
SOCIAL BOUNDARIES

Boundaries with Friends and Social Life

How to maintain friendships without neglecting your marriage, and when a friendship is crossing the line.

Boundary Agreement Resource Library

Dr. Hines Inc. | boundaryagreement.com

This guide is a coaching resource, not therapy or counseling.

Friends Are Not the Enemy

Healthy friendships outside your marriage are not a threat. They are essential. You need people who are not your spouse. Your partner cannot be everything to you, and expecting them to be is a recipe for suffocation.

But friendships need boundaries too. Especially when they start to compete with or undermine your marriage.

The Venting Boundary

Everyone needs to vent. But if your friends know every detail of your last argument and your partner does not know you told them, that is a problem. Venting to friends should never replace communicating with your spouse.

The Opposite-Sex Friendship

This is not about jealousy. It is about wisdom. If you are having emotional conversations with someone of the opposite sex that you would not have in front of your partner, you have already crossed a line. Transparency is the boundary.

The Time Allocation

If you are spending more quality time with friends than with your spouse, something is off. Friendships are important. Your marriage is primary. If your partner feels like they get your leftovers, that needs to change.

The Influence Check

Are your friends building up your marriage or tearing it down? If your friends speak negatively about your partner, mock marriage, or encourage behavior that would hurt your relationship, they are not your friends. They are a liability.

The Couple Friendship

Invest in friendships with other couples who are committed to their marriages. Iron sharpens iron. Surround yourselves with people who are fighting for their relationship, not running from

it.

EXERCISE: The Friendship Audit

Answer honestly. Discuss with your partner.

Name your 3 closest friends. Does your partner feel comfortable with each of them?

Have you shared something with a friend that your partner does not know?

Is there a friendship your partner has concerns about? Have you listened?

Are you giving your partner more energy than your friends, or less?

What couple friendship would you like to invest in?
