

Safety:

Healthy boundaries, respect, and gentleness sustain our healing environment.

Creating a healing environment for ourselves enables far more rapid and smoother healing. There are many facets to a healing environment. It is incredibly helpful to have interactions with others that are gently respectful of our boundaries. This is necessary for us to heal. It's a process of gradually finding and nurturing relationships that support our healing. See the Connecting Step for more ideas on this.

Establishment of self awareness regarding safety creates a fundamental foundation for further healing, self actualization (or realizing our full potential), and learning. Our internal environment is as important as our external environment. When dealing with our internal environment the concepts of healthy boundaries, respect and gentleness are paramount. Being gentle with ourselves, and respectful of the challenges we are facing, helps us to create healthy boundaries for our internal world. Focusing on self-safety creates a platform for healing.

Traumatic memories carry with them myths and fears that can skew our sense of safety. Sometimes the myths and fears make us feel unsafe when we are actually physically safe. Sometimes they lead us to believe that we're safe in risky situations. These skewed perspectives can lead to behaviors that limit our opportunities and/or lessen our safety. A major function of healing is developing the ability to discern our actual level of safety regardless of our emotions. One of our members says to himself, "I am safe today when my health and well being are not at risk."

Each of us is responsible to choose who we share with and how much we share. Maintaining healthy boundaries is an ongoing process with each person we relate to, shifting to fit the situation.

We create our own safety today. Each of us deserves to be safe and to feel as safe as we can. It's up to us to choose situations and set boundaries that are safe for us. We can choose healing tools that help us determine and maintain healthy boundaries. They can also foster respect and gentleness—towards ourselves and others.

Vital Cycle: The healthier our boundaries, the safer we are, the easier it is to set healthier boundaries.