

*Transform
Your Boundaries.*



Sarri Gilman, MA, MFT

Boundary Tips

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The Seven Patterns

Learning how to stand with your own Yes and No, at all times, takes a great amount of focus and practice.

Often people bury their Yes and No, their truth, with ways of being in the world. These modes of being can be classified into seven major categories. You may recognize that you spend lots of time going from mode to mode.



Workaholic: "I'm too busy doing really important things."



Caretaker: "Other people are suffering. I must take care of them."



Protector: "I shield everyone and myself from knowing the truth. I lie to myself about living with an addict, gambler, cheater."



Sacrificer: "My religion/spiritual belief tells me I should."



Lover: "He/She is more important than I am. He/she won't love me if I do that."



Isolator: "I alienate myself to the point of loneliness."



Numb-er: "I shut myself down by drinking, medicating or drugging, shopping, food, gambling..."



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Every relationship has boundaries. When you learn to recognize the seven patterns, within ourselves, and within others, it makes it easier to understand the boundaries and balance we need to thrive in our relationships. You can feel out of balance if you are always doing your pattern. Think about what you need to feed your soul, feel happy, and be in balance.

It is not selfish to take care of yourself. Self-care is a thoughtful act of kindness. You may find that when you are replenished, you actually have more to offer others - rather than less.





It is your responsibility to mind your own boundary. Think of this as your job. No one else can do it for you.

If your boundaries are only based on what other people will approve of, you will lose that connection with-in. Your yes and no come from inside of you.

Give yourself permission and approval to say yes and no when you need to.





Your boundaries are not here to please other people. Your boundaries are trying to take care of you. Your yes and no will be all twisted and confused if you can only please other people.

Your boundaries can't take care of anyone else. You can't say No for someone else. It's a life skill and important that each person do this for themselves.

(exceptions are children and vulnerable adults)





Your boundaries take care of you. Ask yourself if something is a yes or no for you. You will notice your answer is trying to take care of you. When you listen to your yes and no, you are letting your boundaries take care of you.

Other people can't make up for what you are refusing to give yourself. If you need a break or a rest, waiting for everyone to stop asking you for things is not a good strategy. Start giving yourself exactly what you need. Use your boundaries to protect your time so you can give yourself the love, care, attention, time you need.





Other people do not maintain your boundary. You must watch over and protect your own boundaries. Sometimes you need to rebuild a boundary, but it is always yours to watch over.

Other people show you how strong your boundary needs to be. Some people will push and ask again and again trying to get you to say yes. When someone is being pushy, you just need to repeat and be firm- no matter how many times they push. Some people are very pushy.





Other people will try to manipulate your boundary. This happens in any relationship. It is a boundary test to see if you will stick to your boundary. Even when people love you they will push on your boundaries every now and then. Teens are really good at this! Just be clear that you are not changing your mind.

Setting boundaries is normal. Try not to get annoyed or frustrated that you need to set a limit, it is part of taking care of you. If you pay attention, you'll notice you have lots of opportunities to clarify your boundaries.





Setting a boundary may allow you to meet your emotional needs. You will notice that you get feelings of resentment, frustration, and anger if you do not set boundaries. If you say no when you need to, you'll notice you will feel relief, a sense of calm, and be able to care for yourself.

Boundaries, your real Yes and No, come from your inner self, your wise self, a self that must be heard by you. You have inner wisdom. This wisdom is something you can trust. Practice tuning in and listening to your real Yes and No. Other people can't tell you what is best for you.





Be sure you make time to ask yourself questions before you make decisions. Get to know what really is a Yes or No for you. This compass is the only way to check in with yourself.

Yes and No are not emotions. Your feelings can make you confused about what is a yes or no for you. Try to separate your feelings from your yes and no and listen to what is true for you.





Emotions need time and attention. We are feeling-beings and we feel things all the time. Know your feelings; your grief, joy, hurt, fear, awe, etc.

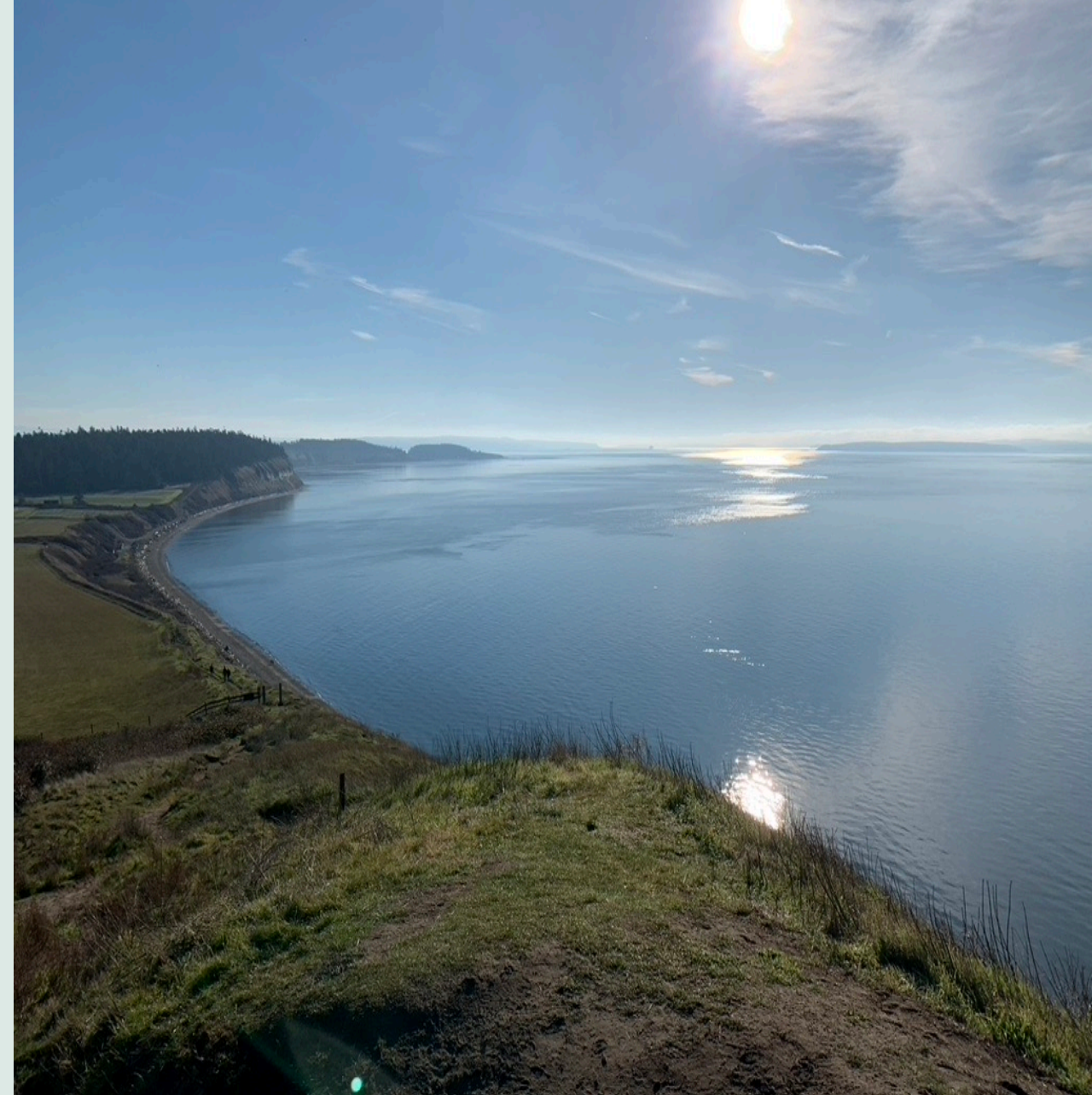
Journaling, talking to a friend, contemplating, and paying attention can help you notice your feelings.

