

## 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.