our family has a tradition of getting together one weekend in October to carve pumpkins, and last Saturday was the big day. Of course, there was a lot of good food to enjoy, too!

Our family will also be blessed later this month with the birth of a new baby boy. He has no name yet, so for now, he's Nugget. I promise there will be pictures coming to you soon!

But for now, let's talk about creating boundaries!

This week I'm going to cover the last step in the process of creating your boundaries. This newsletter will cover how to connect your **core values** to your **boundaries**. I love this approach because knowing your values makes it so much easier to determine the boundaries you need.

Let's review the work we've done together so far. Your boundary work includes looking at what boundaries mean for us, how we feel when we don't set boundaries, or don't set them the right way, and what kind of boundaries we need to consider setting.

I gave you a worksheet to begin discovering what you value, and I gave you the five-step process for determining the most important values in your life. Did it take a while? I'd love to hear from you about the values you selected and what your process was like.

Okay! Let's get started.

When someone does something (**action or behavior**) that violates one or more of

your values, you immediately **have a thought** about that violation. That thought manifests in your body as a **feeling** that reflects the thought. And then you **react (behavior)**.

This creates a **cycle** that looks like this: **Their Behavior→Your Thoughts+Feelings→Your Behavior. Rinse and Repeat** until the relationship is damaged.

Sometimes the reaction is visible and sometimes it isn't. Either way, the behavior will likely continue until you do something to break the cycle. Communicating well-intentioned boundaries upsets the cycle. The goal is to be able to communicate your boundary in a way that maintains or enhances a relationship, not harms it.

For example, I often write about giving up alcohol in 2022. I'm fine meeting friends out no matter where we go - even to a bar. I'm not tempted and I can usually get something alcohol-free that I like to drink. I learned pretty quickly that some of my friends weren't fine with it. **They didn't feel comfortable drinking unless I was drinking.** Even after I lightheartedly assured them that they should order what they want and I'll order what I want. What we drink isn't why we get together, anyway! Right?

One of my core values is my health. When my friends would suggest **(behavior)** that I have "just one glass of wine", or they said "C'mon, you used to love to drink with us! Order something!" I **thought** to myself, "Stop! I don't want to drink alcohol!" and I **felt** angry, sad and disrespected. I value my health and don't want to put alcohol in my body. Why can't they respect that?"

I fumbled and stumbled and somehow ended up apologizing that they were uncomfortable. **But I stood firmly with my values.** So we awkwardly changed the subject and I went home early.

Something had to change. What I wanted was for my friends to ***let me order what I wanted and not make a big deal out of it.*** This is the NEW behavior I wanted.

Here's how my boundary came together:

Value Being Violated: *My Health*

People Involved: *Friends*

Value Violation: *Insisting I order alcohol when we're out*

Feeling: *Disrespected*

New Behavior: *Let me order what I want and don't make it an issue.*

Boundary statement:

I love being with you all. We've been through a lot since we've been friends and we've always supported each other through whatever we were going

through. I need to let you know that when you all encourage me to order alcohol when we're out together, I feel like you don't respect how hard I've worked to remove alcohol from my life. I prefer you let me order whatever I want and don't make a big deal about it. I hope you understand.

See what I did there? **I didn't insist that my friends comply with my rules.** I didn't give them an ultimatum. I honestly expressed my love for my friends and asked that they respect my choices.

You may be thinking, "**Yeah, but mine is more complicated than that.**" I honor that! Just like we all have different core values and need different boundaries, the person in our lives who is violating our values will react differently.

If you look closely at my boundary statement, **I made sure I connected** with my friends using **mutual purpose** (we've been through a lot) and **mutual respect** (we've always supported each other). I shared my boundary in a non-confrontational way. I started with **facts** (encourage me to order alcohol), followed by my story with my **feelings** (I feel like you don't respect how hard I've worked). **I stated my boundary in a straightforward and firm way but without a threat.** I finished by hoping they'd understand, knowing that I was fully prepared to stop meeting them out if they argued.

I didn't feel the need to invite a discussion. I hoped they'd see my point and agree, though I was prepared to continue the conversation if they wanted to discuss it. I had to prepare how to handle both their agreement and their disagreement.

HAPPY ENDING! They agreed to support me and honor my boundaries.

All right, now it's your turn. If you're still working on your values, I get it. Don't hurry through that. When you get your boundary statement where you want it, practice your delivery out loud. You can record yourself or stand in front of a mirror. If you have a trusted friend who would agree to listen to your boundary statement, even better!

I've really enjoyed bringing this boundary work to you. I hope it helps you in your relationships. As always, I'd love to hear from you! All of my connection information is below.

Until next week, be brave and make space for yourself,

Margie

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