Your feelings need your understanding. Know why you feel the way you do.

Emotions can stop you from setting your boundaries.

Do not let that happen. Your fear, anxiety may get stirred when you listen to your Yes and No. Feelings may about what you imagine someone else will do or say. You can't control other people or the future.

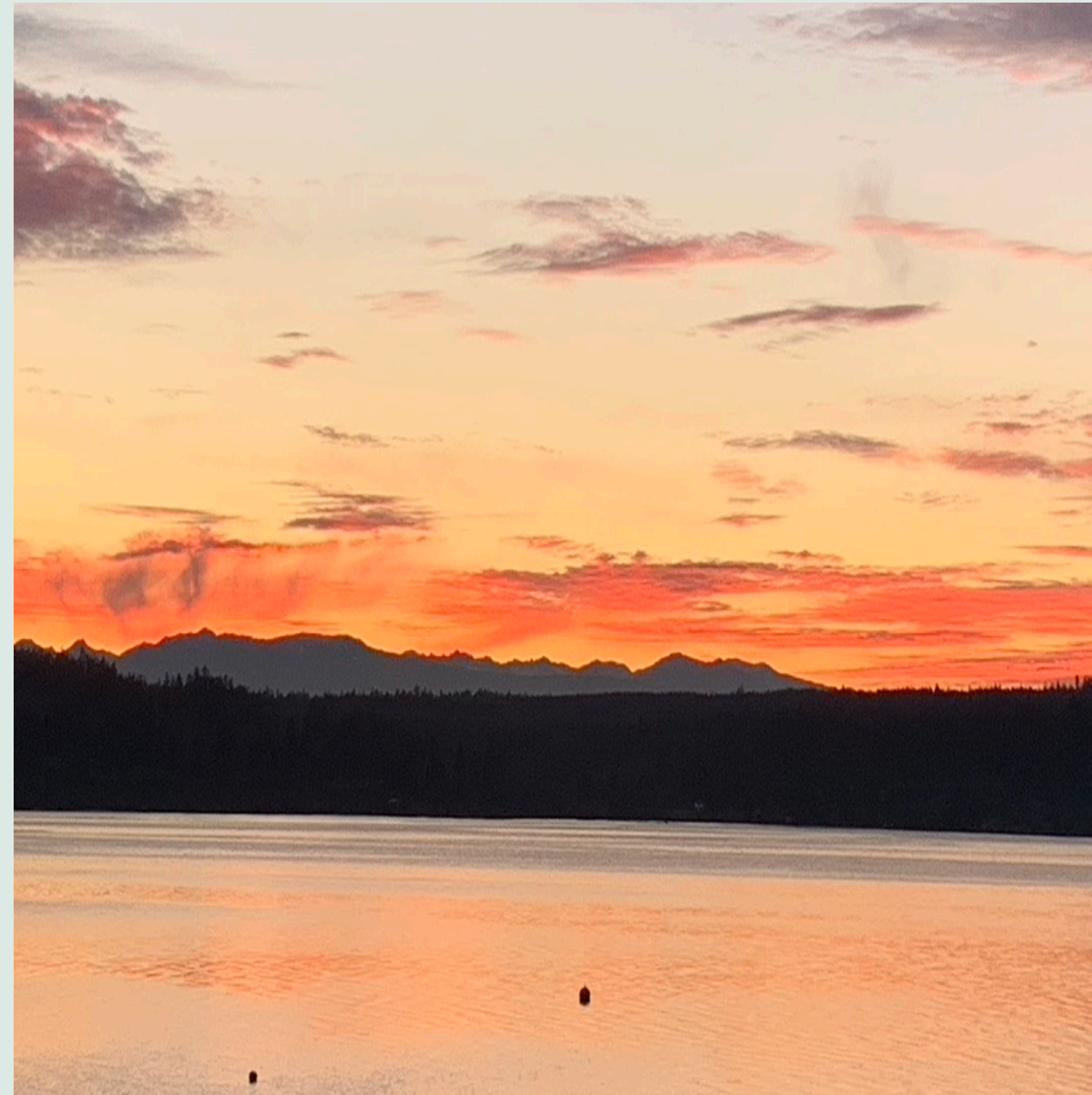
Your boundaries, are taking care of you, and only you, in the present.





Separate your emotions from your boundaries. Take care of them separately. Listen to your Yes and No with an open mind. Be willing to know what really is a Yes and No for you. Be authentic, truthful, and honest with yourself.

Boundaries are not emotions. Yes and No are not feeling words. Boundaries are made of Yes and No. It is very simple and uncluttered with emotion. Practice asking yourself if something is a Yes or No for you. It gets easier to hear your truth as you stay tuned in with yourself all the time.





Messy situations can feel like there are no boundaries.

These situations can become toxic. Use your boundaries to take good care of yourself and free yourself from situations by creating boundaries where you need.

Check yourself for signs of overload and being overcommitted. You may need to renegotiate the expectations and commitments you are asking of yourself. Use your boundaries to reduce your load.





