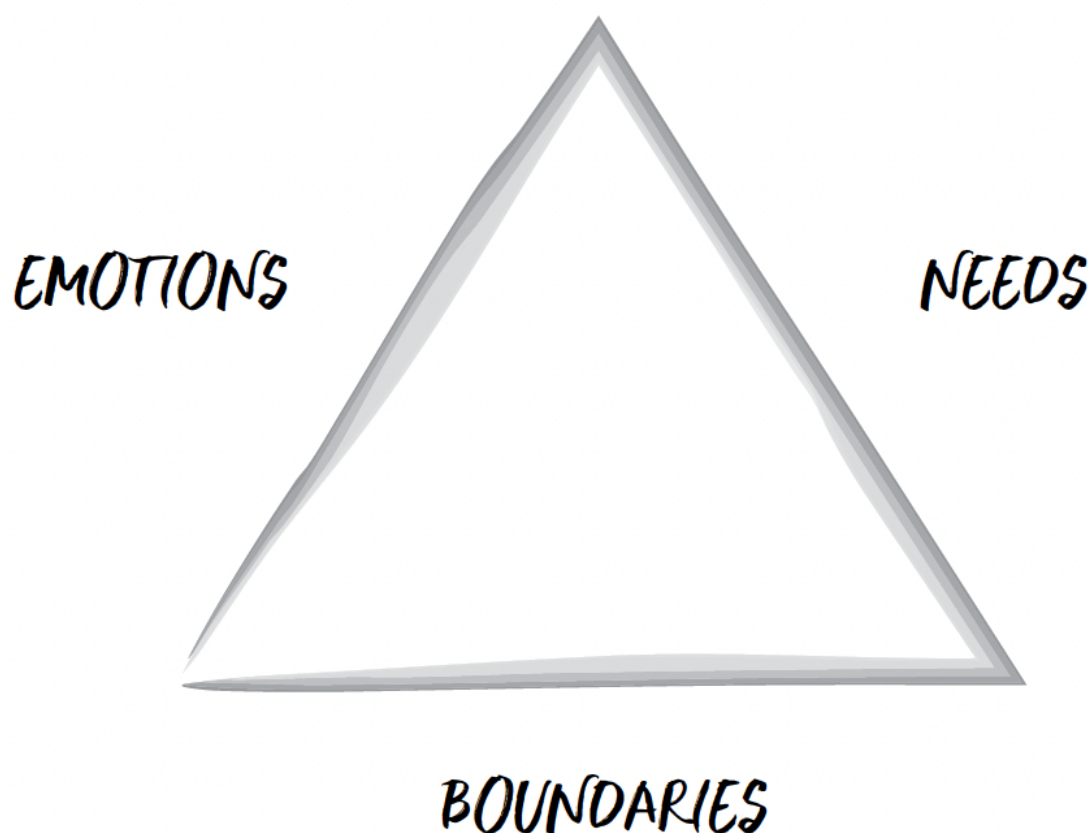


# HOW TO COACH WITH LOVE

*Self-Esteem Triad*



## SELF-ESTEEM TRIAD



### **The Self-Esteem Triad:**

1. Your needs must be met, consistently and with love, care and respect.
2. Your boundaries must be respected, consistently and with love, care and respect.
3. Your emotions must be respected, consistently and with love, care and respect.

Your Self-Esteem Triad is where your boundaries meet and unite to give you a strong, grounded, and undeniable sense of who you are. This invisible force field around you tells you what's okay and what's not. It articulates your needs – what matters to you even when you neglect these needs – and your access to your emotional intimacy, where deep connection with yourself and others is paramount.

## SELF-ESTEEM TRIAD: NEEDS

Our **needs**, in this context, are what our child-selves needed to feel validated, important, worthy and loved. With these assurances, we retain our I-amness, and go into adulthood with a sense of belonging.

