Boundaries: The Atmosphere of AGAPE

Boundaries: The Atmosphere of AGAPE

Goal of this class:

Maturing in AGAPE; Becoming the People God created us to be; giving more glory to Jesus through the way we live our lives. To become mature, each of us must learn to FORM, COMMUNICATE and HONOR healthy boundaries in our lives.

Boundaries: The Atmosphere of AGAPE is a class designed to help you mature in AGAPE love. The class is intended to help you grow in receiving and giving AGAPE in your relationship with God and with others, especially those closest to you. The teaching in this class builds upon the foundation of the AGAPE Class and the teaching on the Redemptive Gifts (by Arthur Burke) concerning eros and AGAPE.

Many of us experience the pain and conflict in our personal relationships on a daily basis. We see all around us the irresponsibility of others and our own irresponsibility to do what is right, which causes much hurt, conflict and broken relationships.

AGAPE is the very nature of God and releases rest, peace and confidence on our relationships. When we learn to properly Form, Communicate, and Honor healthy boundaries, AGAPE will naturally and beautifully grow in our relationships, releasing the present reality of the kingdom of God and a Divine Order like that of the Garden of Eden and the New Jerusalem which is to come.

Growing in Boundaries: Becoming Mature in AGAPE

One CRITICAL ASPECT of maturing in AGAPE is to be able to be in close relationship with safe, caring people who we can meet with regularly to share our boundary problems, process our emotions and receive truth. AGAPE groups are the place to do this. Join one or form a new one of your own.

"Whoever has no rule over his own spirit
is like a city broken down, without walls."
Proverbs 25:28

Introduction to Boundaries

I. God is a God of Boundaries

a. God is AGAPE and He wants us to be able to know Him, experience His AGAPE, unfailing love for us, and to be able to share that AGAPE powerfully with others. This gives him glory.

b. Boundaries create the_____ for us to grow in _____and give us the _____ to _____AGAPE over Eros.

c. Boundaries are a _____, not a _____.

d. Boundaries do not_____ our freedom; they _____ us to greater freedom.

II. Boundary Problems in the Garden—Read Gen. 1:26—2:25

a. God sets Adam and Eve in a beautiful setting for them to _____ in loving relationship with Him and each other.

b. He says, "Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth." My translation: "Don't be afraid. Go out and enjoy life. Bring all this AGAPE I have given you to the whole world!"

c. Within His boundaries life is meant to flourish and be full of

i. _____

ii. _____, and

iii._____

d. God places a _____for Adam and Eve for their _____.

e. Adam and Eve _____ God's boundary and pay a dreadful price: _____ and _____ from God and His beautiful Garden.

f. From the beginning, we see the classic boundary problem of the _____ _____ with Adam and Eve. What are the problems with this awful game?

i. No one will take _____ for their own choices and actions

ii. The real problem never gets _____.

iii. No growth or _____ occurs. We stay stuck in our _____.

iv. In the blame game, I am acting the way I am because _____ does _____.

v. It is an ancient way to avoid _____ of my problem.

Maturing in AGAPE and boundaries is a process and will take time, patience and perseverance. But the fruit is fantastic and liberating. The result is joy, peace, compassion, rest and harmony in our relationships. The ultimate desire of our Perfect loving Father God is that we share in His abundant life now and for eternity. Boundaries are a primary tool to bring us into this abundant life.

Eph 4:11-16

11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — Christ — 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

I. <u>**Forming Healthy Boundaries**</u>

    a. The first step in learning boundaries is to understand them and form healthy ones.

    b. Boundaries help us form a healthy separation from others

        i. Boundaries are most simply defined and understood as _____ _____.

        ii. Draw two large circles in the space below

<u>ME</u>   <u>OTHERS</u>

In each of these circles write the following words: **Thoughts, feelings, attitudes, behaviors, opinions, choices, preferences, wants, limits, values, talents, love.**

The first principle of Boundaries is that I am <u>RESPONSIBLE</u> for what goes on inside my boundaries, and I am <u>NOT RESPONSIBLE</u> for what goes on inside the boundaries of others.

c. Like an invisible fence, boundaries help me understand where one person _____ and another person _____.

d. Boundaries tell us what _____ to us and what _____ to others.

e. Confusion and relationship problems begin to form when we begin to feel and act like we are_____ for what belongs to someone else and is_____their boundaries.

f. The goal of forming good boundaries is to realize our own _____ _____ from others so we can be responsible _____ them but not _____ them.

g. Boundaries are ultimately about _____-_____, not controlling others. They help us gain the only legitimate form of control God blesses.

h. Types of Boundaries

    i. _____: They help define you. What you want and what you don't want.

        1. No, I don't like that.

        2. No, I don't want to do that.

        3. Yes, I like that.

        4. Yes, I will do that.

    ii. _____: These are God's absolutes and laws that we cannot alter or change for our own purposes.