Speak your truth. Start by speaking your truth to you.
You need to know your truth to figure out where you
need boundaries.

Permission to set your boundary must come from inside of you. You may feel judged by others when you set boundaries. You may be called names. Others may not give you approval for having a boundary.

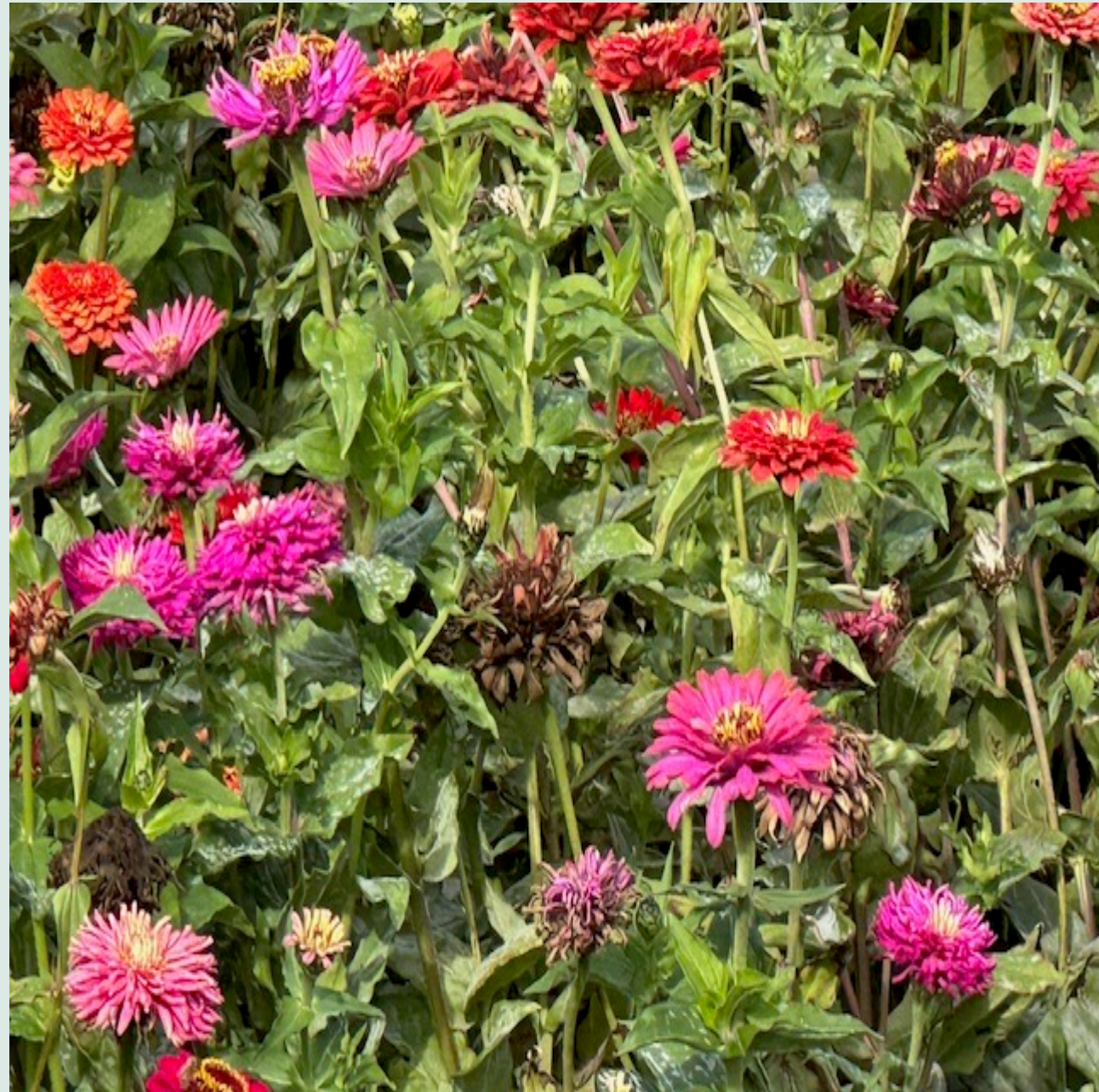
The only approval you need is from you.





When you listen to your yes and no, your compass, you may feel a stronger connection to your intuition. This is not your imagination. Your awareness does expand as you pay attention to what is true for you.

Ask yourself this week if there is a contract or an agreement between yourself and others that needs some clarifying and boundaries. Unclear contracts or agreements can waste your precious time and leave you feeling resentful. Clarify contracts at the beginning of an agreement.





When you need to set a boundary, draw some energy from something strong. Visualize or look at something strong and solid, like a mountain. Breathe in the strength from the mountain to establish your boundary.

Recovery and healing often involves establishing new boundaries in your life. Take time to think about where you need boundaries to support your recovery and healing. You may choose to let others know that you need to make some changes.





Notice when you feel resentful. Resentment means you needed a boundary and you didn't have one.

Now you may be in a position to clarify your boundary.

The online, cyber, social networking world often is lacking boundaries. It may even feel like you have no options or protection. This is a very big learning curve for all of us and many platforms make it impossible to protect yourself. Establish the boundaries that you need to feel safe and comfortable.





Talk about boundaries with people you are close to. At first it may seem awkward. Over time, your friends and family will get used to the idea that you will talk about boundaries and it will start becoming familiar.

Ask other people about their boundaries. It builds relationships and connection when you understand the boundaries of other people. Get to know what is ok for those around you by asking.





When hard things are happening, it can be difficult to prioritize your own self-care. When you are tending to someone else, or many others, take breaks to care for you too. Do some soothing things for your body to feed yourself. Release some tension in your neck, back, belly.

Create a daily routine every single day to nourish yourself. Use boundaries to protect your time and space for replenishing you.





Use your boundaries to keep your privacy. People may ask you questions you don't want to answer. Your experiences and stories belong to you.

It takes great strength to topple a boundary. If you are advocating for change, it may be a long commitment to keep trying to move a boundary. Recognize when you feel depleted and need a break to refuel yourself.





Celebrate your boundary growth. Notice how many things you are responding to differently. Reflect on how paying attention has transformed you.

Boundary challenges will keep coming at you. You may not have control over the challenges you are facing. But you do have control over how you treat yourself. Be supportive of you and give yourself what you need.





Your body sends signals about your boundaries. Notice where you feel your boundary truth in your body. If you go too far or do too much, notice the symptoms you get. You can care for your body by responding to the signals earlier.

