
TRUST & RECOVERY

The Trust Rebuild

A step-by-step guide to restoring trust after it has been broken. No shortcuts. No pretending.

Boundary Agreement Resource Library

Dr. Hines Inc. | boundaryagreement.com

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

Trust Is Not a Feeling

Trust is not something you decide to give back. Trust is rebuilt through consistent, verifiable behavior over time. You cannot talk your way back to trust. You have to walk your way back.

If trust has been broken in your relationship, whether through dishonesty, infidelity, financial deception, or broken promises, this guide provides the framework for rebuilding. It will not be fast. It will not be comfortable. But it is possible.

Phase 1: Full Disclosure

The person who broke trust must provide complete honesty. Not trickle truth. Not partial confessions. Everything. If new information comes out later, it resets the clock to zero. The betrayed partner gets to ask questions. The answers must be truthful, even when they hurt.

Phase 2: Accountability Without Defensiveness

The person rebuilding trust does not get to say 'You need to move on' or 'How long are you going to hold this over me?' The timeline is not theirs to set. They demonstrate accountability through actions: transparency with phone and finances, following through on commitments, checking in without being asked.

Phase 3: Consistent Behavior

Trust is rebuilt in small moments. Did you do what you said you would? Were you where you said you would be? Did you tell the truth when a lie would have been easier? Every kept promise is a brick in the foundation.

Phase 4: Gradual Release

Over time, the betrayed partner begins to relax the verification. Not because they are pretending it did not happen, but because the consistent behavior has provided evidence that things have changed. This cannot be forced or rushed.

Phase 5: The New Normal

The relationship will never go back to what it was before. That is not a tragedy. The new version, built on honesty and earned trust, can be stronger than the original. But it is different. Accept that.

EXERCISE: The Trust Inventory

For the person rebuilding trust. Answer daily for 30 days.

Did I tell the complete truth today? Y / N

Did I follow through on every commitment I made? Y / N

Did I get defensive when my partner expressed doubt? Y / N

Did I proactively share information without being asked? Y / N

What is one thing I did today to demonstrate trustworthiness?

EXERCISE: For the Betrayed Partner

Check in with yourself weekly.

Am I seeing consistent change, or just words?

What evidence of trustworthiness have I observed this week?

Am I holding onto resentment that I need to process?

What do I need from my partner right now?

Am I open to the possibility of rebuilding? Why or why not?

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