        1. Do not lie, steal, or covet.

        2. Give to others, and be generous.

        3. Have compassion for others.

        4. Forgive as I have forgiven you.

    iii._____: the law of sowing and reaping

        1. Not bailing others out of their messes

2. Cancelling a credit card

3. Ending an abusive conversation

iv. _____: Guarding your heart (Prov. 4:23)

    1. I love you, but I don't trust you at this point.

    2. When you are able to be kind, we can be close again.

    3. When you face and own your anger we can be close again

    4. I can't share my deep feelings with you if you are going to punish me for them.

v. _____:

    1. Taking some time away to sort things out on a situation.

    2. Moving out when a person becomes dangerous and abusive.

    3. Moving out of the house to get treatment for addiction

    4. Moving in with a safe family member or shelter from abuse.

vi. _____:

    1. Allowing others to be a safe buffer from dangerous people or situations

    2. Joining a support group

    3. Partnering with a counselor to help you navigate a delicate situation (be careful for co-dependency)

vii. _____: using time to your advantage and allowing things to unfold.

1. Let's not talk about this for now until we calm down

2. Setting a future time to talk about an issue once you have both had time to process your thoughts and feelings

3. Set future goals: we will address this during the summer when we have more time.

II. **Boundaries Help us Grow in AGAPE**

   a. When you encounter words in the Bible like truth, righteousness, justice, honesty, integrity and holiness, pay attention

   b. These all describe some aspect of_____that God desires for His people.

   c. Boundaries are _____ and a _____ _____ that help each of us _____ and _____ in AGAPE.

   d. The Boundaries Triangle: God's Three Goals for Boundaries. He gives us boundaries in order for three things to grow in our lives:

      i. **AGAPE love**—AGAPE is what we were created for and is ultimate reality. We cannot give others straight-arrow, selfless love without a mature understanding of boundaries.

         1. Boundaries are God's tool to make relationships _____.

         2. When we feel safe, _____ can develop between people. Trust helps us to face and deal with the _____that will set us free.

         3. AGAPE _____ in an atmosphere of healthy boundaries.

         4. The _____ _____ (Exodus 20:1-17) are an example of God's boundaries that make life safe so AGAPE can grow and mature in us.

ii. **Freedom**—Boundaries preserve our freedom to
_____ God's best path for our lives and
relationships.

1. Boundaries reclaim our _____ to choose
AGAPE over eros.

2. God is our example. He maintains His independence
and power to act and operate independent of our sin
or excuses.

   a. He is free to say no to our requests if they are
   harmful for us.

   b. He is free to choose to the cross for His Son if
   that is what will bring good and salvation to His
   sons and daughters.

3. We are free to have our own opinions, make our own
choices, choose our own paths in life.

4. We are even free to reject God and choose bad and
harmful things for ourselves.

5. Our freedom is a _____, and we are to use that
gift to give AGAPE to others and not eros. We are
free to _____ AGAPE in each and every
situation and not our own self interest.

iii. **Responsibility**—Boundaries help people _____
how they can take responsibility for their lives before
God.

1. They help us understand the _____ and
_____ of our responsibilities to others.

2. God takes responsibility for certain things

   a. He creates, rules, and maintains the universe
   and created order. (Genesis 1:1, Col. 1:17)

     b. He seeks and saves those who are lost (Luke 19:10)

     c. He keeps His promises that He makes from His Word.

     d. He says He is _____ _____ for

        i. _____ (Job 34:10),

        ii. _____ (I Cor. 14:33), or

        iii. _____ (James 1:13)

3. God says in His Word that we are responsible to

     a. Guard our hearts (Prov. 4:23)

     b. Take up our crosses daily (Luke 9:23)

     c. Be Good stewards (Matt 25:14-30), and

     d. Grow in the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23)

4. But we are not responsible to _____ others or _____ them to do things that are wrong or harmful (Lev 19:15, Prov. 19:19, 2 Thess. 3:10)

5. We are responsible to form healthy boundaries to _____ ourselves and those under our care from harm.

     a. We allow what is _____and _____ to come into our lives, and

     b. We prevent from coming in those things which are _____ or _____ to us.

6. By taking responsibility for our lives, boundaries help us become _____ for truth, justice, and discipline. AGAPE can grow and mature in our hearts, homes and relationships.