Everyone has their own Yes and No inside of them.

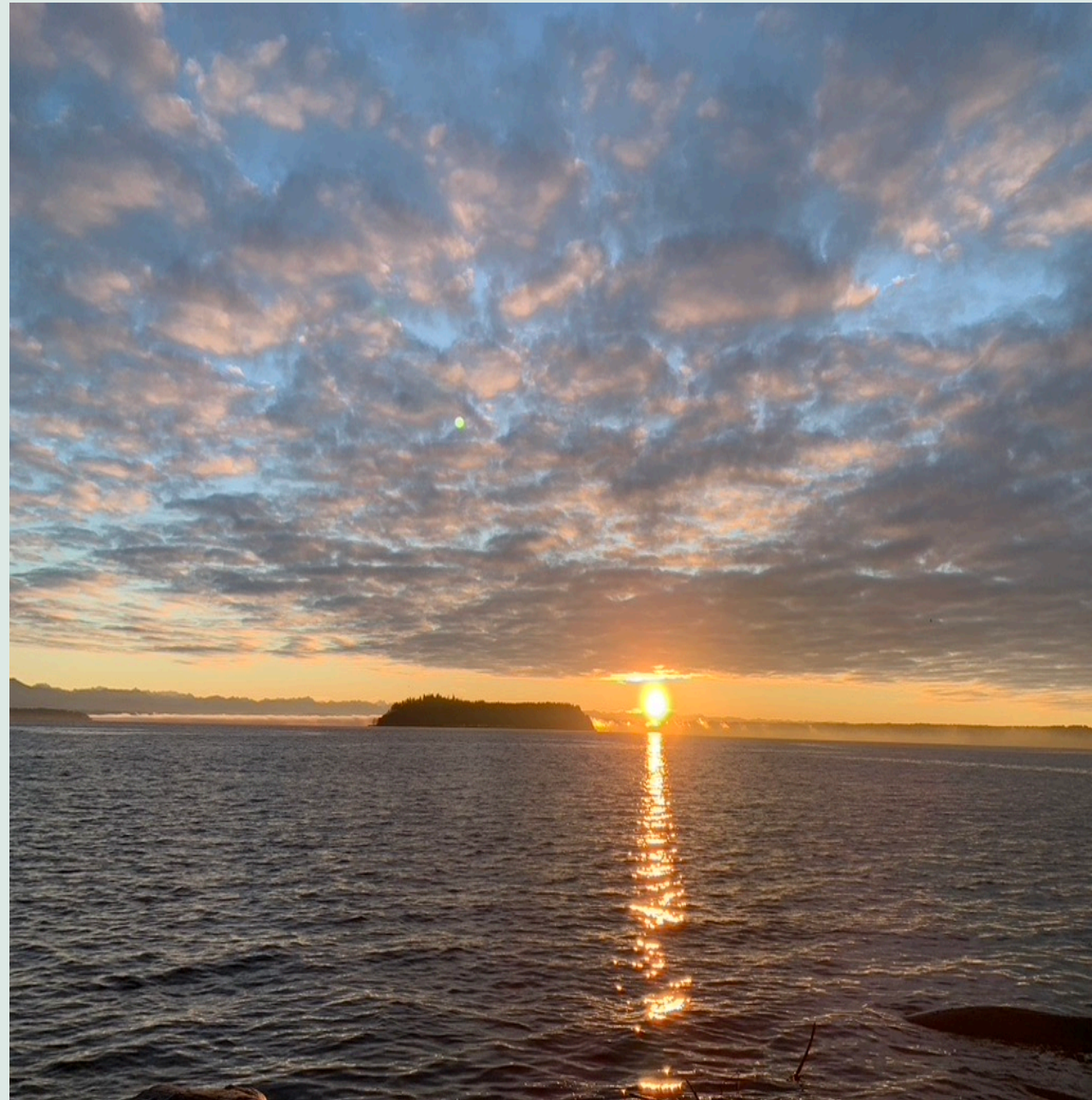
We are all learning different lessons from our boundary experiences. Notice what you are learning.





Choose what to put your attention on. You can put a boundary around what is worthy of your attention and what is not.

My cell phone needs some boundaries, how about yours? Always accessible is not a boundary. It's okay to put your phone away, be separate and apart from the phone. It allows us to be present where we are. Off is a boundary. Put away is a boundary. Always checking is not a boundary.





Check in with other people about their comfort and boundary before “taking” a photo or making a recording. Not every moment needs to be recorded, documented, captured, or shared. Think about what is comfortable for you and ask about what is okay for others. Lots of people are running wild over this boundary without asking. You are allowed to have undocumented experiences. We used to say, “You had to be there.”

Boundaries in the culture can change quickly. Notice ways you keep up to date with new boundaries being expressed and find ways to learn more and enter the conversations.





Setting boundaries is not easy. Setting a boundary may involve you making some big changes in your life. You may find yourself changing a job, moving your home, ending a relationship. Some boundaries require lots of work.

You are worth the effort it takes to build your boundaries. If you have ignored a problem or issue for a long time, it may require lots of effort to create the boundaries you need.





Protect your time off. You can set a weekend message on your email and phone to give yourself the needed break. You can set a message at the end of each work day to help you remember that you have let people know you will respond the next day. Take bold steps.

Create clear contracts with other people. Ask about the expectations the other person has and share your expectations. Write down the agreements. Do this with everyone to prevent hurt, anger, frustration, and boundary confusion.





Other people may not know how to talk about boundaries. If you are working on boundaries, you may have more boundary awareness and skill. Talk about what are yesses and noes, if someone is not as boundary aware.

Stop saying you don't have time. Challenge yourself to make time for what you need. Let go of things that are wasting your precious time. Go ahead, do it without guilt.





Stay calm and hold firm to your boundary. If someone gets angry and throws a tantrum because you set a boundary, let them take care of their own feelings. You can place your boundaries where you need them.

Is it time to lower some of your expectations on you?
Notice if you are pushing too hard on you. Take some
things off your list. You are not a machine.





Make time to be with your friends. If you work, aim for quality time with friends. You may not have lots of time to hang out with friends, so plan ahead to keep up with each other, play, and feed your soul together.

Trust is earned in relationships. When boundaries are violated, trust may be broken. Trust and boundaries are built with awareness. Trust and boundaries are also built on purpose. Listen to your inner compass when it comes to trust.





