

STEP EIGHTEEN



BOUNDARIES WITH OTHERS

THE LION AND THE BUTTERFLY

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BOUNDARIES WITH OTHERS

One of the greatest impediments to progress in our lives is the people who love us. Hard to imagine, isn't it? Well, it's true. It's true because the people who love us now love the us that existed yesterday, a minute ago, a year ago. They love the memory of us. They love the image of us. They love the future of who we could be. They love the idea of who we were, who we are, and who we are to them.

To truly love someone unconditionally we must be willing to accept that growth is a natural part of life. We must accept that the other person is continually growing and changing. We must accept change in each another and grow together, or stay stagnant together. That is the secret to lasting relationships. We grow together or we grow apart.

Now, that's not to say that the people who love us will not love us tomorrow if we change and begin living a new life. They just might make it a little harder for us to change! Because when we change, our relationships change.

For when we change, it means it means they have to change too. Most people resist change. It is not you they are resisting. It is change! Change is difficult to adjust to. It takes time and perseverance to walk those Four Steps of Allowing over and over. It takes effort. It takes work! Most people don't like extra work in their life. So sometimes for that reason alone, people resist change.

Change can be painful. There is loss. There is grief. It is a process to learn a whole new way of dealing with others and dealing with life! It takes a ton of time and energy to get used to the new that change brings, so we resist it. Who has extra time for things like change?

Sometimes it is as natural as aging. We can become a different person altogether and this can change relationships. We no longer mesh, hold the same beliefs, same space, or even the same schedule as those we used to. We ourselves also resist change in others. Our children grow up. Our parents age. Our friends grow and change, or don't grow and change, in the same direction we do. Our jobs change. Our relationships with our mentors change. As we naturally move through life we change, grow, adjust, and move through.

When do new things we become new people. We naturally set new boundaries or ourselves and who we are in the world. Those who knew the old us may not be okay with the new us. Just like a favorite sweater that no longer fits us, we do grow out of people too!

Change is difficult, but it is a constant in life. It was designed to keep us moving, growing, doing, and reinventing ourselves. It is inevitable, even in the lives of those who resist it so. That leads us to boundaries.

YOUR GARDEN OF LIFE

When you take steps to break from the tribe mentality and create a new life for yourself, you are setting a boundary. You are creating your own little Garden of Life, full of dreams and schemes to become all that you wish to be! It is your beautiful bounty of creation. It is your freedom place. It is your sacred place. It is the place where you can just be fully you.

You are saying, "This is who I am. This is where I am going. This is what the world looks like to me. These are my possibilities for my life. These are the possibilities I see going forward. These are the wounds I am healing from the past. This is what I will allow. This is what I won't allow. I am here to protect my peace and my beautiful bountiful garden."

This does not go over too well with people who have no boundaries. For these people everyone else's business is their business. Everyone else should live life according to their opinion. The world that exists for them exists for everyone. They do not like that other people have different views than their own. They have no separation between themselves and others. Their way is the only way, so your way needs to be their way! They have no ability to let others be. They are not good with boundaries. It is almost as if they cannot handle a boundary at all. They are wild. Their world is the only world that exists for them and they cannot comprehend someone else creating a world separate from their view of the world. They don't understand it. They want the world, and you, the way they want the world to be, and they will let you know.

They may react violently, condescendingly, or controlling. They may confront or attack, directly or passive aggressively. They may tell you that you are wrong or bad. They may shame, blame, or guilt you. They may play on your sympathies and ask how you could hurt them this way. They may cry. They may yell. They even beg or become aggressively angry. They may try to sabotage your new life, your new self, or the things you now have new in your life to love. Let's call these people Lions.

LIONS DON'T GROW, THEY GROWL

If you take a Lion who is used to having his own way and being the top predator from the wild and put him in a garden where you are the *top dog*, he will resist. He will try to break out of the garden, out of this new world he finds himself in. He will test to see how strong the walls are. He will attempt to climb the fence. He will run into the mirrored glass, climb the trees, and eat the flowers. He will test the boundaries.

He has never known fences or walls. He does not know what to do with them. Boundaries feel like a cage. They feel strange and unknown. The boundary walls are foreign to the Lion who has always been the king in charge and they stress him out!

Some people are incapable of unconditional love. Some cannot handle your independence, your new growth, your new life, your new boundaries. They may even be people you know, people you have loved your whole life. At a certain point in your journey you must decide who is coming with you on your new journey. Give them a chance to grow with you. They may surprise you. But if they are a true Lion? They will not. Lions don't grow, they growl.

Unfortunately, if they can't understand, if they can't support you, if they can't allow you to change, then you must let them go if you wish to keep your Garden of Life beautiful. Some Lions are too wild and too dangerous to be tamed. They like the chaos of the wild. They like being the king of the jungle. They will not accept your boundaries. They will tear down your walls and destroy your beautiful Garden of Life you have worked so hard to build. They will fight. They will resist.

