



Gentle Boundaries & Compassionate Conversations

A 7-day guided practice for navigating control patterns while maintaining connection and protecting your peace.

You're Not Alone in This

If you're reading this, you're probably navigating something delicate: someone you love is reaching for control, and you're trying to hold space for their struggle while protecting your own peace.

This isn't about choosing between compassion and boundaries. It's about learning that both can—and must—coexist. You don't have to do this perfectly. You just have to start.



What's Inside This 7-Day Kit



Daily Reflection Prompts

Clarify your needs and feelings through guided journaling that helps you name what you're experiencing.



Conversation Scripts

Address control patterns without blame using compassionate language that invites understanding.



Boundary-Setting Framework

Learn when and how to set clear boundaries when compassion alone isn't enough.



Self-Care Check-Ins

Protect your emotional reserves with practical tools for maintaining your wellbeing.



Emergency Support

Know when patterns escalate beyond healthy boundaries and how to access immediate help.

Days 1-2: Name What You're Feeling & Assess the Pattern

01

Morning Reflection (Day 1)

Grab your journal and spend 5 minutes answering: What specific behavior bothers me? How does it make me feel? What do I need instead? Be concrete—"He insists on choosing all our meals" rather than "He's controlling."

03

Reality Check (Day 2)

Answer honestly: How long has this been happening? Is it getting better, worse, or staying the same? When I've raised concerns before, how did he respond? Do I feel physically safe raising this with him?

Why this matters: You can't address what you can't name. Clarity is the first step to compassionate boundaries.

02

Evening Practice (Day 1)

Share one feeling with a trusted friend. Not to vent, but to be witnessed. Say: "I'm noticing I feel [emotion] when [behavior] happens. I'm working through how to address it, and I just needed to say it out loud."

04

Pattern Recognition (Day 2)

Check if he can acknowledge stress, takes responsibility, shows openness to help, and if you feel heard. If you check 3+ items, there's room for growth. If 1 or fewer, consider professional support.

Day 3: Your First Conversation

Choose Your Moment Wisely

Pick a time when you're both not hungry, tired, or rushed. Make sure you won't be interrupted and you're not already in conflict. The setting matters as much as the words.

The Five-Part Script

1. **Opening:** Ask permission to talk and set a time limit
2. **Observation:** Name the behavior without blame
3. **Invitation:** Ask what's stressing them
4. **Boundary:** Share how it affects you
5. **The Ask:** Request partnership in finding solutions

Example Opening

"Hey, I want to talk about something that's been on my mind. I'm not trying to attack you—I care about you and about us. Can we spend 10 minutes on this?"

Example Observation

"I've noticed that [specific behavior] has been happening a lot lately. For example, [concrete example]. I'm not saying it's intentional, but I wanted to check in."

Example Boundary

"I feel [emotion] when [specific situation]. I need us to figure out how to balance your need for [control/structure] with my need for [autonomy/ease/partnership]."

After the conversation, journal: How did it go? What did you learn about what he's carrying? Did he listen, deflect, or get curious? What's one small shift you agreed to try?

Day 4: Set One Clear Boundary

The Boundary Formula

**"I understand [his need/struggle],
AND I need [your need]. Moving
forward, I'm going to [your action]
so we can both feel respected."**

1

Meal Control Scenario

Situation: He dictates meal times and gets upset if you eat outside the schedule.

Boundary: "I know routines help you feel grounded, and I need flexibility with my own eating. Moving forward, I'll honor your schedule for yourself, but I'm going to eat when I'm hungry."

2

Financial Control Scenario

Situation: He controls household finances and questions your purchases.

Boundary: "I understand money feels tight and you want us to be secure. I also need autonomy within our agreed budget. Let's set a personal spending limit for each of us, and anything within that is a solo decision."

3

Decision-Making Scenario

Situation: He makes all decisions without asking your input.

Boundary: "I know you're trying to take the lead, and I need to feel like we're deciding together. Moving forward, I'm going to speak up with my preference, and we'll figure it out as a team."

Practice saying your boundary out loud three times. You're training your body to feel the weight of your own words.

Day 5: Protect Your Energy



Self-Care Isn't Selfish—It's Survival

When you're navigating someone else's stress responses, you need your own anchor. This isn't optional—it's essential to your wellbeing and your ability to hold boundaries.

Physical Check-In

- Am I sleeping enough?
- Am I eating in a way that feels nourishing?
- Have I moved my body this week?

Emotional Check-In

- Do I have someone I can talk to who isn't him?
- Have I done something this week just for me?
- Am I numbing out (excessive scrolling, drinking, avoiding)?

Relational Check-In

- Am I still spending time with friends/family?
- Am I isolating to keep the peace?
- Do I feel like I can be myself around him?

Today's Action

Do ONE thing that fills your cup. Not for him. Not for the household. For you. Examples: Call a friend. Take a walk alone. Read a chapter of a book. Make your favorite meal. Say no to something you don't want to do.

Days 6-7: Evaluate Progress & Decide Your Next Step

Day 6: Reflection

Has anything shifted since your first conversation? Is he more aware, more defensive, or more open? Do you feel more or less safe expressing your needs? Are you holding your boundaries, or backing down?

If Things Are the Same (or Worse)

This is information. Write down: What happened when I set a boundary? Did he listen, deflect, escalate, or ignore? Do I feel more anxious now than before I spoke up? If yes, it's time for outside support.

1

2

If Things Are Improving

Celebrate it. Small shifts matter. Keep communicating, holding your boundaries, and tending to your own needs. Revisit these prompts in two weeks to check continued progress.

3

4

Day 7: Your Commitment

Choose your path forward: Keep practicing if he's responsive. Bring in professional help if you're both willing but stuck. Reevaluate the relationship if he's dismissive or making you feel unsafe for having needs.

Emergency Support: When Control Becomes Unsafe

If any of these are true, please reach out for help today. **These are not stress responses. These are red flags for abuse.**

- He monitors your phone, location, or who you talk to
- He controls your access to money or transportation
- He threatens you (directly or indirectly) when you assert boundaries
- You feel afraid to speak up or leave
- He isolates you from friends, family, or support
- His anger is unpredictable or escalating

Immediate Resources

National Domestic Violence Hotline (US):

1-800-799-7233 (available 24/7)

SMS Support:

Text "START" to 88788

International Directory:

[hotline.org](https://www.hotline.org)

You are not overreacting. You are not "too sensitive." If your gut says something is wrong, listen to it. Your safety matters more than keeping the peace.

You Deserve a Relationship Where Love Doesn't Cost You Your Freedom

You picked up this kit because you care. About him. About your relationship. About yourself. That care is beautiful. And it's not enough on its own.

You can hold compassion for what he's going through AND hold boundaries around what you need. Both can be true. Both must be true.

If this week brought clarity, relief, or even just permission to name what's been happening—that's a win. If it brought more questions or confirmed your fears—that's valuable information. Trust it.

Your feelings are valid. Your needs are non-negotiable. And you are worthy of a home that feels safe, a relationship where your voice matters, and a life where you're not shrinking to accommodate someone else's unprocessed pain.



Need More Support?

WhatsApp: +254 720 202 299

Email: hello@arcaneguides.com

We offer one-on-one guidance for navigating control patterns, couples support (if he's willing), and resource referrals for therapy, legal help, or safety planning.

You don't have to do this alone. Download this kit. Save it. Return to it. Share it with someone who needs it.

With care,
The Arcane Guides Team