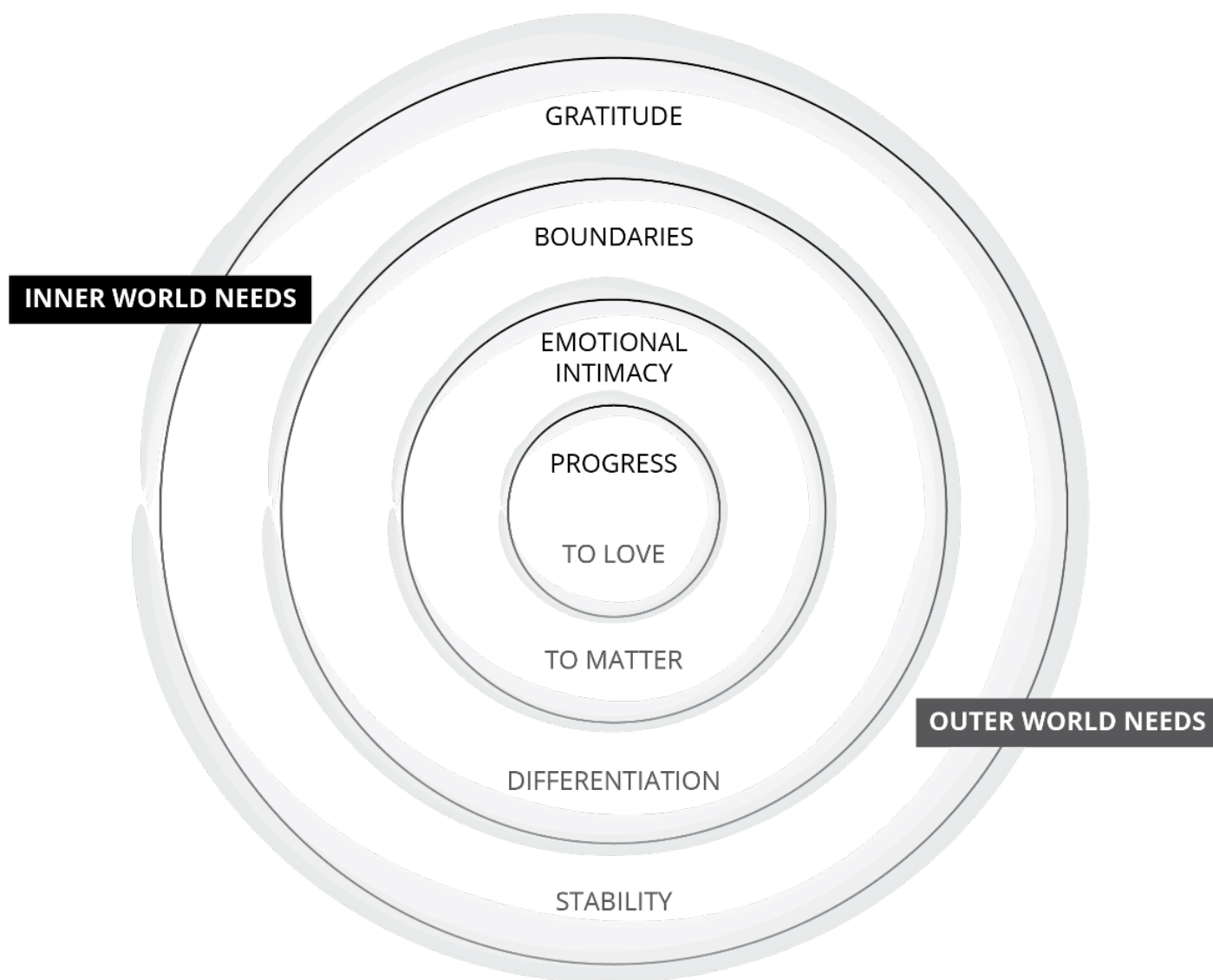
Our needs are survival-based, and nurture-based. Both types of needs are vital, when we're growing up, to our sense of who we are, that we belong, and that we are okay.

