

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

Episode 56 Boundaries

Welcome to the podcast. Loving on purpose. I'm your host, Bonnie Lyman. If you're having trouble navigating through your relationships with your adult children, if you are struggling to connect with them or having specific challenges, you're in the right place. You're listening to Bonnie Lyman and this is episode 57, Boundaries. Well, hello, my friends. I welcome you back. I kind of feel like I'm welcome you into my house. I usually sit at my dining room table that has lots of chairs, and I try to picture at least one of you sitting there listening to me. It really helps me to talk to somebody directly, specifically, and with a lot of figuring and passion that maybe somehow I can help you understand what's going on in this thing called life and why it's always hardest to get along with family members. Isn't that the case? I want to welcome any of you that are new. And if any of you just stumbled across me and I've just found out about me, I am a life coach, and I help women find hope and feel better and feel connected when they're struggling in their relationships with their adult children. And so my podcast is one way I do that. I'm also on Instagram at Bonnie Lyman coaching. You can find me there. And I also have an email that I send out. I'm actually sending it out several times a week, but for sure every Thursday, and that's called Thursday. I want it to be like you and I have a date. We're just going to sit down and I'm going to try to help you view things from a different perspective, a more optimistic or a more compassionate or a more kinder or more loving perspective that you can start living the life you want to live.

There's just no reason for us when we have the capacity inside of us to control and choose what feelings we want to choose. And I'd say what's easy to do is also easy what not to do. But that's what I help people do. If you're new, welcome and I hope you enjoy this podcast. Of course, I love getting reviews, and I don't get many, but that's okay because when I run into you personally, you're just beaming with feedback. For me, that kind of keeps me in the game. But all I want to do really is help one person. And if I can do that, then my time and effort in doing these podcasts are more than worth it to me. I want to tell you about something that's happening this Friday. I think I've had two in the last month or so. What I call or. They're called Instagram lives. And if you go to search for Bonnie Lymancoaching.com, and I'm going to be starting this question and answer Instagram Live this Friday, February 3, 09:00, a.m. Pacific Time. So that's ten Mountain Time, eleven Central Time, and twelve Eastern Time. Then I'm not bringing people on yet. I'm getting ready to bring someone on and coach them. But you can type in questions or answers about anything. I mean, some of my clients have been regarding their relationship with their mother or their mother in law and so we solve our emotional problems in all the same way and that is managing our brain, training our

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

brain, becoming the boss of our brain. So it was from an Instagram Live that I got this topic that I decided to talk on boundaries today. So we're going to talk about what a boundary is and when it's appropriate to use a boundary and to help you analyze if that's really what you want to do. It's kind of a loosely used word these days. We sometimes say, well, they cross my boundary. In other words, maybe they're meaning they push me too far or maybe they said something that was totally unacceptable to us or maybe they did something that interfered with our personal space, our spiritual space, our feelings about family. And so we're going to talk about when it's appropriate to set a boundary and how to determine if that's necessary to do so. In the Instagram Live, a couple of weeks ago someone asked how to handle when your adult children are having a bad influence over your younger children that are still living at home and they're influencing them, they're trying to pull them to their side. That is going against some of the values you are teaching them. And I couldn't understand the specific I would have needed to have a conversation with her. But let's just say about going to church. Let's just say your adult children have decided not to go to church. So when they get around their younger siblings they're trying to influence them to have similar thoughts and that they should be considering maybe not until when they got older and leave the house. I don't know what the rules are in individual houses about going to church if you want to or not, but people have pretty definite feelings about that. But anyway, this was really bothering this woman and she didn't know how to handle it. Whether we set a boundary or not, having to do with what these adult children are saying or doing with their younger siblings, it's an individual decision as to whether we want to set a boundary or not. There's no absolutes as to when they are to be set. It's a personal decision. Now I would say anytime there was any sort of physical or even extreme emotional abuse then definitely that's a time where it's jeopardizing our safety and so we for sure want to set a boundary there. So first of all, I'm going to talk about what is the difference between a boundary and a request. A request is just that, a request.

