



# Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies

*Alison Cook , Kimberly Miller*

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**Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies** Alison Cook , Kimberly Miller

**What if feelings like anger, sadness, and fear could improve your life for the better? In this practical, life-changing book, Christian counselors Alison Cook and Kimberly Miller describe their unique, five-step process for bringing peace to overwhelming emotions and harmony to your inner world.**

Do you ever struggle to calm your competing, internal "enemies"? *Boundaries for Your Soul* provides a Spirit-based plan for creating remarkable serenity. You can recognize that these often-overwhelming emotions are not your enemies; rather, they are helpers who have gone well beyond their roles, robbing you of deep-down joy and genuine connection with others. By compassionately guiding them to their proper functions you can make them your greatest encouragers and allies.

In *Boundaries for Your Soul*, Cook and Miller guide you through a five-step process for doing so, showing you how to introduce the Holy Spirit to your wayward emotions and transform your weaknesses into powerful strengths.

Filled with anecdotes and wisdom from the authors' combined twenty-five years of study and clinical practice, *Boundaries for the Soul* leads readers on a journey of personal discovery grounded in the Christian tradition. Additional helps include exercises and opportunities for personal reflection.

## Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies Details

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## **From Reader Review Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies for online ebook**

### **Courtney says**

This book is an ideal fusion of psychology and spirituality with a firm foundation in research. There are 1000s of self-help books out there, but this packs a powerful punch. By empowering their readers to strengthen their habits of mindful self-awareness with their Christian faith, they are providing a desperately needed model for inner peace and contentment in contentious times. The first few chapters lay the spiritual framework and background, then they introduce the internal family systems (IFS) method, followed by plenty of relatable, authentic, case stories that help expand the reader's understanding of what is possible. IFS is a research-backed method that has been widely tested in clinical contexts and is successful in treating PTSD, in pain management, and for anxiety and depression. This means the book helps people pair good neuroscience with a deep and abiding sense of the goodness of the soul. What is better? As a person who reads widely in self-help, mindfulness, psychology, and neuroscience, I can **HIGHLY** recommend this book. It will make you a better version of you by building you up--not by giving you another giant to-do list.

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### **Lovely Loveday says**

Boundaries for Your Soul is an insightful read that is full of scripture and reflection. This self-help book is aimed at empowering readers to strengthen their habits of self-awareness and focus on their Christian faith. A step by step guide to help you live your life with God being the center. A great self-help book that is sure to open your eyes and heart to find better peace with God.

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### **Sarah says**

As a social worker and someone who is in ministry, this book is awesome! Boundaries for Your Soul is very helpful, practical and great for interpersonal relationships. This book will help you create healthy boundaries with the external world, so you have healthy boundaries within your internal personal life. I love how this book takes the shift on focusing on our internal world for our overall mental, spiritual and emotional health. This book is not just about the internal dialogue, but finding freedom in the internal dialogue with the Lord. I really enjoyed this book and found it super helpful. It is a great resource and I highly recommend it!

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### **Joan says**

I have read many books on external boundaries and found them very beneficial. I was intrigued by the idea of establishing internal boundaries. It might offer help for runaway thoughts and feelings.

The authors present a Christian approach to the Internal Family Systems Model of Therapy, integrating it

with boundaries concepts. The first third of the book concentrates of helping us understand the parts of our souls, how to identify the parts that need care, and how we can be Spirit-led. The authors write, “The focus of this book is to help you access the Spirit of God abiding in your soul and to encourage you to invite his Spirit to be near those parts of your soul needing care.” (722/4229)

The next part of the book outlines the five part strategy the authors prescribe to do a you-turn and bring the parts of the soul under the leadership of the Spirit-led self. They include focus on an overwhelming part of yourself, befriend this part you don't like, invite Jesus to draw near, unburden this weary part, and finally, integrate it into your internal team of rivals. Specific instructions are given as well as personal examples from their counseling experiences as to how the technique works.

The authors address specific issues in the last third of the book, such as anger, fear, perfectionism, etc. Readers are taken through the five steps for each issue, including an example from the authors' counseling experiences. The authors even point out good aspects of each of these emotions generally thought to be detrimental. Each can be put to good use. There is even a chapter for strategy when the other person has the challenging soul issues.

I think this book has great personal potential. It reminds me of the healing of memories technique that was popular in the Christian realm decades ago. Imagining Jesus coming into the situation is essential. The successful examples in the text are of people doing the imagining as they are directed by one of the authors. How well this process can work by reading a book may be very different. I tried to go through a few of their exercises but my scientifically trained mind had difficulty with the whole imagining Jesus idea.