Yes, children do have boundaries. All children have a compass inside for their own yes and no. It is really important for children to learn about their compass and the compass of others.

Your first Boundary. The first act of life is to create a boundary, a membrane that is the cell's identity. It defines an inside and an outside, what it is, what it is not.

Margaret Wheatley





When it comes to boundaries we are all teachers and
we are all students. Notice when you are teaching.
Notice when you are learning.

Joy comes from your ability to appreciate and feel grateful. Use your boundaries to take time to appreciate all that is around you. Allow yourself time to feel your gratitude and joy.





Practice non-distraction. Have you noticed that it is so easy to have your attention pulled from what you are trying to do or complete? It seems we are wiring our brains for distraction. Practice holding your attention on what you are doing and ignore the voice of distraction.

Try slowing down. It takes many boundaries to slow down. These days it can feel like everything is moving too fast. You may feel an onslaught from email, phone, text, social media, news – all of it a constant bombardment. Protect yourself. Give yourself permission to quiet the noise and slow down.





Look for ways to reduce the chaos around you. It could be your desktop, some drawers, a closet stuffed with things you don't need. Use your boundaries to edit the stuff that is disorganized. Get free of it.

Other people sometimes give us stuff we don't need.

Be honest with family or friends if you are being passed along things you won't use. This is different than being given a gift. This is the person that gives you things they thought you'd like from the thrift store, things they no longer want, or things you won't use. All of us can have boundaries on stuff.





Set your boundary quickly. The fastest land animal is the **cheetah**, which has a recorded speed of 109.4–120.7 km/h (68.0–75.0 mph). The **peregrine falcon** is the fastest bird and the fastest member of the animal kingdom with a diving speed of 389 km/h (242 mph).
When you need to set a boundary, be a cheetah or a falcon and set it quickly.

People who are addicted have trouble with boundaries. You may notice they don't respect your boundaries. They struggle with listening to their own wisdom, their own Yes and No. You can't plant your wisdom, your truth inside of someone else. You can accept your wisdom, your truth, your own Yes and No and act on that.





Meditation gives you a boundary from the external noise all around you. We all need quiet and to unplug and have a boundary to connect and be with ourselves.

Be willing to set “away messages” on your phone/email for your work. Those messages can give you boundaries and permission to stop checking your phone.





Holidays can be loaded with expectations we heap on ourselves. Check your expectations and try some boundaries around those expectations. Getting yourself overwhelmed and exhausted isn't really a celebration. Less really is more.

If you are a “giver” notice if you are allowing yourself to receive. Are you needing to let yourself receive more? Take a minute and write that question on paper and then write your answer. Your answer may help shine the light on a boundary that could help you with this.





When you work with other people, clarify the boundaries and responsibilities you are taking on. Be sure you have an understanding. If there isn't follow through, don't ignore it. You need to decide how to respond when an agreement is broken.

You don't have to give anyone a second chance, or a third chance, or a fourth chance. You can forgive someone and still establish a new boundary and stick to it. When someone crosses your boundary it is not up to you to "trust" them by giving them another chance. It is up to them to earn trust with you.





People often wonder where is the boundary when you notice someone needs help for depression or some other health condition? If you are worried that someone may be suicidal, ask them if they are suicidal. People find relief talking about it. You can share your concern for their wellbeing. You can share about a time when you needed help. You can ask if they want your support to get help. It helps to be brave and willing to talk about what you notice. You are showing you care when they may have given up on caring about themselves or given up on getting help.

If you have been giving and giving to others lately, it is time to replenish yourself. Write down three things you'd enjoy doing if you had some time. Now go make some time for those things on your calendar. You have to schedule yourself in your day or all of your time will be consumed by others. Stick an hour on each day to do something you like to do: reading; walking; playing an instrument; etc.





Try to use an app to help you meditate. I am not being paid to say this. I use the app Insight Timer in my office all the time with clients. There are guided meditations and music or sound meditations. You don't have to sit in a lotus position to meditate. Just turn off all distractions, sit comfortably on a couch, chair, or in your parked car. And close your eyes. You can meditate anywhere. There are no boundaries for where.

Borrow this strategy: MPYP. This is a simple way to sort out whose problem it is and who is responsible for solutioning. This is something you can do in your head. Ask yourself if it is MP or YP = “My Problem or Your Problem”.





Hope has no boundaries. Pay attention to where hope is taking root. It may be inside of you. It may be in a place where you don't have hope, but you discover hope is thriving where you'd least expect it.

When you allow other people to solve their own problems, you are helping them grow and develop strength. This is not a rigid rule. Sometimes helping people with their problems is essential. But you need to know the difference between helping someone who needs help, and helping someone who needs to learn to help themselves.





There is no reason to be cruel or insult someone when you set a boundary. You have the power to take care of yourself. You can be kind and establish your boundary. Some of the memes online make it seem as though telling everyone to F off is boundary setting. It is not necessary to create drama when saying no.

Saying no is enough.

Boundaries are not a fad that are “in” this year and “out” next year. If you develop your boundaries in a healthy way, you’ll use them all the time.

Boundaries never go out of style.





Yes, you can outgrow a boundary. Notice if it is time to change your own rules, shift your boundaries. As relationships change, as we become more aware, we realize we need new boundaries.

Speak up. Use your voice to be a champion.

Lead.

It can be very stressful to ignore your truth.





You have everything you need. You don't need everything you have. Set boundaries on overconsuming and keeping the things you don't need.

Be careful with your trust in others. Trust is earned in relationships. Boundary violations are betrayals of trust. You decide if that trust is earned or if you are giving trust to someone who isn't concerned about your boundaries.





According to the American Institute of Stress, the key to reducing stress is preventing it. Think about your prevention strategies. Recovery strategies (after the stress) is not as effective as prevention. Aim to reduce and eliminate stressors. It may not always be possible, but think about minimizing or reducing your exposure to the stressor. This may involve changing a job, getting counseling for a relationship, doing whatever you need to bring the stress load down. Many people focus on treating stress with activities to reduce stress, this is helpful. But research shows it is more effective to reduce and eliminate the stressor.

All of us have boundaries. I've heard people say, "I don't have any boundaries." This isn't true. They are always inside of you but it may be hard to hear them if you have ignored your boundaries.





Most conflicts are about boundaries. It helps to discuss the boundaries and look for ways to be honest about what is a yes or a no. You can't force others to change their no into a yes.

On the Inside, you know your truth. This isn't a truth
for everyone.