7. Where clear boundaries are not kept, relationships can _____and become _____ in so many ways.

e. Reclaiming our Power to _____

    i. Taking _____: the beginning of healthy boundaries

        1. I am responsible for what is inside my boundaries

        2. I am responsible for the fruit that comes from what is inside my boundaries

    ii. Immature people are _____-_____.

    iii.Mature people are _____-_____.

f. Maturity means that I am responsible for what is happening in my life before God

III. **Boundary Problems**

a. Compliants: Saying "Yes" to the Bad

    i. Have fuzzy and indistinct boundaries.

    ii. Don't want to rock the boat. Peace at any cost.

    iii.Their spiritual and emotional radar is broken

    iv. Are paralyzed and unable to say "No. due to

        1. Fear of hurting others feelings

        2. Fear of abandonment

        3. A wish to be totally dependent on another

        4. Fear of someone else's anger

        5. Fear of punishment

        6. Fear of shame

        7. Fear of being seen as selfish or unspiritual

b. Avoidants: Saying "No" to the Good

    i. *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.   To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.   Rev. 3:20-21*

    ii. God is standing at our door willing to help and be good to us.

    iii. Avoidants will not open the door.

    iv. Out of fear, pride or woundedness, they will not let God or others in to care, help or love.

c. Controllers: Not respecting other people's boundaries

    i. Can't hear others' "no"

    ii. "No" simply means a new challenge to change their minds

    iii. Keep putting pressure on others

    iv. Keep putting boulders in other people's backpacks

    v. Aggressive Controllers

        1. Don't listen to others

        2. Run over them like bulldozers

        3. They try to make everyone fit into the world as they see it ought to be.

        4. Have no capacity to hear or understand others' values or perspectives

    vi. Manipulative Controllers

        1. Less honest than aggressive controllers

        2. Use guilt and manipulation to get their way

3. Constantly try to talk others into complying with their will

4. Do not take "No" for an answer

5. Jacob with his brother Esau and in deceiving his father to receive the birthright of the firstborn

6. God dealt with him at Bethel when he wrestled with God and came away with a limp.

7. What is wrong with control? It is not AGAPE, it is self-centered and does not honor or value the hearts, minds, lives and choices of others. And God will resist this.

vii. Non-Responsives: Not Hearing the Needs of Others

1. Those with a critical spirit who don't honestly care about other's needs or desires. They blame others constantly for their own problems. Be Right giant.

2. Those who are so selfish and self-absorbed they can't see anyone's problems or needs but their own.

a. This is complete immaturity.

b. Psychologists call this narcissism.

IV. **Common Boundary Myths**

a. Myth #1—If I Set Boundaries, I am Being Selfish

b. Myth #2—Boundaries Are a Sign of Disobedience

c. Myth #3—If I Begin Setting Boundaries, I Will Be Hurt By Others.

d. Myth #4—If I Set Boundaries, I Will Hurt Others

e. Myth #5—Boundaries Mean That I Am Angry

f. Myth #6—When Others Set Boundaries, It Injures Me

g. Myth #7—Boundaries Cause Feelings of Guilt

h. Myth #8—Boundaries Are Permanent, and I'm Afraid of

Burning My Bridges

V. <u>Boundaries and Co-dependency</u>

a. **Boundaries and codependency - Can I say no?**

   i. Can we set boundaries and learn to say no when we are codependent? Absolutely! In fact, we must if we are to have any hope of unhealthy relationships changing for the better.

   ii. <u>When we are codependent</u>, allowing someone else's actions or behaviors to determine our own, we can become trapped in the same kind of controlling and manipulating ways they use. This kind of relationship swirls in a vicious cycle of twisted practices. Within a family, the children and other loved ones also learn to function in this manner. These behaviors are thought necessary for survival. This prohibits any change and restoration toward a healthy family life.

   iii. Change toward a healthy family goal must begin with the codependent's change in self. Our ultimate dependency belongs only on God alone. A positive goal is not to be dependent on any others in an unhealthy way. 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12 says "Make it your ambition to lead a quiet life, to mind your own business and to work with your hands, just as we told you, so that your daily life may win the respect of outsiders and so that you will not be dependent on anybody."

   iv. We must be responsible for our own actions and decisions in all areas of life. We can hardly be effective if we do not have respect. By submitting to the Lord, we are entrusting Him with our lives. Our Father can deliver us from an unhealthy codependency just as He can deliver an alcoholic or substance abuser from their addictions. To

seek His guidance and ways, we are defining the boundaries for our lives. We cannot do it alone because our fleshly nature is weak and too often operates out of emotion rather than wisdom.

The Serenity Prayer, so often used in 12 Step Programs, contains some very significant lines. "God grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference." We cannot change others. It sometimes takes a great deal of courage to change what we can (usually within ourselves).Change is possible with God's help; if we ask He will give us the wisdom. "So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things and to understand the stupidity of wickedness and the madness of folly" (Ecclesiastes 7:25, KJV).

    b.**HERE ARE A FEW CHARACTERISTICS OF CODEPENDENTS**:

        i. - Feel most comfortable when they are giving
        - Find needy people to take care of
        - Try to please others instead of themselves
        - Have an overdeveloped sense of responsibility
        - Feel anxiety, pity, and guilt when other people have a problem
        - Wonder why people don't do for them
        - Feel victimized by the "selfishness" of others
        - Try to be all things to all people all the time
        - Have difficulty saying "no" and/or setting boundaries
        - Feel empty and bored when they are not involved in a crisis
        - Seek out chaos and then complain about it
        - Get angry when somebody refuses their help or doesn't take their advice
        - Tend of have a self-esteem that is connected to "doing"
        - Try to prove that they are good enough to be loved
        - Are afraid of making mistakes
        - Are easily offended by other's "rudeness" or "insincerity" or "uncaring attitude"

- Can become self-righteous with phrases like "I would NEVER do that...."
- Try to be perfect, and expect others to be perfect
- Have self-blame and put themselves down
- Must be in control at all times

c. **Setting Boundaries**

    i. 1. When you become aware we need to set a limit with someone, do it clearly, preferably without anger and with as few words as possible.

