

Practices for Protection and Creating Good Boundaries

Setting good boundaries on how we relate to others can be an essential aspect of our healing. Many times the trauma or the person inflicting the trauma violated our boundaries. If the trauma started in our young lives, we didn't always have clear boundaries or learn how to develop them. We are constantly interacting energetically with our environment and with those around us. Some people and situations drain our energy, while others fill and enliven us; most of this interaction is at an unconscious level. When you feel your energy being drained or something triggers you, it is important to know some ways to protect yourself. Here are some exercises to feel protected:

Images for Protection—Visualize One of the Following

- a window of glass surrounds you as a protection and sets your boundaries.
- a globe or an egg of rose-colored light (the color of compassionate love) surrounds you and protects you. Nothing can penetrate the shield, but you are able to give off love to others.
- a strong but graceful shield of impenetrable material (it could be shatterproof glass, steel or even iron) surrounding you to establish your boundaries.
- a soft cocoon that gently surrounds and protects you. Inside the cocoon you have plenty of space and all the nourishing things you need to grow and be yourself, to protect and take care of yourself. Sometimes you may want to flex your wings and fly around a bit outside of the cocoon to test your strength. Even outside you are still surrounded by protective energy.

Cutting Energetic Ties

If you feel that your energy is being pulled by a person or situation from a specific part of your body, such as your solar plexus, heart, or throat, place your hands gently over this area of your body. Imagine that your hands form a shield of protection. If a memory comes to mind, breathe out all the painful energy and breathe in loving kindness and compassion. Recognize that you are in the present moment, and that what happened is over. Breathe out and let go of the memory.

If you feel chains or cords connecting you with people, past events, or memories, you can visualize cutting the cords that bind you. Use abdominal breathing to center. When you feel ready, choose some way to cut the ties that bind you—an imaginative scissors, Samurai sword, fire, or cleansing white light. After the visualization, feel your wholeness and integrity.

Holding Your Energy Field

Sometimes when we are with people in conflictive situations we start out like a juicy plum and end up like a dried-up prune. Latin Americans have a strong word, *chupar*—to suck out—for people who drain others. The following brief practice may help you hold your energy so you are not drained or sucked out by others in conflictive situations at home, at work, or during meetings:

- *Be seated and cross your ankles.*
- On your lap join together your fingertips and thumbs of both hands.
- Breathe deeply, relax your shoulders, and feel your energy system circulating in a loop through the channels that run through each of your fingers.
- Rather than losing energy from your body-mind-spirit, with this posture you are circulating energy in a closed system. You can be fully attentive to others and focused on the matter at hand, but without being drained.

Patricia Mathes Cane, Ph.D., *Trauma Healing and Transformation: Awakening a New Heart with Body Mind Spirit Practices*.
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