It is not "The Truth." It is "Your Truth."





To know if something is a yes or a no for you... You need to have a process of spending time being checked in with yourself. You need a way to reflect inside. I personally like to use a journal to reflect.

We all have patterns that repeat in our life. We can look back and discover our boundary life lessons. Notice what you are learning about how to use your boundaries.





Try seeing Yes and No without bias. One is not good and the other bad. Recognize they are both doing the same job - taking care of you.

Growing your boundaries... is like growing giant wings of freedom on your back.





Once you dig in and focus on your boundaries... you see how it is part of everything in your life.

Self-care begins by doing things that give you joy. It can be very simple. Make a list of the simple things. Be sure you have these things within your reach every day.





Have you noticed that it is easier to say Yes? Yes is a likeable word. Embrace No as a likeable word too. Yes gets all the warm fuzzy feelings. Practice holding good feelings around saying No.

Some people think setting boundaries is about being firm and focusing only on your fence line.

Boundaries are also about awareness, not just borders or your fence line to protect yourself. Stay aware of what you need, and what others also need for their boundaries. Think of boundaries as a discussion to bring about understanding.





Caretaker is one of the seven patterns you may find very challenging. If you are caretaking someone, be sure you allow yourself time every day to give to yourself. It can be quiet time, or taking a walk. Keep a list handy of a few things you can easily do. This will help if you are too tired to think of something.

Give yourself at least 15 minutes or more each day of something that you enjoy. Research has shown that if you do 15 minutes a day for yourself, you will gradually increase this.

Notice how you start your day. Begin with some boundary practices. One of my boundaries is to start my day with journaling. Begin your day with a routine that helps you feel good, connect to you and those you live with.





Check in and see how you are doing with trusting yourself. If you've been listening to your compass, your yes and no, you will feel like you can trust yourself.

If you are feeling stuck and can't tell if something is a yes or no for you, take your time. Be patient and listen to your truth. There may be more than one answer. It may be hard for you to get behind your yes or no. Look closely at your fears. Take steps in your life to first address your fears before you make any big decisions.





Support other people in your life to listen to their boundaries. We can all encourage each other to listen and trust our wisdom.

Grief can release lots of anger. Anger may be misguided or aimed in the wrong direction. Take time to understand your feelings and your loss. Boundary work involves understanding and caring for our emotions.





Speaking your truth is one of the boundary truisms that will lead you to becoming a boundary expert in your life. Here is a quote to think about: "I choose not to remain silent. I choose not to be an instrument of my own destruction." From Camille T. Dungy *Say Yes to Yourself: A Poet's Guide to Living and Writing.*

"No is a complete sentence." Anne Lamott. You don't need to explain your boundaries. When you explain your boundaries, other people may argue with you about your boundary. The only person who needs to understand why you have this boundary is you.





It is always a courageous act to redefine your boundaries. Think about that statement. It takes courage, wisdom and knowing when, to make a change to your boundaries.

Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it is spent. Careful, lest you let other people spend it for you.

Carl Sandberg





Quiet is a boundary. We are in a noisy world and it is helpful to create your own sanctuary of quiet.

Did you know... If you leave your phone out on a table while talking with someone, the quality of your conversation will be shallower than if your phone is hidden from view? I put my phone out of sight now more often.





Try a boundary experiment. I tried a boundary experiment and do not have internet at my cabin in the woods where I work and see clients. I have learned that I don't miss it. Whenever you want to try a new boundary, call it an "experiment" and test it out to see how it feels for you.

"The most important thing we learn is to grant ourselves mercy." Mary Pipher.

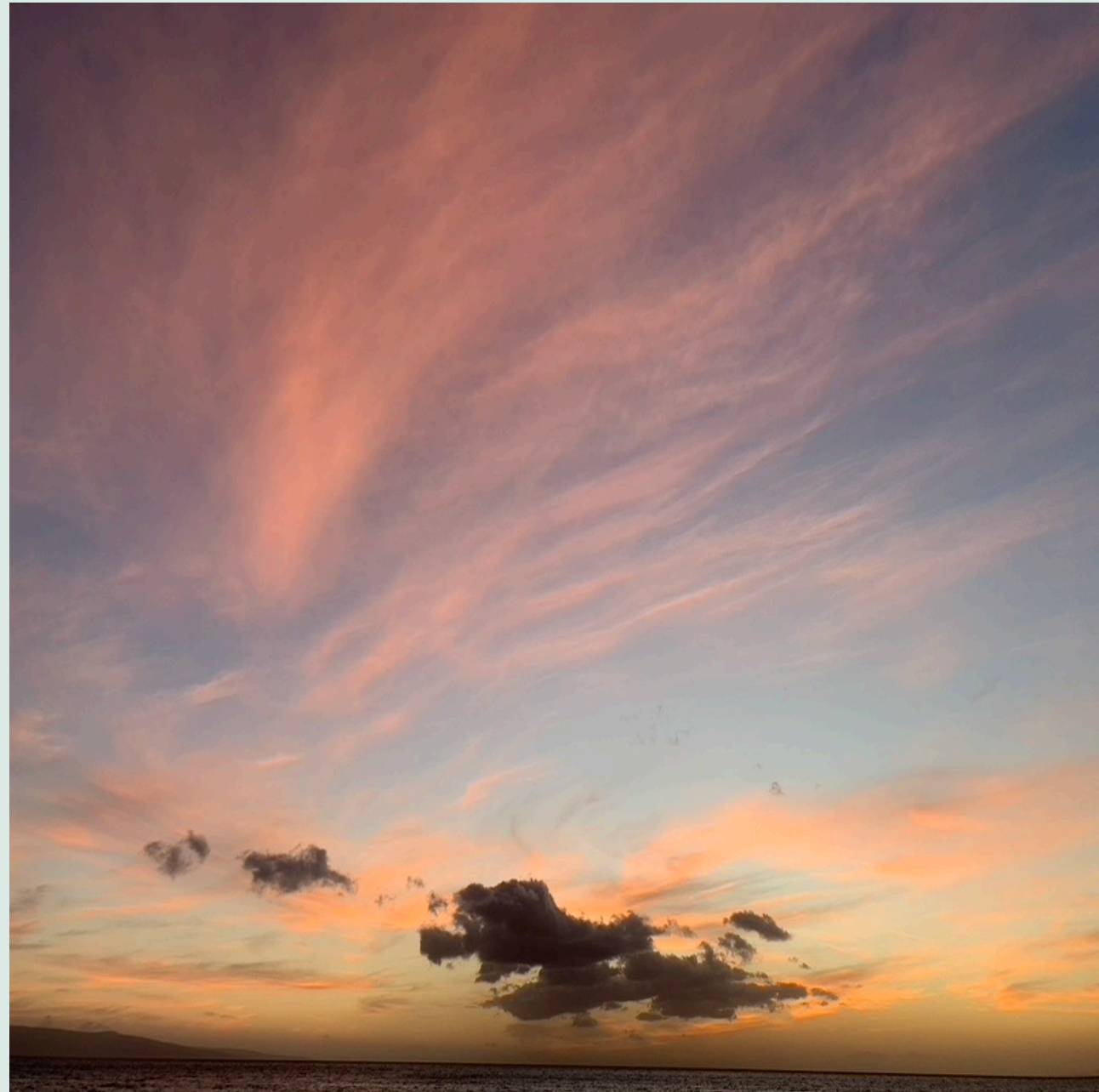
Granting yourself mercy is important for psychological self-care.





