

# **THE COUPLES CURE**

## Miraculous Recovery for Couples on the Brink

### Boundary Violations

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These come from the work of Pia Mellody. External Boundary Violations are what others do to you. Internal Boundary Violations are what you do to others (failure of proper containment).

#### INTERNAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

- Yelling and screaming
- Talking about the other person to the person, telling them what to do, what they are thinking, or how they are.
- Name-calling
- Ridiculing or making fun of another person
- Lying
- Breaking a commitment
- Patronizing a person. (Better than)
- Attempting to control or manipulate another person by telling them what to do, say, act or what they are feeling
- Being sarcastic especially when being intimate
- Shaming or blaming a person
- Interrupting

#### EXTERNAL PHYSICAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

- Standing too close to a person without his/her permission
- Touching a person without his/her permission
- Getting into a person's personal belongings and living space such as one's purse, wallet, mail, and closet
- Listening to a person's personal conversations or telephone conversations without his/her permission
- Not allowing a person to have privacy or violating a person's right to privacy
- Exposing others to physical illness due to your having a contagious disease

#### SEXUAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

- Touching a person sexually without his/her permission
- Not negotiating when, where, and how to engage in sexual activity
- Insisting on having your way sexually in the face of another's "NO"
- Demanding unsafe sexual practices

- Leaving pornography where others who do not wish to or should not see it may see it
- Exposing oneself to others without their consent
- Staring or looking at another person lustily (voyeurism) without his/her permission
- Exposing visually and/or auditory to others on your sexual activities without their consent

### COMMUNICATION BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

- Calling, emailing, or texting you excessively
- Responding to you with sarcasm, eye-rolling, or mockery (called contempt)
- Raising their voice or yelling in your presence
- Blaming you for their anger or actions
- Interrupting you
- Monopolizing the conversation o
- Rejecting, minimizing, or ignoring your feelings (called invalidation)
- Failing to take responsibility for any aspect of your disagreement
- Giving you the silent treatment or shutting down
- Calling you names
- Denying or distorting your reality (called 'gaslighting')
- Being deceptive or withholding information
- Giving you back-handed compliments or engaging in passive-aggressive behaviors
- Suddenly failing to honor previously agreed upon agreements Criticism
- All or nothing statements (e.g., you've never loved me!)
- Assumptions (e.g., you are the kind of person who...)
- Pointing out your flaws (e.g., you aren't very good at...)

### PHYSICAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

- Attempting to isolate you from friends or family
- Touching you without permission (e.g., hitting or sexual touch)
- Looking through your belongings without permission
- Blocking you from leaving a room or home
- Throwing or breaking things in your presence
- Threatening you or using aggressive gestures
- Denying your personal space or privacy
- Standing too close to you or talking too closely
- Exposing children to yelling or physical fighting

### SEXUAL BOUNDARY VIOLATIONS:

- Repeatedly being asked to have sex after saying "no"
- Ongoing deception about your partner's sexual behavior
- Exposing children to sexual content
- Exposure to STDs through your partner's sexual behavior
- Having your sexual preferences shamed
- Being inappropriately stared at or objectified
- Being touched sexually while asleep

## OTHER VIOLATIONS:

- Aggressive movements (e.g., slamming doors, storming around the house)
- Constant negativity, complaining or whining
- Making unrealistic demands on someone's time, energy, or finances
- Continued lateness
- Spending someone else's money on items that are not agreed upon
- Refusing to participate in household chores or other relational activities
- Suddenly failing to honor previously agreed-upon commitments
- Difficulty allowing others to finish their thoughts without interrupting
- Telling other people how to manage their affairs
- Talking to them about them and what they are thinking or feeling or doing without consent.
- Criticism
- Difficulty saying "no" to requests for my time, energy, and other resources
- Blaming others for undesirable results
- Using the silent treatment when I don't get my way
- Withdrawing when I experience fear
- Talking and analyzing instead of allowing others to get close
- Allowing others to touch me when I don't really want to be touched
- Difficult honoring someone else's "no"
- Children had no privacy rights and could expect that at any moment someone might open the door and come into their bedrooms
- Physical punishment was common
- People were frequently interrupted while speaking
- Blaming others for undesirable outcomes was a common theme among adults and children alike
- When people became overwhelmed or lose control, they would resort to hiding behind walls of anger or silence rather than communicate their experience and ask for what they needed
- Can't say no without being told you are selfish and guilted.
- No way to keep connection while still saying no or doing something different than parent wanted.
- Not safe to say no or have a boundary