Whether it's a request or boundary, they don't have to like it. But you just make a request and let me give you an example. My family, my parents and my brother were not members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter day Saints. And I joined this church when I had just graduated from college. So I was, like, 21. And that was a horrible thing to my family, about the worst thing I ever could have done. So when I would get around my brother, he would always badmouth me in regard to the church and accuse me of alienating myself from my family because of it. And he'd also make some accusations about how my husband was treating me in regard to what he thought. He was following certain teachings of our church. Now, I can't control him and I can't convince him otherwise. But it was very contentuous, and I didn't care for the conversations we were

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

having. It was hard for me to find loving thoughts about my brother when we carry on these conversations. So I just made a request that we never talk about my involvement about my membership in this particular church. And he respected my request and never did. So I can request anything I want of anybody without being defensive, without being resentful, but kindly and lovingly, and then we see where it goes from there. Now, a boundary is a request, but if it's not honored, there is a consequence. And you openly share what that boundary is and what the consequence is going to be. But the consequence isn't going to be what the other person has to do. It's an action you are going to take or you are going to do. So say my brother did not honor my request, and he kept bringing up what a horrible thing I had done in joining this church and badmouthing things that were of value to me from this church, then I might set a boundary. And it may sound something like this. I'm asking that we don't discuss my membership in this church ever again. But if you do bring it up, and if we're on the phone, I'm going to say, I love you, but I think it's time to get off the phone and I'm going to hang up the phone. If we're in each other's presence, then I'm going to walk away. Do you see? I didn't put any responsibility on him of what he had to do.

It was all on me and what I was going to do. So one thing maybe is if one of my children, who I felt was struggling and came into my house and wanted to smoke, I would request that he not smoke in the house, that he go outside. And if he didn't honor that request, then I would get more specific. I would start by requesting him not to smoke in the house. And then if he didn't honor that request, I would say, if you're going to smoke in my house, I am going to ask you to go outside. So it told him what I was going to do. I was going to ask him to go outside. Now, that doesn't sound very threatening to a relationship, but when you set a boundary and most of the time we want to work it out with requests and maybe some conversation, but if you're setting a boundary and they don't like it and it makes them mad, they may not want to have a relationship with you anymore. So what I'm saying is be very careful before you set a boundary. And I'll give you some reasons of why you might want to set a boundary, but you have to be willing to risk losing the relationship. And I'll address later the situation with the mother and the adult children that were influencing her younger children in a way she didn't approve of. But right now, I want to give you some steps to setting boundaries. So the very first thing you want to do is not set a boundary or even make a request when you are feeling angry or resentful or out of sorts. It's not a spur of the moment thing. You want to think it out a little bit and you want to get yourself in a place of peace and love. And like I said, not when you're annoyed, not as this threat that comes across, because you're really just kind of being defensive. And anytime you're defensive, you're going to start a war or an argument that gets nobody anywhere. So get yourself in a place of peace and love and as I give you these steps, it'll probably tell

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

you how to do that. So the first thing you do is make a request. So as I made the request to my brother, I would appreciate it if you never brought up anything about my membership in this church. I said it very kindly and respectfully and I think that was partly why he honored my request. Then you ask yourself, do I really want to set a boundary? You're thinking, probably something has to change. I can't live like this, this can't go on. But it can't be from a manual. It can't be, they shouldn't be doing this. It goes back to if they don't know it's bothering you, then they're going to continue to do it because they feel very strongly about it. And I'm thinking about these adult kids influencing their younger siblings. They've got strong feelings and opinions and probably research of maybe why they quit going to church. And so they're trying to form a team that everybody in this family is going to think this way, but we can't have the manual. They shouldn't be doing this because these are not their children. These are my children and they're interfering with how I raise them.

