

What's Control and What's Asserting Boundaries? A Newcomer's Approach to Step One."

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So how do I know that I'm controlling others or merely trying to assert my boundaries?

After all, any relationship is a relationship of adjustment, give and take, two or more unique different individuals trying to come together....be it just as co-drivers on a busy road, or parent and child, or man and a woman in a close relationship... and each is trying.

This is my limited understanding...If I try to assert myself from an undercurrent of fear and anxiety and shame and guilt and fear of being shamed, or arrogance and anger... then I'm in "unhealthy controlling behavior" ...and operating out of the classic "victim, persecutor, rescuer" mode.

If, however, I assert myself out of confidence—not arrogance, but confidence by which I mean the lack of anger or anxiety or fear, and am merely expressing myself (not trying to force an outcome) with a view to work together on a mutually acceptable outcome for both parties, then I'm not in an unhealthy controlling relationship. So the thought process may be like:

1. I value this relationship and would like it to be healthy.
2. I express myself without that undercurrent of fear and anxiety and anger and arrogance. I keep checking within what I'm feeling inside to see where I'm operating from... Health or Unhealthy.
3. I also express myself with a feeling of trust. I trust that the other person will also respond from health, but I am open minded to realize that maybe I'm in recovery and the other person may not be...so I'm open to the fact that the other person may listen to me or maybe even try to control me in return.
4. My response to the other person's response/reaction again needs to come by going back to point 1.

I know it sounds so mechanical and intellectual, even to me, but I guess for me it's like learning to drive a car.... the ignition in neutral, then the gear, then the reverse or drive forward, the brake, the clutch, the change of gear, the acceleration, the de-acceleration the initial fits and starts, possibly even a few bangs (Ha ha) ... and slowly and steadily to do this almost intuitively and reflexively (with a lot of God's Grace in it).

Of course to achieve this stage I first need to dig deep within myself, clear up the blocks in this car of mine, the electric circuitry, the fuel gauge (I need to not be running in empty), my fuel needs to be clean, my brakes need to work, my windshield needs to be clean, I need regular

servicing and repairs, etc., etc...God.

It almost seems so ideal if I can get this car of mine going in this crazy unhealthy traffic of people in my life...

Every instant one of two things happen. Either I am in recovery or I am in relapse. Sometimes an event happens, and I react to it out of my Old Codependent Self Defeating Behaviours ... I act out of fear and anxiety and fear of Shame and guilt. Whatever I do with that undercurrent to me is relapse.

In the old days it was always that. But nowadays there are instances when I sense I'm in the above self defeating behavior, and I accept my powerlessness and my disease, and I do not fight it or run away or freeze... instead I hand it over to my Higher Power, and with that power of my Higher Power I respond from strength and confidence and then whatever I do has a better chance to create health rather than sickness.

Do I achieve that all the time? No!

But even if I do it one out of ten, that's good enough for me right now.

Because slowly I know it'll become two out of ten and so on and so forth.

Yes. Today I come from that sense of hope rather than that old sense of hopelessness.

-Guneet