        2. We cannot simultaneously set a boundary (a limit) and take care of another person's feelings.

        3. Anger, rage, complaining, and whining are an indication of boundaries we need to set.

        4. We'll be tested when we set boundaries.

        5. Be prepared to follow through by acting in congruence with the boundary.

        6. Some people are happy to respect our boundaries.

        7. We will set boundaries when we are ready and not a minute sooner.

        8. A support system can be helpful as we strive to establish and enforce boundaries.

        9. There's a fun side to setting boundaries too.

VI. <u>How To Measure Success With Boundaries</u>

Step #1—Resentment: Our Early Warning Signal

Step #2—A Change of Tastes: Being Drawn to Boundary Lovers

Step #3—Joining the Family

Step #4—Treasuring our Treasures

Step #5—Practicing Baby "No's"

Step #6—Rejoicing in the Guilty Feelings

Step #7—Practicing Grown-up "No's"

Step #8—Rejoicing in the Absence of Guilty Feelings
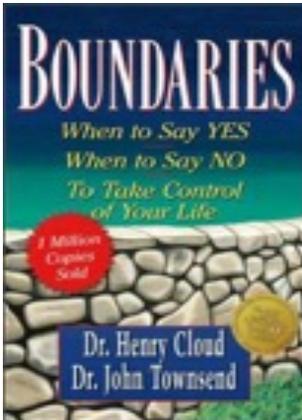
Step #9—Loving the Boundaries of Others

Step #10—Freeing Our No and Our Yes

Step #11—Mature Boundaries—Value-Driven Goal Setting

Step #12—Mature AGAPE—The Bride Becoming Spotless

Appendix 1—Ten Laws of Boundaries

The Ten Laws of Boundaries

"Boundaries" by Dr. Henry Cloud and Dr. John Townsend, basically teaches you about setting and maintaining healthy boundaries with yourself and other people, and addresses issues that arise when boundaries are not maintained. It helps you learn what you are responsible for and what you're not, and when to say "no."

Law #1: **The Law of Sowing and Reaping**

Our actions have consequences.

Basically, this is the law of cause and effect. This is simple reality. You can't avoid consequences. If you overspend, you will most likely get into debt. If you eat right and exercise, you will have better physical health. Obvious, right? However, in human relationships, some people try to save others from this law by stepping in and reaping the consequences for someone else. For example, if every time you overspent, your mom stepped in and covered for you, she would be keeping you from experiencing natural consequences, and you'd never learn anything. You would do it over and over again.

I've found that I have a tendency to "step in" when it is not wise that I do so. Sometimes I have this "savior" mentality where I feel like I want to save those I love from ever being hurt. I've gone to great lengths to "fix" something for someone else, but by doing that, I not only drain myself, but I take power away from them – I keep them from experiencing the consequences and learning from them. This is called codependence. I have also been in relationships where my partner attempted to do the same for me – to "rescue" me from pain naturally occurring from the choices I made. In those relationships, I never really grew... I assumed that whenever I "messed up," my partner would step in and "save me" (usually in an emotional sense).

Law #2: The Law of Responsibility

We are responsible TO each other, but not FOR each other.

Cloud and Townsend write: "We are to *love* one another, not *be* one another. I can't feel your feelings for you. I can't think for you. I can't behave for you. I can't work through the disappointment that limits bring for you. In short, I can't grow for you; only you can. Likewise, you can't grow for me... You are responsible for *yourself.* I am responsible for *myself.*"

This kind of goes right along with Law #1.We are responsible "to" people but not "for" people. This was an important thing for me to learn, as I have always felt responsible for other people's happiness. I felt if I couldn't make everything all better for them, I was failing them. In reality, they are responsible for their own feelings. I am ultimately responsible for mine.

Law #3: The Law of Power

We have power over some things; we do not have power over other things (like changing people)

Under this heading there is a Bible verse that really hit home with me. It expresses my own feelings about my struggle with the thoughts, feelings, urges, tendencies brought about by depression, borderline, etc:

"I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do... For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do—this I keeping doing...waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members (Romans 7:15,19,23).