What is it that makes someone an expert? There is so much fakery online, be careful with your boundaries online and define for yourself the credentials of expertise.

Real intimacy involves respecting each other's boundaries. Knowing someone's boundaries allows you to connect deeply and authentically.





Holidays can be overwhelming. Be sure to take time for extra stress-busting and soul-filling experiences rather than just tasks on your to-do list.

Self-reflection is part of staying in touch with your inner compass. You need a practice to stay checked in with yourself and hear your own voice. I use a journal for staying in touch with myself. If I have a question I am mulling over, I write it at the top of the page and then write out my answer from my inner compass.





You can plan for the future, but you can't predict it.
Stay flexible and open to the changing realities.

If you are overworked, you will feel it in every part of you. Step away from what seems like urgent 'work' and put that attention on resting and restoring yourself.





Caretaking others may come more easily than
caretaking yourself. What are you needing more of
right now?

It's okay to free yourself from toxic old beliefs. You
are worthy of better.





There is no separation between the mundane and the sacred.

Patricia Donegan.

When we practice gratitude for what is, we experience more
of the sacred.

The truth has been buried everywhere. Allow yourself
to know your truth and speak it.





Some feelings can be hard to be with. When we ignore or avoid our feelings, they drag us under in a riptide. You are a feeling being. Feelings only want to be understood.

Caretaking is a loving act of devotion. Ask yourself what would be an act of kindness to yourself? Give to yourself in a way that is meaningful. It often involves rest, play, taking care of your health.





“Yes is a very powerful word. It's like opening a door. It's like fanning a flame. It's the most powerful word in the world.” ~ Kenneth Oppel, *The Nest*

Check on the boundary between you and your phone.
Take digital breaks, try leaving your phone in airplane mode put away for big stretches of the day. It will amaze you how much more focused, present, and aware you will feel.





Are you paying attention to your body? Your physical body is your home. Our bodies require attention every day. Notice what your body is needing from you. Taking care of your body is self-care. When babies are born, we do a lot to meet their bodily needs. It seems when we become older, we tend to neglect our bodies. Give your body the self-care it needs. You may need to make some changes in your life to do this.

"The boundaries we set are a madness of our own making." Terry Tempest Williams, *Erosion*

Terry is reminding us that all of the boundaries in our culture are invented, made up by us. Boundaries can be created and re-created.





"Patients with a serious illness often receive medical interventions for which they never gave consent." Angelo

Volandes

Do your loved ones know your wishes for your death? Break through the silence around talking about death. We are all going to die one day. It is important that your doctor and your family know what sort of medical life saving measures you do and do not want taken. What kind of quality of life is important to you? Be sure your wishes are understood.

Are you over-helping? Over-helping is when you do things for others that they can do for themselves. Life is a big effort. There is much to take care of and do. Allow others to be capable and be responsible. Who are you over-helping? What can you stop doing and let others grow?





Make sure you understand the deals you are making with other people. Take time to ask questions and be specific about all of the expectations. Do not assume that others will do something. Spell out the agreement. Take responsibility for what you want in the agreement by making sure it is understood.

Being busy and overwhelmed with too much will lead to costly mistakes. Take time to check your work, review your email before sending it, read the agreement before signing it, slow down. Notice when you need to pay more attention to what you are doing.





"The point of doing nothing, as I define it, isn't to return to work refreshed and ready to be more productive, but rather to question what we currently perceive as productive." Jenny Odell, *How to do Nothing*

Reduce the distractions. We are surrounded by distractions and it makes it hard to give our complete attention to anything. Try to set boundaries around the distractions to help yourself focus. It is more satisfying to do things mindfully, aware, and fully attentive to the one thing we are doing.





"By paying attention to what is real and true and authentic, we come home to our self, the person we want to become. We remember what we may have forgotten. The world is so beautiful in spite of the troubles." Terry Tempest Williams

Neuroscientist Antonio Damasio describes emotions
as the "continuous musical line of our minds, the
unstoppable humming."

Your feelings just are. When we try not to feel what
we are feeling, we become ill in some way.





"Practicing an art form is a way to grow your soul."
Kurt Vonnegut. What type of art is calling you to
learn, practice, play? Art is part of self-care. And
self-care is what boundaries are all about.

Take time to savor your experiences and your memories. "When we savor an experience, we hold it in mindful awareness, paying conscious attention to the pleasant thoughts, sensations, and emotions arising in the present moment. We can also savor delightful memories, so that we relive joyous experiences and appreciate them all over again—like the day we met our life partner, or first held our newborn child, or took that romantic trip to Prague."

Kristin Neff





Make time for your relationships. Join in and find a group to become part of.

"Just like a bee goes haywire if it loses its hive, a human will go haywire if she loses her connection to the group." Johann Hari, *Lost Connections*

Native scholar Greg Cajete has written: "In indigenous ways of knowing, we understand a thing only when we understand it with all four aspects of our being: mind, body, emotion, and spirit. If you want to know something or be fully present to experience it, know it with the four aspects of your being."





At some point every day, we need to walk away from the to-do list. The to-do list keeps us from connecting with ourselves and our souls. Be sure to watch your boundary between the never-ending to-do list and the precious time to dive into something soul filling.