One way then to handle that is deciding, do you really want to set a boundary or can you handle it a different way? For instance, you could take on a whole different perspective that perspective may be there's two perspectives. Well, there's always more than two perspectives to every happening, but the perspective you're having is, these are my kids and I want to teach them my values as long as I can so that they will follow these values when they get older. The other perspective could be they might as well start seeing the other side now, because when they become adults and move out of the home, it's available to them. All the knowledge, all the people that have decided to leave the church, they're out there. So maybe if they see both sides now, and while they're still under the umbrella of some of my schooling, maybe they'll see both sides and evaluate which way of life do they like better? So do you see, that's a whole different perspective. So maybe you wouldn't want to set a boundary. And again, as long as it's loving and kind, you can always make a request. I prefer that we talk about something else when we're together, but we can't control other people so they don't have to like our request and they don't have to even go along with it. So do I really want to set this boundary? Because, remember, you might lose the relationship. So you've decided, let's say you want to set a boundary, that it is just infringing upon your personal space of teaching those younger kids the values you want to teach them without any interference. So then you need to decide what you will do if they don't meet your request and then you just have to live with it. So you might say, if you don't stop talking negatively about the church to your siblings, I'm going to ask that you not be near them at least while I'm around.

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

So again, it's up to them and they may not like that or they may think you've got your blinders on, that you're not being fair with those siblings. They can have all sorts of opinions, but you decide what is going past respecting yourself and what you want to do. So then you make a request. So this is what you consider. Also before you make a boundary, is your relationship with yourself better because you've made this boundary or will you regret having set that boundary? In other words, do you like your reason for even setting a boundary? And I'll have to tell you that most of the time, boundaries are not necessary. Most of the time we just need to make requests coming from love and understanding and maybe telling them why you're making that request. But it's only when they won't respect your request that you set a boundary. So you got to like your reason. And your reason may be, in the case of these younger children, this is my only chance, this is their only opportunity of hearing about the church from their family.

We've got to make sure that we're not creating a new problem in other words, the problem of disassociating ourselves with the older kids. Because like I said, it may be a good thing that your younger children hear this. There's a 50% chance they'll just blow it all away and there's a 50% chance that they're going to embrace it. But in a situation like this, if it's not from their siblings, they can look it up on the internet. There's all sorts of people out there that can influence them. So here comes the hard part on setting a boundary. You must follow through with the consequence. If you set a boundary that you no longer want them, your older kids belittling the church to the younger kids. And if they do, you're either going to ask them to leave and maybe not ever be around them again. You've got to figure out what's going to make this more than just a request that you're serious about this, but you must follow through with it. If you don't follow through with the consequence, this isn't a boundary. It's hardly even a request. It's more of just a wish. But I think it's good to make a request and this is what we should do more often and then have a conversation around it. So I want to tell you about a situation in my life with myself and my husband. We were in Africa and as we were there, all the senior couples lived in new flats and anytime a new couple came in, we'd always get together. Now, I'm a real talker. I mean, I really like to talk any chance I get. So my husband told me that he thought I was a very good person and he wanted to help me be even a better person. And he suggested that I not talk so much when I'm around other people. So just as we he said that we were getting ready to go next door to meet another couple. And so we're sitting there and I'll admit my thoughts about what he said that he shouldn't be saying that. It's part of my manual that husbands don't make requests like that to their spouses, to their wives. And so I went over and subconsciously I decided I'm just going to be myself. So I was my talkative self. And so my husband gently took two fingers and tapped me on my knee. And I knew that was a sign that I was talking too much. So I politely got up and said, I think I need to go back to my flat. It was nice

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

meeting you. See you tomorrow. So my husband stayed and I went back to our flat. So I just let it go. But then it happened again another time when we were with a group of people and he started tapping me on my knee. So I stayed. But after we got home, I didn't set a boundary, but I made a new request. And my request was I would prefer it if you never tapped me on my knee again. And my thoughts were I could have gotten defensive, but that would have started an argument. My thoughts were, I am a good person. I have a good heart, and there are people out there that like me. Even though I talk a lot, we can't control what others will say or how they'll react, and we can't control their actions. So for instance, the person that you request that they go outside when they smoke and they don't do it the next time they're coming over, you may want to set the boundary. If you are going to come over and smoke inside my house, I will never allow you to come back into our home again. We are responsible for taking care of our own needs when we advocate them to someone else, that they should just know that I don't like smoke in the house, or they should be more respectful of how I want to raise my kids. You're operating from a manual of what people that if they liked and respected you, this is what they do? No, they get to do anything they want to do. And if you operate from shoulds, they should know by now, I don't want smoke in my house.