This is a state of powerlessness, a state I know very well and fight against every day. Though I do not have the power in and of myself to overcome these patterns, I do have the power to do the things that will bring the fruits of success later on:

1. I have the power to agree with the truth about my problems.
2. I have the power to submit my inability to God. (I cannot make myself well, but I can call the Doctor! I can ask for help from my therapist and those I trust.)

3. I have the power to search and ask God and others to reveal more and more about what is within my boundaries. (*Communicate* and be open to evaluating myself).

4. I have the power to turn from the negative I find within me. (Not that I'll be perfect, but I can recognize that those things aren't good and take the steps I need to replace negative behaviors with positive).

5. I have the power to humble myself and ask God and others to help me with my developmental injuries and leftover childhood needs.

6. I have the power to seek out those that I have injured and make amends.

The serenity prayer says: *God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.* In other words," God... help me to clarify my boundaries and to know what I have the power to overcome myself, and what I need to turn to You and others for help with. Help me to know what is me and what is not me."

Law #4: The Law of Respect

If we wish for others to respect our boundaries, we need to respect theirs.

If we want people to respect our boundaries, we must respect theirs as well. Hearing "no" has always been hard for me. But if, we love and respect people who tell us no, they will in turn love and respect our no. "Freedom begets freedom." When we accept that others have the right to set boundaries with us, we feel better about setting our own.

Law #5: The Law of Motivation

We must be free to say, "no" before we can wholeheartedly say, "yes."

We fear that other people won't respect the boundaries that we set with them. This is quite an issue that I struggle with. I'm afraid if I tell people no, or be specific about my needs, they will be disappointed, angry, or hurt (I've learned to fear this from past experiences). I'm afraid I will be abandoned. Sometimes we do a lot for other people, not out of love, but out of fear. Fear that we will not be loved anymore if we confront them or say no. This is a false motive that keeps us from setting boundaries, and it includes:

1. Fear of loss of love, or abandonment.
2. Fear of others' anger.
3. Fear of loneliness.
4. Fear of losing the "good me" inside. ("I'm being selfish/unloving")
5. Guilt (When I say no, I feel bad)
6. Payback (You receive things with a guilt message, so you feel obligated to give back)
7. Approval (The other person becomes a symbolic "parent")
8. Over identification with other's loss. (Haven't dealt with their own losses so they feel someone else's sadness to a much greater degree)

If I do things for others for any of these reasons, I'm not really free. I'm not doing it out of love and being a good person. I just get bogged down more and more. "Let God work on the fears, resolve them, and create some healthy boundaries to guard the freedom you were called to."

Law #6: The Law of Evaluation

We need to evaluate the pain our boundaries cause others.

Sometimes we assume that if we set boundaries, we will get a negative response. Though this is sometimes true, that doesn't mean we should avoid boundaries. Ultimately, when we set boundaries, the result is good for both you and the other person (in the long-term). It leads to honesty, relief from guilt, and better communication of who you are and what you need. Though it may be difficult because setting boundaries sometimes requires confrontation and hurt feelings, if we do not do this, anger and bitterness will set in because we are not being open about our own limits and needs. Doing so also gives the other person permission to be honest as well.

Law #7: The Law of Proactivity

We take action to solve problems based on our values, wants and needs.

For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction. Cloud and Townsend give the example of someone who has spent years being passive and compliant, and then suddenly exploding out of nowhere. Though this reactive phase of boundary creation is helpful (especially for victims) and frees that person from a feeling of powerlessness, being stuck in this phase does not allow for the development of proactivity. "This is where you are able to use the freedom you gained through reacting to love, enjoy, and serve one another. Proactive people show you what they love, what they want, what they purpose, and what they stand for. These people are very different from those who are known by what they hate, what they don't like, what they stand against, and what they will not do."

I went through my own phase of "reactivity" and "rebelliousness," in a sense, where I felt like I was fighting against people and ideas all of the time. While it made me feel powerful, it was also a very negative place to be. I started to pass off judgments about people without even really thinking, and I just felt like arguing all of the time. I eventually realized that's just not where I wanted to be and needed more positivity and love in my life.

Law #8: **The Law of Envy**

We will never get what we want if we focus outside our boundaries onto what others have.

Envy focuses on what others have or have accomplished, or in other words, outside of our boundaries. It can lead us to neglecting our own responsibilities can become a destructive spiral downward. Instead of envying what someone else has, look at yourself and figure out why you feel like you're lacking so much. Why are you resentful? Do you really want that? Then you need to work on yourself, instead of focusing so much time and energy wishing you could be like someone else. Comparing yourself to someone else never leads to growth. Taking inventory of your life and your desires does.

Law #9: **The Law of Activity**

We need to take the initiative to set limits rather than being passive.