"When caregivers have self-compassion, they are also more likely to engage in concrete acts of self-care such as taking time off, sleeping more, and eating well. They'll stop to care for their own emotional needs, recognizing how difficult it is to deal with such a high level of suffering on a daily basis. The hardships of being a caregiver are just as valid and worthy of compassion as the hardships of being a trauma victim." Kristin Neff, *Self-Compassion*





In a request, you are asked genuinely if something is a yes or no for you. In a request, your schedule is checked and asked about. When you make a request, you are wondering if something will work for the other person's time. A request ends in a questions mark. Will this work for you?

When there is a respectful request, there is no emotional response to the answer. A yes or no is accepted.

A request is not a request, if it is met with anger, hurt, or rage when you say no. Then the request wasn't really a request at all, but a concealed expectation or demand.

Authenticity is brave. It is the only path to real intimacy, closeness, and connection.





No yes without no. -Brian Doyle, *One Long River of Song*
This is a simple way to remember that Yes and No are like
the Yin Yang symbol. Everything has the seed of its
opposite. They are not total opposites, they are relative to
each other.

Re-examine all you have been told in school or church
or in any book, and dismiss whatever insults your own
soul. Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass*





Grief is not a problem to be solved, it's an experience to be carried. Megan Devine

During COVID-19 we are all learning how to carry more loss, more grief.

You may notice that some of your self-care routine isn't helping you much. When you are dealing with an overwhelming situation, try some new self-care activities. It helps if your self-care happens at the same time every day. You can count on it and you get grounded from having a routine.

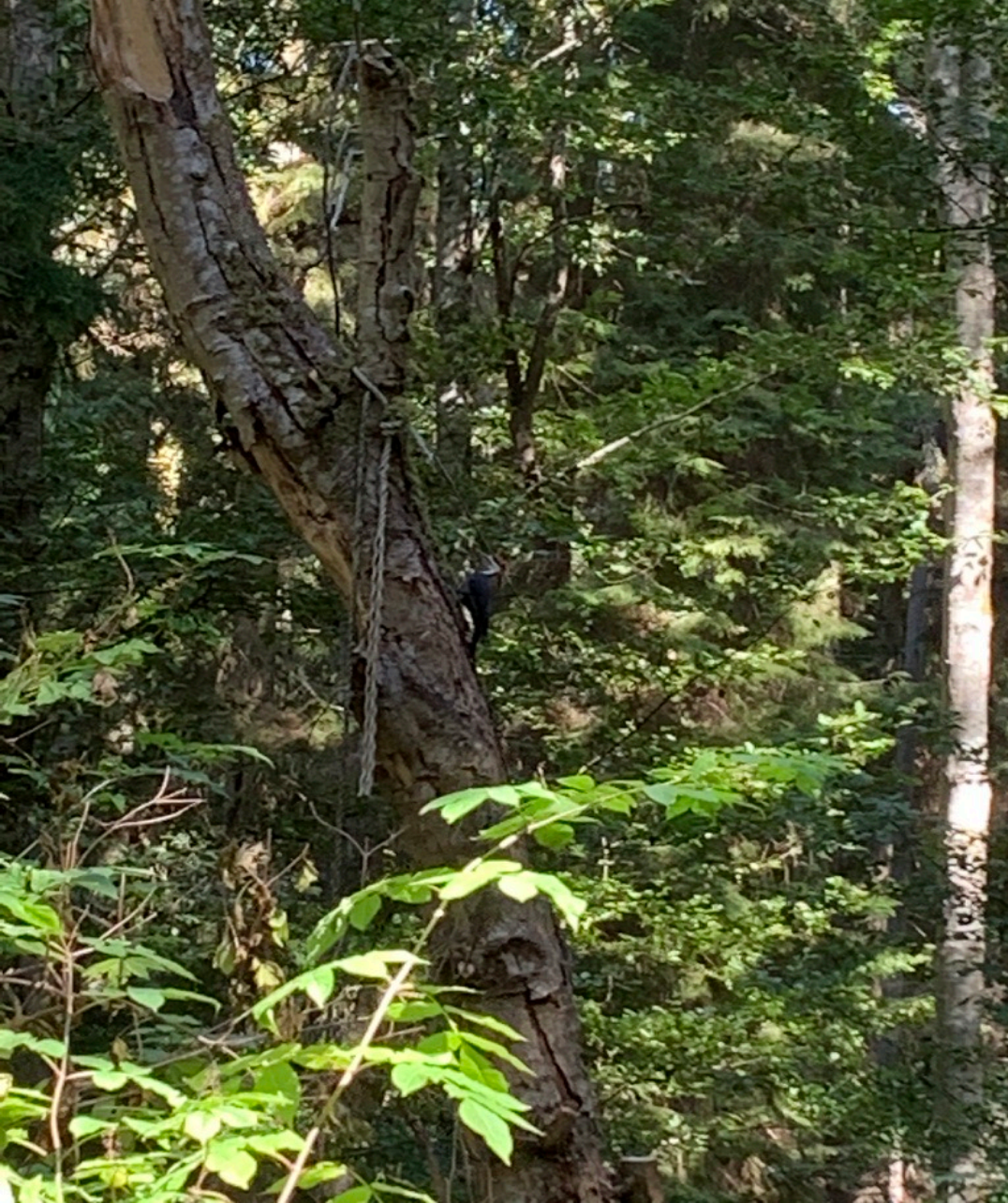




Check yourself for how much and how long you can carry extra responsibilities. We all have capacity limits. Notice when you are at your capacity and give yourself a break. Your break can be small or large, whatever you can manage.

People notice when you take time to stop and listen. It's easy to be distracted. When you interact with your loved ones and your co-workers, let them know they are worthy of your full attention. If you find someone doesn't offer this to you, let them know it matters. You may need to ask for boundaries around distractions while talking together, or request a different time to talk when they are willing to move away from the distraction.





Notice what you purchase and collect. One of the benefits of cleaning out closets and drawers is noticing where we have been wasting our earnings. When you clean something out, make a note in your journal about what you notice.

"And a step backward after making a wrong turn, is a step in the right direction." Kurt Vonnegut

If you have said yes to something and you realize later you should have said no, it's ok to correct yourself.

We often learn about our boundaries by correcting ourselves.





Wise saying: "There are two ways to get enough: one is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less." G.K. Chesterton

Place some boundaries on your to-do list. Be sure you are able to bring balance between doing, doing, and doing and find some time for being. Breathe. Breathing helps bring you back to the present. Now. Stay in this moment.





Your immune system listens in on every thought and feeling you have. Send it helpful messages.