I do recommend this book to readers who desire to deal with parts of their souls and establish soul integration. Just know there will be much work on the part of the reader required. Just reading the text will not create the healing. Reading this book and going through the suggested exercises might be quite a journey. It may be most helpful to read this book with a trusted friend who can help with the process.

I received a complimentary galley of this book from the publisher. My comments are an independent and honest review.

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## **Kimberly Miller says**

Alison is an amazing co-author! She writes wonderful personal stories in this book!

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## **Holly says**

You can turn your shame to joy, your anger to advocacy, and your inner critic into your biggest champion. Do your emotions control you or do you control your emotions? Many people let guilt, anger, or self-criticism dominate their lives and negatively affect their relationships. Boundaries for Your Soul shows you how to calm the chaos within. This groundbreaking approach will help you: know what to do when you feel overwhelmed, understand your guilt, anxiety, sadness, and fear, welcome God into the troubling parts of your soul, and move from doubt and conflict to confidence and peace. Boundaries for Your Soul includes relatable anecdotes, helpful exercises, an engaging quiz, and opportunities for personal reflection. Gathering the wisdom from the authors' twenty-five years of combined advanced education, biblical studies, and clinical practice, this book will set you on a journey to become the loving, authentic, joyful person you were created to be.

It almost seems counterintuitive to embrace the ugly parts of yourself, but that's exactly what the authors recommend for healing. It focuses on emotions and how to constructively cope with them, rather than shoving them deep inside or allowing them to rule your life. They offer up a five-step approach to walking through those depths of your soul, wading through the mess, and coming out the other side. These five steps include focusing on and owning the emotion, coming to acceptance with it, inviting God to work with you on coping with and overcoming said emotion, unloading that emotion onto either God or others around you, and finally overcoming it and growing into a better person from having experienced it. Written as engagingly as one can write a non-fiction book, this is a good self-help book for those who are struggling to accept themselves in their entirety.

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## **Create With Joy says**

Many of us are familiar with the work of Henry Cloud and John Townsend, who taught us the principles of establishing healthy boundaries with others. Boundaries For Your Soul takes that concept one step further, becoming the first book to focus entirely on applying the concept of boundaries to our internal thoughts and feelings.

Cook and Miller's approach is ground-breaking. By integrating Cloud and Townsend's boundaries concepts with a therapeutic model called the Internal Family Systems model and interpreting it through a Christian lens, Cook and Miller have found a tangible way to help bring wholeness and healing to people's lives.

Boundaries For The Soul can help us to:

- \* Know what to do when we feel overwhelmed.
- \* Befriend our internal enemies.
- \* Move from chaos to confidence.
- \* Transform our anxiety, anger, sadness, and shame.
- \* Discover the peace we've always wanted to have.

If you're looking for a life-transforming book that can help you to change the way that you think, Boundaries For Your Soul is it!

This excerpt is part of an original review that is published on my blog. To read my review in its entirety, please visit [Create With Joy](#).

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## **Julius McCarter says**

Alison Cook and Kimberly Miller's Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies is an excellent blend of psychology and Christian faith that brings rich insight into the problems that most plague genuine Christian living: Things like anger, fear and shame. Here, practitioners who has assisted countless others in walking through their own lives and dealing with that negativity present a spiritually-healthy perspective that Christians -- particularly pastors -- would be foolish to ignore.

And that's because their approach simply makes sense. Too often, pastors encourage parishioners to ignore those negative feelings. Fight them. But Cook and Miller know that it's only in embracing them -- only in

learning lessons from them -- can we grow into spiritually and mentally healthy persons.

Their integration of psychology and faith creates one, richer, more comprehensive approach, and this benefits the reader tremendously.

Don't neglect this book. Spend time with it. Soak in it. And find here the kinds of healing for which you've longed.

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I received a free copy of this book from the publisher in exchange for my honest review here.