God gave me the ability to take initiative. He will match my effort, but he doesn't do my work for me – that would be an invasion of my boundaries. Passivity and "shrinking back" never pays off. I am supposed to try, to put the effort in. I'm going to fail and make mistakes, but at least I'm trying… And that's what's important. The "trying" part is completely my responsibility. When

a baby bird is ready to hatch, if you break the egg for it, it will die. The bird needs to peck its own way out of the egg. This strengthens the bird and allows it to function in the outside world. If you rob the bird of this responsibility, it will die. If God or others "hatch" for me, I will ultimately fail. I won't have my own strength to get through life. That's why problems and struggles are so important, and why God doesn't fix everything for us. If He did, we would never learn and grow.

Law #10: The Law of Exposure

We need to communicate our boundaries to each other.

"The Law of Exposure says that your boundaries need to be made visible to others and communicated to them." Because of the fears described earlier, we set "secret" boundaries. We withdraw, resent, or experience the pain of someone's irresponsibility instead of being honest about how they affect us. If boundaries are unexpressed, relationships suffer. Nothing good ever comes from lack of boundaries. If they're not exposed directly, the will be communicated indirectly (passive-aggressiveness) or through manipulation.

We need to make sure people can see us clearly. Boundaries help us to be seen and heard. If we do not communicate our needs, desires, things we are uncomfortable with... we hide parts of ourselves in the darkness. "When our boundaries are in the light, that is, are communicated openly, our personalities begin to integrate for the first time. They become 'visible' and then they become light. They are transformed and changed. Healing always takes place in the light." This was incredibly eye-opening to me. It helped me to understand at least part of the reason why I struggle with feeling like a real person and why I'm different depending on who I'm with or what situation I'm in... It's my lack of boundaries and communication. I'm so afraid of "losing" people, of being rejected or abandoned, I "hide" myself and allow anything and everything into my person. My personality is not integrated. Once I start setting boundaries, being honest about who I am (my needs, wants, beliefs, values, etc), I will start to feel "real" and I won't "lose" myself around other people. And this will allow myself to heal and discover who I really am. Amazing!

Ten Laws of Boundaries

Appendix 2—Six Stages of Emotional Maturity

Emotional Maturity: Eight Skills for Healthy Emotional Maturity (from <u>The Secret of Maturity</u>, Third Edition, by Kevin Everett FitzMaurice). Six Levels of Emotional Maturity

[The Secret of Maturity, Third Edition](#).
New and expanded 2012 version updates the 1990 version excerpted here.

LEVELS 1-4 OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY

Level One Maturity -Basic Emotional Responsibility- When a person reaches level one of emotional maturity, they realize that they can no longer view their emotional states as the responsibility of external forces such as people, places, things, forces, fate, and spirits. They learn to drop expressions from their speech that show disownership of feelings and a helpless or victim attitude towards their feelings. Expressions such as: "They made me feel . . . , " "It made me feel . . . ," "I made them feel. . . ," and any others that denote external emotional responsibility are first changed into "I" statements as opposed to "You" or blaming statements. They are, for example, changed from, "You make me so mad when you do that," to "I feel mad when you do that because . . . ." People learn at this level to regularly use the following expressions: "When you did . . . , I felt . . . , because . . . ." "When . . . happened, I felt . . . , because . . . ." As time and maturity advance, they begin to use even more accurate statements that inhibit the Blame Game such as:
"I chose to feel . . . when I did . . . , because . . . ." "I choose to feel . . . whenever . . . happens, because . . . ." "I chose to feel . . . when he, she, it, did . . . , because . . . ." "I am in the habit of choosing to feel . . . whenever my/ your . . . says anything to me, because . . . ."

Level Two Maturity - Emotional Honesty- Emotional honesty concerns the willingness of the person to know and own their own feelings. This is a necessary step to self-understanding and acceptance. The issues of resistance to self-discovery are dealt with at this level. They are related solely to the person's conscious and unconscious fears of dealing directly with the critical voices they hear inside. In the past, they have typically lost all interactions with this internal adversary, so their fears are justified. Now, however, they know how to choose to feel so that they can keep from being destroyed, or they can choose not to interact with their accuser at all. The realization of the old maxim, "To thine own self be true," is the primary goal at this level. This means that we are always true to what we feel: we do not hide, stuff, suppress, or repress what we feel, but honestly experience it at this level of maturity. Here, you are at least honest with yourself about how you really feel. As a secondary goal on this level, people

learn to locate others with whom they can safely share their real feelings, their real selves. Such work to never again accept self as behavior.

Level Three Maturity -Emotional Openness- This level concerns the person's willingness and skills in sharing their feelings in an appropriate manner and at appropriate times. Persons at this level experience and learn the value of ventilating feelings, and also the dangers involved in hiding feelings from self and others. Self-disclosure is the important issue at this level of work. Yet, it will never be as important as the willingness of the person to be open to experiencing all of their feelings as they arise without the critical voices they hear inside trying to change, control, or condemn them. The dangers of suppressing feelings, and the values inherent in exploring and allowing all feelings internal expression are investigated further. At this level, one has the openness, the freedom to experience any emotion without the need, the compulsion to suppress or repress it.

