



Let us touch
the dying,
the poor,
the lonely
and the
unwanted
according to
the graces
we have
received.

Mother Teresa
(1910 - 1997)
Saint

Healthy boundaries are crucial. With healthy boundaries, we prioritize our own well-being and thereby steward the gifts we have been given. With healthy boundaries, we understand that choices of others impact us, but do not control us. With healthy boundaries, we honor that we can tend to, rather than cling to, the suffering of others.

Boundaries reinforce our self-hood and help us better relate with our neighbor-hood.

Boundaries restore our strength. With clear boundaries, we are more agile in responding to changes in our environment. We can observe our sense of engagement when in the midst of crisis and then activate our dis-engagement when away from intensity. We can pivot between labor and renewal.

Boundaries strengthen our security. With clarity about where we end and where others begin, we can decide how to protect ourselves first. We can acquire what we need for our own safety and root ourselves in what or in whom we believe guards us. From this base of assurance, we can reach out with courage. We can risk to care for those in need of our graces and bring healing to those who are vulnerable.

Boundaries affirm that our life is woven into community. Perhaps surprisingly, boundaries remind us of our essential unity with others. While they assist us in noticing distinctions, they also remind us of similarities. We accept that at some time we will be dying, or without, or lonely, or isolated. We might also accept that at that time – because of community – there will be grace in those around us to assure our care.

Boundaries free us to be ourselves and, as we reach beyond ourselves, to touch the lives of others.

*What is one thing I can do to reinforce healthy boundaries?
How am I similar to someone I see as different from me?*