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## YOUR VITAL NEEDS



**Learning to meet your Vital Needs** provides the pathway to learning how to trust your Inner World – to be able to look within for answers. This is how you learn that you matter and that you're worthwhile. These needs are the bridge to your mindful self – the part of you that is already alight with the truth of who you are. Vital Needs are not optional. They are the very lifeblood of your selfesteem. To ignore these needs is to tell yourself that you don't matter.



**There are four Inner World Vital Needs and four Outer World Vital Needs** for you to learn to meet each and every day. By cultivating habits that meet these needs, you are teaching your mind to work for you instead of against you. You give yourself the gift of creating a garden rich with all it needs having been met so that your Centered Self can flourish. Think of your mind as a flower. For it to be its beautiful best, it will need eight different nutrients. When any of these nutrients are neglected, the flower can't reach its full potential.

**The Inner World Needs and the Outer World Needs work in harmony with each other.**

Starting on the outer ring of what you need, are Gratitude and Stability. Then, as you move in through the rings to the center – your Centered Self – you come closer to knowing yourself, what matters to you, how you matter to the world, and what gives you meaning.

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### **1. Inner World Needs –**

Gratitude → Boundaries → Emotional Intimacy → Progress

### **2. Outer World Needs –**

Stability → Differentiation → To Matter → To Love

**The Inner and Outer World Needs are partners:**

Gratitude/Stability

Boundaries/Differentiation

Emotional Intimacy/To Matter

Progress/To Love

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As you learn to meet each pair of needs consistently, the next set of needs present themselves and become available to you. Gratitude and Stability work hand in hand. The first is the internal need; the second is the external need. Having (internal) gratitude gives you (external) stability.

Next, we have Boundaries and Differentiation. Having firm boundaries (internal) allows you to differentiate your own individual self from that of your tribe (external). This is followed by Emotionality (or Emotional Intimacy) and To Matter. At the center is Progress and To Love.

Each pair of needs – an Inner World Need and an Outer World Need – work together to give you a centered approach to getting your needs met. When one need is met to the exclusion of the other, you'll be out of balance. You are not being truthful with yourself, or in some way you're denying yourself what you need. Any area of denial, suppression, or indifference you feel is a wonderful indicator to you of where you could become more mindful and attentive.

For example, you can't be emotionally unavailable to yourself or others and still expect to matter to others for who you are. You're not being yourself, you're not fully expressing yourself, and you're presenting only certain aspects of yourself to them. Others may not fully realize that you're not being your real, authentic self but you will know, and this tug of incongruity will prevent you from feeling genuinely connected to them.

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## SELF-ESTEEM TRIAD: BOUNDARIES

Our **boundaries** are invisible and symbolic 'force fields' that are pulsing from us. When they're healthy and functional, they serve as an early-warning detection system for when someone comes into our personal space, or tries to abuse us or use us. They signal to us when we're going into someone else's space and abusing or using them. It may mean that we won't be yelled at. Or belittled. Or told what to do with our body. Or told how to dress. It may mean we expect people to honour their word to us.

And to be there for us when we need support.

[illegible]



## WHAT HEALTHY BOUNDARIES LOOK LIKE

I can remember being so unsure of myself Back Then that I would wait tensely to see what others thought about something before I would cautiously join the conversation. Or would go to the opposite extreme and try to dominate the conversation so people had to agree with me. Yep, what a party...

I began to notice that other people didn't do this, and had a much richer and rewarding experience of life. I'll just mention that had you told me this was possible Back Then, I would have thought you had serious issues. No one could be like this. And if they were, they were faking it.

Here are some thoughts about what characterizes this mode of being in the world...