Level Four Maturity -Emotional Assertiveness- The person at this level of work enters a new era of positive self-expression. The primary goal here is to be able to ask for and to receive the nurturing that one needs and wants--first from self and then from others. As a secondary goal, persons should learn how to express any feeling appropriately in any situation, i.e., without aggressive overtones. This person makes time for their feelings--they prize and respect them. Such understand the connection between suppressed feelings, stress, and illness. Level Five Maturity, Emotional Understanding, and Level Six Maturity, Emotional Detachment, are both covered in another booklet entitled, *Self-Concept: The Enemy Within.* For ordering information, please look at the end of this booklet.

LEVELS 5-6 OF EMOTIONAL MATURITY

As I promised in *The Secret of Maturity,* this book contains levels five and six of the steps to complete emotional maturity. I cut them out of *The Secret of Maturity* and kept them for this book, because I didn't think they would be understood or appreciated without the explanations offered for self-concepts
in this book.

Level Five Maturity -Emotional Understanding- Persons on this level understand the actual cause and effect process of emotional responsibility

and irresponsibility. Self-concepts are known as "the" problem. They realize that it is not possible to have a so-called good self-concept without a complimentary bad self-concept. Such experience firsthand, that because of the nature of knowledge and the formation of self-concepts, that all self-concepts contain their opposites. Knowing that though we may hide one half
in darkness (unconsciousness) it is still active in us; they begin to regularly leap beyond the pitfalls of self-concepts, self-images, and self-constructs.
This knowledge of the Unity of Opposites (of self-concepts, of knowledge) is applied to new situations daily. Other understandings at this level include the following: attempts to capture a moment of self can only kill the self as the self is a living process and not knowledge or memory; to reduce self to knowledge is literally to kill it; one either has their self and is alive and experiencing, or one has found their self as knowledge and lost it. Self-concepts are always externally referented by their very nature, and thus forever the perfect targets and hooks for the Blame Game. (For a description of the Blame Game see *The Secret of Maturity.*) Knowing that self-concepts are the only hooks that can be used in the Blame Game, people at this level remember to work on seeing their own self-concepts and finding release from their own. Self-knowledge is used to free the self from self-concepts on this level rather than to form them and imprison the self in them. The main work here is a total shift from identifying with any self-concepts to identifying only with the true self. II Corinthians 10:5 "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, . . ." Matthew 10:39 "He that findeth his life shall lose it: . . ."

Level Six Maturity -Emotional Detachment- At this level the person lives without the burden and snare of self-concepts, self-images, self-constructs, and all group-concepts and thing-concepts. They are only aware of self as process, as a sensing being, as an experiencing being, as a living vessel, as unknowable and untrappable--because it is alive and not static or fixed. They have died to the life of self as self-concepts. True detachment from all self-concepts has occurred. Thus true detachment from others has also occurred, which means that absolute emotional responsibility has been achieved (actually discovered). Not having self-concepts to defend or promote, this person can remain unaffected by the Blame Game, and even experiences unconditional love for their enemies. I Thessalonians 4:4 "That every one of you should know how to posses his vessel in sanctification and honor;"

Appendix 3—The Drama Triangle

Karpman
Drama Triangle
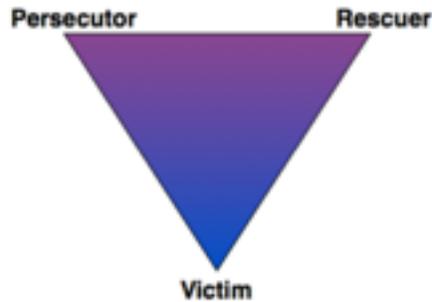
The **drama triangle** is a psychological and social model of human interaction in transactional analysis (TA) first described by Stephen Karpman, in his 1968 article *Fairy Tales and Script Drama Analysis*.[2] The Drama Triangle model is used in psychology and psychotherapy

The model posits three habitual psychological roles (or roleplays) which people often take in a situation:

- The person who plays the role of a *victim*
- The person who pressures, coerces or *persecutes* the victim, and
- The *rescuer*, who intervenes, seemingly out of a desire to help the situation or the underdog.

Of these, the "rescuer" is the least obvious role. In the terms of the drama triangle, the "rescuer" is not a person helping someone in an emergency. It is someone who has a mixed or covert motive that is actually benefiting egoically in some way from being "the one who rescues". The rescuer has a surface motive of resolving the problem, and appears to make great efforts to solve it, *but also has a hidden motive to not succeed, or to succeed in a way that they benefit*. For example, they may feel a sense of self-esteem or status as a "rescuer", or enjoy having someone dependent or trusting of them - and act in a way that ostensibly seems to be trying to help, but at a deeper level plays upon the victim in order to continue getting their payoff.[*citation needed*] (See below). As Transactional Analyst Claude Steiner says:

> ... the Victim is not really as helpless as he feels, the Rescuer is not really helping, and the Persecutor does not really have a valid complaint.

