

SIGNS OF UNHEALTHY BOUNDRIES

Trusting no one – trusting any one – black and white thinking
Telling all
Talking at intimate level on first meeting
Falling in love with new acquaintance
Falling in love with anyone who reaches out
Being overwhelmed by a person, preoccupied
Acting on first sexual impulse
Being sexual for partner, not self
Going against personal values or rights to please others
Not noticing when someone else displays inappropriate boundaries
Not noticing when someone invades your boundaries
Accepting food, gifts, touch, sex that you don't want
Touching a person without asking
Taking as much as you can get for sake of getting.
Giving as much as you can give for sake of giving
Allowing someone to take as much as they can from you
Letting others direct your life
Letting others describe your reality
Letting others define you
Believing others can anticipate your needs
Expecting others to fill your needs automatically
Falling apart so someone will take care of you
Self abuse
Sexual and physical abuse
Food abuse

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DOUBLE MESSAGES

Mixed messages that adult children received growing up in an
Alcoholic/dysfunctional home.

LOVE = REJECTION “I love you, but don't bother me...”
In adult life, these children are attracted to relationships where they are
rejected because they equate love with rejection.

“YOU CAN COUNT ON ME” = DISAPPOINTMENT
“I'll be there for you – next time.”

The dysfunctional parents want credit for their good intentions but
don't want their disappointing behavior to count. The Adult Child
learns not to want or expect things. They deny their needs because
they don't want to be disappointed when they aren't met. They don't
depend on others.

“ALWAYS TELL THE TRUTH” = “I DON'T WANT TO KNOW”
The child is told to always tell the truth as long as it is something the
parents want to hear. Truth becomes an ideal, lying becomes the
reality. In adult life, the child lies automatically (without guilt) even
when telling the truth would be easier.

“EVERYTHING IS FINE” = SENSE OF DOOM/HOPELESSNESS
The child is told that everything is fine or it will be alright, but the
family atmosphere is one of hopelessness, depression, anxiety.
Everything is not alright. The Adult Child suffers from distortions in
his/her perceptions of reality, feels powerless over his/her life, is often
depressed and distrusts his/her own judgments.

“BLAME ALCOHOLISM – EXCUSE THE BEHAVIOR”
The alcoholic parent does something negative and/or irresponsible
(like embarrassing the child in front of the child's friends while the
parent is intoxicated) and the child is told by others not to get mad at
the parent – “It wasn't his/her fault, he/she was just drunk...” The
child learns that if the parent is drunk, then it is OK for the parent to
do whatever he/she wants.