You'll lose every time because we can't control them and they really want to smoke inside your house. The other thing is we can't expect someone else to read our minds. So when my grandkids come over and I give them a snack and their parents are here and they take it and they go in the living room and they smear it all over my couch and my kids don't reprimand them, I can't be angry at my kids for not disciplining their kids. I need to take the responsibility that when we eat in this house, we only eat in the kitchen. And if you aren't going to honor that request, then I am not going to give you any food while you're in my house. But again, I have to like my reason for doing that, and I have to follow through. Maybe it doesn't take a boundary like that. Maybe it's just having a conversation with my daughter or my son about his kid's behavior. I don't want them eating anywhere but in the kitchen. Can you help me make that happen? And then again, we don't have any control over them and we can't go to our manual. If they respect me, they'll respect my request. No, they'll either honor your request and discipline their kids and help you get them to eat in the kitchen, or you don't serve them any food.

Setting Boundaries when you set boundaries, you become responsible for your feelings. You're not resentful for what somebody else is doing or not doing. You have made it clear of what's acceptable and what's not acceptable in your personal space. We're not responsible for whether they like our boundary or not. They are responsible for their feelings so they can choose to like it or not, setting necessary boundaries. Even

Loving on Purpose Podcast

with Bonnie Lyman

outwardly, expressing our request feels like we can establish an honest, clean way to have a good relationship. It's telling the truth. From your perspective, some might say I was rude to my husband, that he was just trying to help me be a better person. I mean, my husband loves me and I know that. And yeah, I probably do talk too much. He's probably right. But from my perspective, I felt like, first of all, he was infringing on my space and trying to change one of the things that I like about myself, that I get along with so many people and it's so easy for me to talk to other people. I feel very relaxed around them. But he had a manual for me. For me to be even a better person, I shouldn't talk so much. Number two, why I didn't feel I was being rude to my husband. I know a lot of people that like that. I talk a lot. And number three, I know myself well enough that sometimes for me to feel good about myself, apparently I feel like I need to talk a lot. We all have our agency. The greatest showing of love we can give to another person is to respect their agency and respect that we have agency also. So I want you to remember these steps. If you can make a request, make a request. It's only in the toughest of situations that we really where there's really a power struggle we feel like going on that we want to set a boundary. Not even a power struggle, but that someone is really infringing upon your personal space.

And so you just clean it up and you be honest and you're you get it out there like the reason of why you're setting a boundary and follow through. If you are going to set a consequence, you're only going to feel worse if you don't follow through with the consequence. I hope this helped you. I actually thought this was going to be a really short podcast. I guess I do talk a lot. I can't wait to talk to you next week. Have a great week and go do some lovin on those people that are the most important people in your life. If you like this episode and you felt it was of benefit to you, I ask you to share it with somebody that perhaps it could also benefit. But if you're still feeling kind of stuck in that you don't know how to apply what was talked about or where to start, on changing your thoughts, on changing your perspective, on bettering your relationship, get on a call with me and we can have a discussion, and I can tell you how to apply it and where we start. And then you get to decide what you want to do about this relationship that maybe you're struggling with your adult children. There is no reason to go on the rest of our lives struggling with our relationships with our adult children. Let's assume the best. Let's assume that we all love each other and we're just trying to figure out how to maintain our own boundaries and respect another ones. But I can help you with everything. So just go to [Bonnie Lyman.com](http://BonnieLyman.com) and book a call. I can't wait to hear from you.