Sometimes as we let in the new possibilities for our own lives, like self-respect, self-worth, happiness, balance, and joy, the Lions in our lives cannot handle it. They will do almost anything to bust your steady boundaries to create the chaos of the wild. They want you to be back in the thick of jungle, filled with drama and fear, with them!

If those people are people we really love, with whom we have long standing relationships, who are often family or dear friends, and they resist that much to the point it endangers or hurts us, we must let them out of the garden. We must let them go out of our lives for sheer self-preservation. They will have their jungle and you will have your peace.

It is sad. There are the emotions of grief. There are tears, question, worry, anger. Why can't they accept us and grow with us? We want them our new Garden of Life and letting go is painful. It can be an emotional process of grief and sorrow.

There is the process of restructuring what is healthy and what is not. To protect our new possibilities, we must set up our new Garden of Life Wall boundaries. We must face our own fears and voice our own needs. We must accept others for who they are. Lions are not always "bad." Most are not. They are just wild.

This process of growth is a back and forth process, an exchange. It takes time. Some Lions may even acquiesce a little, to which you can meet in the middle. But Living in Possibility with healthy boundaries means not just letting any Lion to come make a mess of your life or your emotions. It is realizing you have a choice to allow them in your life. If they trash your new garden, you must let them go into the wild where they want to be.

This is a process of accepting. It is accepting that they might not want to go with you on this journey. It is respecting their right to live life the way they want to live it and your right to live the way you want it. Just because you don't have the same dreams or have grown in the same way does not mean one is right and the other wrong. It is true acceptance to allow others to have their paths and their lives too, even if it is not the same as ours.

That said, what about those who do change and grow with us? Let's call these people Butterflies.

BUTTERFLIES BLOOM

Butterflies start in their cocoon In the cocoon many changes are taking place silently, strongly. Internal struggles built to strengthen those wings happens deep with a cocoon state. This is a very private and internal process of which we may not see it happen at all!

Ever feel like you need to just "get away" to figure it all out? During times of great growth, we often need time alone. We need time to cocoon! This is where mental health spas, rehab, or even just daily walk time is crucial for great growth. We need to set aside the time to grow our wings. We need time out of the world to focus in on our inner world. We need space to be with just ourselves to face our blocks, bust them up and grow new in our gardens!

Sometimes Butterflies leave us for so long we may think they are Lions and gone forever. They may not see the changes in us. We may not see them changing, growing. As

they live their own lives and do their own thing, we not even see these Butterflies are indeed changing with us! We may even be cocooning and growing next to each other and not know it! Then one day they show up and surprise us! Their colors bright and wings shining fully able to dance with us in our new possibility Garden of Life!

There are others who learn of our new Garden of Life and walk in with open arms. These might even be people you thought would never walk through the doors of your World of Possibility with you, who would never be able to see the wonders of your internal garden. Yet, here they are, walking with you in appreciation. Here they are, honoring you, and learning with you, loving the new you in ways you could never comprehend. Like Butterflies coming out of a cocoon, many have the capacity, willingness, and ability to grow with us. They pollinate our flowers and dance thru, allowing themselves to awaken the new. They may even help you see a new vision for yourself you never thought possible!

LET THE LIONS GO. LET THE BUTTERFLIES GROW!

The process of change never ends. Some people are natural at growing and others shine easily. Others may take some time. Give them time. Have some patience and give people a chance to grow in the manner they choose. It is a critical part of being a Possibility Person. For if we wish others to accept change within ourselves, we are best to offer them the same courtesy.

We can still love the lions, we just don't have to allow them to destroy our Gardens of Life in the process. letting people go out into the wild to discover and build their own gardens is a great joy in life! If we are Butterflies ourselves, then we too can go fly over the walls and beautify other people's gardens too. It is all a dance of life and growth and change and possibilities!

The world will surprise us. People will surprise us. As we open up to our own ideas of possibility for our own lives, we give others a chance to open up to theirs. We give others the chance to spread their wings and fly out of their own cages, their own tangled jungle, and into the light of day. Like Butterflies coming out of cocoons, those that can grow and change with us, will!

Being there to pave the way, shine the light, and offer those possibilities to others is one of the joys of Possibility Living. No more is there a pull and tug of control. No more thinking *I wish they would just...* Instead it is an open invitation, an open gate to a beautiful garden. If we choose to see the wonders of the world, within our Garden of Life there lies a chance to have an authentic relationship with the Lions and Butterflies in our lives.

Or, we can choose to be a Lion ourselves and see the walls as permanent cages. We could feel like the boundaries are someone else's doing instead of seeing the fantastic exploration of the world around us, able to grow, and change with each passing day. We can resist or we can grow.

Who we are constantly changes. What boundaries we set for ourselves and others change as we change. Who we are, what we see as the world, who we see as our self as constantly changes. To grow with it or to resist it, that is up to us!

The possibilities await. What path do you choose?

ARE YOU (ARE THEY) A LION OR A BUTTERFLY?

Who are your Lions in your life? Who are your Butterflies?
Are you a Lion or a Butterfly in someone else's life?
