Session 20: Boundaries: Where I End and You Begin

Phase 3 — Rebuilding: Relationships and Life (Weeks 4–6) · Week 4 — Relationships Rebuilt

Date: _____ My craving today (0–10): _____ One word for my week: _____

Handout for this session: the Session 20 handout (My Boundary) — in the Handouts Packet.

What we're learning

A boundary is a property line. It says where I end and you begin. Without lines, we fix, rescue, control, and carry consequences that are not ours, until everyone is worn out. A real boundary states what I will do: “If drinking starts, I will leave and take my ride home.” It is not a threat and it is not a way to control the other person. It is short, kind, and true — and every verb in it is mine.

- Boundaries describe my behavior 'I will leave / I will not lend / I will hang up and call tomorrow' — every real boundary ends in an action the speaker controls.
- Consequences are not punishments They are the natural, pre-announced result that makes the boundary real. If I will not actually do it, I do not say it.
- No is a complete sentence, and so is a kind offer Boundaries also say yes on purpose: what I will gladly do, within limits I can sustain without resentment.
- Rest and refusal are part of the pattern People who last in hard work withdraw to rest and say no to some demands — boundaries are not a lack of love; they are how love stays possible without burning out or blowing up.

Goals for this session

☐ I can define a boundary as a property line — what I will do — rather than a wall or an ultimatum aimed at controlling another person

☐ I can sort examples into boundary, request, and manipulation

☐ I can write one boundary in the session's sentence frame with a built-in consequence I control

Check-in

Where in your life right now are you carrying a load that is not yours — and resenting it in silence?

Discussion — write your answers

Write what you would say out loud — and more, if it comes. There is no right-length answer; there is only an honest one.

1. Sort these aloud: 'Don't ever call me drunk again' / 'If you call drunk, I'll end the call and try you tomorrow' — which is a boundary, and why?

2. Where do you most need a line: money, time, body/safety, or recovery protection?

3. What boundary have you set with words and broken with actions? What made you cave?

4. Who models a healthy boundary in your life, and what exactly do they do?

Session 20 — Skill Practice

Boundary-writing workshop: each participant writes one boundary using the frame — 'I love/care about _____. I will _____. I will not _____. If _____ happens, I will _____.' Pairs audit each other's drafts with three checks: Is every verb theirs? Is the consequence real and kind? Is it short enough to say while nervous? Revise in the room.

My boundary: I love/care about _____. I will _____. I will not _____. If _____ happens, I will _____.

Check my draft: Is every verb mine? ☐ Is the consequence real and kind? ☐ Is it short enough to say while nervous? ☐

My takeaway

The one thing from this session I most need to remember — in my own words:

Homework — this week's application

☐ Deliver or rehearse your boundary this week if the situation arises naturally — do not manufacture a confrontation. Either way, write the sentence on a card and keep it where you will see it before the relevant call or visit.

Space to do the homework and note how it went:

An optional Scripture handout for this session is available from your facilitator on request.