- **You see yourself accurately.** Not worse than you are, and not better than you are. Just as you are – and not all blurry through the lens of how you think everyone else sees you and perceives you.
- **You know who you are,** what you prefer, what your needs are, what you're interested in, and you express these preferences by way of the choices you make.
- **You do what you say you'll do,** even if the commitment is only to yourself.
- **You develop appropriate trust over time.** You're not overly trusting in the early stages of a relationship; nor do you hide behind walls of distrust.
- **You give and receive love,** care, and respect consistently and without having to be prompted.
- **You behave according to your own values** about what it means to you to be the person you want to be.
- **No one else gets to describe your reality** or dictate how you think or feel.
- **You know you're responsible for your own happiness.**
- **You weigh the consequences of your actions** on yourself and on others.
- **You don't try to control someone or have power over them,** and you don't let others do this to you.





- **You're able to notice with joy when someone expresses appropriate boundaries.**
- **You respect the generosity of others** when they are generous with you. You don't devalue or dismiss this. You don't take this for granted or think it's what you're "owed".
- **You help someone because you want to**, not because you feel emotionally blackmailed or bullied into it, or because you "have" to be seen to be a "good" person.
- **You tell the truth.** You're okay if someone doesn't like this.
- **You accept apologies**, but you recognize patterns of deceit, selfishness, and lack of thoughtfulness, and you respond by managing your own emotional reactivity, requesting respect, and if the relationship isn't close, creating appropriate emotional distance.
- **You are compassionate, empathetic, and kind to others.** This doesn't mean you're a people-pleaser.
- **You can hear ideas that are in opposition to your own** and be delighted by the differences and be willing to discuss them.
- **You can say "no"** in a way that isn't defensive or reflects your need for approval. You're okay with someone else saying "no" and you don't take it personally.
- **You express what you want** without manipulation, without responding with the "silent treatment," aggression, passive aggressiveness, or innuendo.
- **If someone compares you unfavorably to someone else you're not defensive**, and you don't take it personally. You privately explain to them that being compared to someone else is hurtful. You say that you are who you are and that you would appreciate that they respect this.
- **You don't look for reasons to be sensitive or upset**, but instead, assume good faith behavior on the part of the people in your life. In this, you give others the benefit of the doubt.
- **You're okay putting yourself first**, and you don't feel unduly selfish doing so. You have people in your life who know this is healthy selfcare.
- When someone in your life is deliberately rude, gossips about you, or tries to spoil your moments of celebration and you ask them for their kindness and don't get it,



you adjust accordingly rather than letting it continue and feeling personally devastated as a result.

- **You don't assume you know what's going on for someone else.**
- **You don't assume someone has it "better" than you.** You know everyone has stuff going on, and that no one has it made. Everyone is deserving of your compassion.
- **You are able to recognize people who are "emotionally mature".** You see their capacity for calmness under pressure, their lack of a need for drama, and their willingness to be open yet able to say when they don't agree.
- **You're able to recognize emotionally unsafe people** who willingly shut down vulnerability, who are self-involved, who see things in terms of black and white, who mistake feelings for facts, and who wish for a different life or circumstance and do nothing to bring it about.
- **You're able to express your preferences** and insist upon them when it concerns you. Equally, you can go with the flow when it doesn't really concern you.
- **People can give you feedback that you consider without hypersensitivity,** and if it's sound, you act on it.
- **You express gratitude easily.**
- **You reciprocate warmth and openness without the need to "test" others.**
- **It's not all about you.** There is reciprocity in your relationships that are characterized by a flow of attention, energy, and focus depending on what's going on for both parties. You don't make it all about them all the time. Equally, you don't expect it to be about you all the time.
- **If you have a family, your children don't have to fulfill a part of you that you don't know how to fulfill.** You alone are responsible for how you feel, how you think, and what you do. Your "stuff" is about you.
- **You don't respond in anger or judgment when your child or someone else makes a mistake** because you know that's about you and would violate their boundaries. You take a time out, gather your thoughts, and respond with appropriateness to the situation. You recognize that your emotional reactivity is you making their humanity shameful.