The situation plays out when a situation arises and a person takes a role as victim or persecutor. Others then take the other roles. Thereafter 'the two players move around the triangle, thus switching roles',so that for example the victim turns on the rescuer, the rescuer switches to persecuting -- or as often happens the rescuer ends up entering the situation and becoming a victim.

The covert purpose for each 'player' and the reason the situation endures is that each gets their unspoken (and frequently unconscious) psychological wishes/needs met in a manner they feel justified, without having to acknowledge the broader dysfunction or harm done in

the situation as a whole. As such, each player is acting upon their own selfish 'needs', rather than acting in a genuinely responsible or altruistic manner.[*citation needed*]. Thus a character might 'ordinarily c[o]me on like a plaintive victim; it is now clear that she can switch into the role of Persecutor providing it is "accidental" and she apologises for it'.

In transactional analysis, the drama triangle is sometimes referred to in the context of mind games - 'the unconscious games played by innocent people'[7] - such as: – *Why Don't You/Yes But*; *If It Weren't For You*; *Why does this Always Happen to Me?*; *See What You Made Me Do*; *You Got Me Into This*; *Look How Hard I've Tried*; *I'm Only Trying to Help You*; and *Let's You and Him Fight*.

The relationship between the victim and the rescuer can be one of codependency. The Rescuer keeps the Victim dependent on them by playing into their Victimhood. The Victim gets their needs met by having the rescuer take care of them.

"Rescuer" vs rescuer

The "game" position of Rescuer is distinct from that of a genuine rescuer in an emergency, such as a firefighter who saves a victim from a burning building or a lifeguard who saves a victim from drowning. As a drama role, there is something dishonest or unspoken about the Rescuer's attempts, or at best, a mixed motive or *need* to be a rescuer or have a victim to help. In fact, 'The Karpman Triangle game inhibits real problem-solving...creates confusion and distress, not solutions'. A drama triangle "Rescuer" plays the role more because they are driven to be a rescuer as a way of avoiding looking at their own anxiety, underlying feelings than because the victim needs their involvement, as in the case of a fireman/rescuer.

In Eric Berne's words, 'The first group, is playing "I'm Only Trying to Help You", while the others are helping people'.

Overview and theory

A "game" in Transactional Analysis is a series of transactions that is complementary (reciprocal), ulterior, and proceeds towards a predictable outcome. Games are often characterized by a *switch* in roles of players towards the end. The number of 'players' may vary.

Games in this sense, are devices used (often unconsciously) by a person to create a circumstance where they can justifiably feel certain resulting feelings (such as anger or superiority) or justifiably take or avoid taking certain actions where their own inner wishes differ from societal expectation. They are always a substitute for a more genuine and full adult emotion and response which would be more appropriate.

Three quantitative variables are often useful to consider for games:

- *Flexibility*: The ability of the players to change the currency of the game (that is, the tools they use to play it). 'Some games...can be played properly with only one kind of currency, while others, such as exhibitionistic games, are more flexible', so that players may shift from words, to money, to parts of the body.
- *Tenacity*: 'Some people give up their games easily, others are more persistent *referring to the way people stick to their games and their resistance to breaking with them.*
- *Intensity*: 'Some people play their games in a relaxed way, others are more tense and aggressive. Games so played are known as easy and hard games, respectively', the latter being played in a tense and [aggressive] way.

Based on the degree of acceptability and potential harm, games are classified into three categories, representing socially acceptable games, undesirable but not irreversibly damaging games, or games which may result in drastic harm. Their consequences may vary from lots of small paybacks (the girl who keeps meeting nice guys who ditch her) through to payback built up over a long period to a major level (i.e. court, mortuary, or similar). Each game has a *payoff* for those playing it. The *antithesis* of a game (that is, the way to break it) lies in discovering how to deprive the actors of their payoff.

The first such game theorized was *Why don't you/Yes, but* in which one player (*White*) would pose a problem as if seeking help, and the other player(s) (*Black*) would offer solutions. White would point out a flaw in every Black player's solution (the "Yes, but" response), until they all gave up in [frustration]. The secondary gain for White was that he could claim to have justified his problem as unsolvable and thus avoid the hard work of internal change; and for Black, to either feel the frustrated [martyr] ("I was only trying to help") or a superior being, disrespected ("the patient was uncooperative").

In the Drama Triangle, the "role switch" is 'the same switch that is included in the formula for games - occurs when one player, after stable roles have become established, suddenly changes role. The victim becomes a persecutor, and throws the previous persecutor into the victim role, or the rescuer suddenly switches to become a persecutor ("You never appreciate me helping you!/Why are your eyes so far apart?").

'Karpman has many interesting variables in his fully developed theory, besides role switches. These include space switches (private-public, open-closed, near-far) which precede, cause, or follow role switches, and script velocity (number of role switches in a given unit of time)'.