

Why You Might Feel Guilty for This Loving Action

When I am on a plane, I always find the flight attendant's announcement a little awkward.

Do I listen even though I've heard that speech about seat belts and exit rows 100 times, or do I seem rude and irresponsible like everyone else does and plug in my earphones and pretend like I am putting my phone on airplane mode?

Regardless if I am fully paying attention or not the part that always sticks out to me is when they emphasize "put on your oxygen mask before helping others."

If the plane is going down, grab your mask, put it on, pull the strings, and then look around to help others. It seems to make sense and be a great tip because if you're about to pass out, how can you help anybody else? Simple enough.

Your Everyday Oxygen Mask

Recently, I've been reading the book *Boundaries*, and it quickly has become one of my top five books of all time. There are so many great nuggets of wisdom in this book on how to navigate the pressures of life. I've pretty much highlighted and earmarked every page.

In short, it teaches you how to put on your oxygen mask first by living proactively rather than reactively and to help you put up the appropriate boundaries at work and home.

Even still, there's something about this word "boundaries" that leaves a bad taste in my mouth and still something about this word that seems "bad."

Brene Brown defines boundaries as simply stating what's OK and what's not OK. Check out more from her on boundaries [here](#).

Her definition feels a little easier to digest, and in reality, you're just creating space and choosing what's right for you in that appropriate time and place, all the while mustering up the courage to say yes or no.

So after reading the book three times (yes, that's right, three times) I've learned boundaries are, in fact, good, and walked away completely humbled, realizing I am not as mature as I thought I was.

Navigating the waters of boundaries is a learning game that I feel I'm failing at most days. Maybe I am, and that's OK. Like I said, it's a learning game.

So, what am I learning?

I am learning not to be so afraid that my no will not be interpreted as "I don't love, appreciate or value you."

I am learning not to be so scared of saying "I can't do that" (when I have nothing going on), knowing it might be met with condemnation and judgment.

I am learning not to dwell in my guilt (internal condemnation), but instead, to deal with it appropriately.

I am learning that I don't need to be all things to all people because this is a recipe for disaster.

I am learning that anger isn't bad, but rather, a warning sign that's something is off and needs to be adjusted.

I am learning to take time for me and more frequently enjoy the activities I would normally do on vacation.

I am learning that it really might save my life (in a daily sense) to put on my oxygen mask first!

In the End

Setting boundaries is easier said than done, but again I am

learning. I understand it's a process, and one day, I hope I can look back and see how I've grown. This inner growth/heart work is the hardest, but I also believe it's the most rewarding.

So, don't take it from me, but listen to your flight attendant: When your life is on the line and the plane is going down, put on your own oxygen mask first.

And in the everyday battle, when it can seem like your sanity is on the line, put on your oxygen mask first, because your everyday peace and joy just may depend on it. {eo}

*A speaker, writer and coach, **Mikaela Kate** has invested seven years in developing leaders from college-age men and women. Conducting Bible studies, women's groups and young adult teams, she encourages others to go further and higher—taking their gifts, passions and skills to the next level. Mikaela currently lives in South Carolina and is an active member of The Father's House Church.*