- **You get that your kids are not responsible for your own emotional reactivity.** Ever. You won't confuse your boundaries with anyone else's boundaries, including and especially your children's.
- **Because you have a strong sense of self, you know you're okay.** This means that others aren't there to make you look good, or "hold up the family's good name," or in any way champion what you think matters. People in your life are there to fulfill their journey, not yours.
- **You don't shame anyone, including your kids, in their moment of vulnerability.**
- **You celebrate people's efforts. With them and with other people.**
- **You're no longer addicted to rescuing others to feel good about yourself.** In fact, you tend to avoid people who need constant rescuing, as you recognize this as their addiction.
- **You are free to explore the world** and you know it's a safe place because you nurture yourself, take care of yourself, respect yourself, and recognize what you need. In the same way, you extend compassion, warmth, and inspiration to others who are on a similar journey of self-discovery.

I find these qualities delightful and entirely worth the pursuit!

When you make this shift, those around you who are engaged in their Own Awesome Lives also shift. The "battle" you may be accustomed to – that of fighting to be heard – disappears. You become able to build relationships based on reciprocal love, care, and respect. Because you attract people who also have a strong sense of self, no one is offended when you voice your truth, and because you have a strong sense of yourself, you are not offended when someone else expresses their own truth

You and the people in your life are genuinely pleased that you are secure in your own convictions and are prepared to state them. And you're delighted when people voice their preferences, even when they're different from your own. Conversations where thoughts, feelings, and perceptions are shared are treated with love, care, and respect.

## SELF-ESTEEM TRIAD: EMOTIONS

Our **emotional truths** are what we feel, how we feel what we feel, how we label this, how we own this, how we experience this, how we release the feeling once we've processed it, and how we feel about what we feel.

Our emotional truths need to be considered important, taken seriously, and validated by the people in our lives, for us to feel secure within ourselves.

When any, or all, of these three key expressions of ourselves are denied, we are going to feel flawed, unworthy, unlovable, and insecure.

[illegible]





## THERE ARE NO NEGATIVE EMOTIONS

All emotions have their place within you, and all of your emotions are valid. To avoid some of them because they're too "negative" is to avoid aspects of yourself. Picture yourself as a ball, rolling through life. Now picture that ball being constructed of your boundaries, your needs, and your emotions. And now remove some emotions from the ball.

What happened? Did your ball deflate a little bit? Perhaps it started rolling in a wobbly fashion because part of it is now missing. Perhaps your ball stopped because the hole in its side is too big. This is the impact of denying a valid aspect of yourself.

If you label your more challenging emotions "negative" then you probably disproportionally value your "positive" emotions. This may manifest in behavior that involves being "super nice," or feeling bad when you don't feel as happy and upbeat as you think you should. It can show up when you feel guilty for feeling down, or hiding when you feel flat or deflated. It can show up in insisting people close to you "cheer up" and deny them their darker emotions. Or you look for the "sunny side" in an ongoing, exhausting demonstration of how "positive" you are.

Society seems to prize positivity and happiness. We struggle for it to be okay for us to express the full range of our emotions, whatever they may be. Again, however, by avoiding our more difficult emotions we only explore certain aspects of ourselves.

This can be a big mistake because it's by exploring these more difficult emotions that true healing may be found.

### So let's begin today.

1. **Feel what you feel.** No distractions. No denial. No suppression.
2. **Label how you feel.** Be as clear as you can about what this emotion is.
3. **Own the emotion as yours.**
4. **Acknowledge how you feel,** without judgment or shame.
5. Allow yourself to **feel the feeling completely**, for as long as this takes. For example, if you need a good cry, go on and have it. **Complete the feeling and release it.**
6. Ask yourself **what you learned** and how you can grow from this experience.

Wherever your starting point... sadness... disappointment... annoyance... frustration... the goal here is to notice if it's been triggered by your own emotional reactivity and then recognize the cause of the emotion is not someone else or a situation, but your own automatic reactions.

Sit with how you feel. Acknowledge your emotional reactivity. You're human. These habits are ingrained over years of practice.



Train your mind to process the emotion, resolve to complete the emotion, then move to “frame” the emotion and the experience that led to it in such a way that it becomes possible to turn it into something valuable for growth, for fulfillment, for self-worth, and for love.

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## VULNERABLE YOU

Being emotionally vulnerable is a courageous and daring act of reclaiming yourself. It's a declaration of determination to be who you truly are, without denial or apology. Sharing a vulnerable truth with another is transformative and boosts your self-esteem. When you do this, you in effect declare that you are willing to risk possible rejection because you know you matter.

### **Vulnerability requires you to be honest with yourself.**

Vulnerability requires honesty about which emotions you've been denying yourself or how you've twisted one emotion into another – such as sadness into anger. It requires calling yourself out about how you may have manipulated others, so you don't have to feel what you feel, or so that they don't perceive you as being vulnerable. It requires facing how you've been defensive, aggressive, or dismissive in moments that have called for genuine and heartfelt emotional truth.

To be emotionally intimate is not a secret job undertaken when no one is looking. Emotional intimacy calls for the act of vulnerability to be witnessed and validated by another.

There is something wonderfully freeing and healing about allowing another person to see a genuinely vulnerable moment in you, and have it treated with the tenderness and respect it deserves.

Emotional honesty requires you to speak up about when you're hiding, denying, or being incongruent with how you feel. It may be scary to drop your guard because you're used to feeling afraid of this. But to stay hidden is to turn away from your Centered Self – from the true essence of who you really are.

You are, no matter how much you may wish to deny it, an emotional being.

### **Here are some ways that you may further explore this for yourself:**

1. Tell someone you trust how you really feel. "I feel sad," "I could do with a hug," "I'm not sure how to approach this."
2. If someone you trust shuts you down, point it out: "Hey, I was sharing something important. I'd like to be heard."
3. Let people close to you share how they feel, and don't interrupt them, try to solve anything, offer advice, or tell them they're overreacting.
4. Recognize the emotional reactivity in others. Don't react with your own emotionality. Respond with compassion. With clear boundaries. With the refusal to perpetuate the dance of enmeshment.



# HOW TO COACH WITH LOVE

## SELF-ESTEEM TRIAD

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## COMPASSIONATE YOU

To be willing to develop this relationship with yourself takes more than courage. It also takes compassion. When you decide to face how you feel, with all its rawness, weirdness, discomfort, and/or shame, you're declaring that your internal world is a compassionate zone. You alone can give yourself this gift.

Compassion doesn't involve self-pity, or feeling like a victim, or deciding to give up because it's too hard, or experiencing a feeling of defeat. Those things constitute toxic shame, making you want to hide, run, and deny anything that even remotely feels like it might be a profound moment full of meaning.

Compassion is your willingness to do what you need to do to heal yourself from your past. It's the moment when you interrupt the gremlin in your head that is spewing criticism and saying Hang on... that's enough... I don't deserve that.

**Compassion is you seeking, with dogged persistence, the Inner World within you that provides you with guidance, wisdom, and certainty.**

This is the compassion that comes from knowing Your Awesome Life awaits you. Bring your compassion to life in the following ways:

- Speak compassionately to yourself.
- Pause before you criticize – is your snarky comment really going to improve anything?
- Share a kind word when someone makes a mistake instead of judging them.
- Seek to understand someone rather than to be understood.
- Be fully present to someone, without it being about you.
- Let someone be fully present to you, and honor this moment with truth.
- Make a mistake, and recognize, with practice, that it doesn't mean that you are a mistake.
- Be compassionate and calm in the face of emotional reactivity.

Compassion can mean letting the moment unfold without you judging yourself.

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# HOW TO COACH WITH LOVE

## SELF-ESTEEM TRIAD

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