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### **Anne Tucker says**

I highly recommend "Boundaries for Your Soul..." This book, aimed at Christians, encourages a deep level of self--or soul--awareness as a means to better fulfilling the two greatest commandments--love the Lord your God with all your heart...love your neighbor as yourself. Internal Family Systems (IFS) counseling (within the context of Christianity) is central to the book and its recommended practices. The book assumes that we are comprised of a mixed cast of internal "characters," and depending on "who's" in charge, we engage in compensatory, soothing, protective, managing, controlling, and numbing behaviors in order to overcome or override painful emotions, memories, or lies that we have believed about ourselves, others, or God. But what to do about it all? The typical advice--"don't trust your feelings!", "think better thoughts!" or "just change your behavior!"--doesn't always lead to long-term change. This book invites the reader to take non-judgmental stock of his/her internal cast of characters and prayerfully uncover what work/task these behaviors/emotions are trying to accomplish, however poorly or destructively, on his/her behalf...and bring them into submission to the Holy Spirit. This paragraph from chapter 2 sums it up well: "God has given you agency. He invites you to participate in the work he is doing in your life. Your task is to trust neither your thoughts nor your feelings, but to lead them in step with God's Spirit. As you do, you can turn the most challenging parts of your soul into your greatest allies." I also appreciated the stand-alone chapters in the latter half of the book devoted to common troubling emotions (anger, fear/anxiety, sadness, envy/desire, guilt/shame) and why/how these emotions can manifest themselves in both healthy and unhealthy ways. Finally, while this book offers helpful insights and information, I would describe it more as a guide or an invitation to a set of practices. It's one thing to mentally know, for example, that anger is a symptom of a deeper problem, but it takes time and effort to set aside condemnation in order to honestly contemplate, to become curious about one's controlling emotions, to pray, to seek Christ's will in the hard spots, and to recognize and work to unburden one's self of lies. Reading this book is a helpful place to start that kind of journey!

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### **Eva says**

I got a little over 25% of the way through and had to put it down. I appreciate the intention, but I found it creepy to discuss parts of myself like they were individual and independent. It felt like reading about multiple personality disorder. The idea is to become a better integrated, more whole person, but for me, the focus on "parts" was encouraging me to feel fractured.

If you are okay with the metaphor of yourself as a collection of "parts" and thinking about addressing those parts as individuals and comforting/integrating them, you might find this useful. But if that idea bothers you, you're better off passing on this book.

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### **Elizabeth says**

Cook and Miller offer a new, evidence-based approach to caring for your soul. The authors skillfully blend the popular Internal Family Systems model of psychotherapy with familiar "boundaries" principles to show readers a new way to manage internal thoughts and feelings. The result is a groundbreaking, proven-effective model for pursuing personal potential, improving mental and emotional health, growing spiritually, and enriching relationships. There's not another book like it!

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### **Prairie Sky Book Reviews says**

I just finished reading a book that, upon completion, I promptly added to my personal list of most influential non-fiction books. "Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies" was published by Thomas Nelson and written by Alison Cook, PhD, and Kimberly Miller, MTh, LMFT. This book takes the complicated question of "Do your emotions control you or do you control your emotions?" and breaks it down into understandable, do-able, and ultimately life-changing practices that will truly transform you from the inside out.

"Boundaries for Your Soul" uses proven concepts involving techniques such as harnessing the power of our imaginations, guiding our inner feelings using imagery, praying for specific feelings while inviting Jesus near to them, and so much more. In addition, this is the only book that teaches the acclaimed Internal Family Systems model from a decidedly Christian viewpoint. All of this combines into an easy-to-understand five-step process we can use any time a feeling or emotion starts to overwhelm us. The five steps include: Focus, Befriend, Invite, Unburden and Integrate. Of course you'll have to read the book to understand what each of these terms mean, but as the authors explain, "We'll walk you through a process of establishing healthy boundaries with the various parts of your soul that are competing for control".

While the concepts of this book might sound challenging and confusing, they truly aren't - at least not when taught by Alison and Kimberly! "Boundaries for Your Soul" is a book that I found fascinating, helpful, and thoroughly Scripture-based. Honestly, I didn't want to put it down because I was learning so much from it! I have begun using the five-step exercise in my daily life, and have felt and witnessed incredible results. If you are ready to "Turn your shame into joy, your anger into advocacy, and your inner critic into your biggest champion", don't hesitate to find a copy of "Boundaries for Your Soul" today!

I received this book free from the publisher through the BookLook Bloggers program. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own.

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### **CIm67858991 says**

It has been said a villain is a hero whose story has yet to be written. In *Boundaries for Your Soul*, Cook & Miller ask readers to consider a spiritual parallel—what if emotions like anger, envy, and shame could be redeemed? What if, rather than remain destructive enemies of the soul, unwanted thoughts and feelings could

be transformed into some of our most valiant allies? But, how?

Jesus promised to send a Helper who would dwell in us, teaching and reminding us of the truth of God. Sin wreaks chaos in our hearts and minds, leaving us hurt and broken. But God, through his Spirit, can bring peace and healing so that we may echo the psalmist, “Give me an undivided heart, that I may fear your name. I will praise you, Lord my God, with all my heart.” (Ps 86:11-12) Cook & Miller assert that as we prayerfully invite God to help us connect with the hurting parts of our souls, he will enable us to lead them as they are changed from adversaries to collaborators in our efforts toward maintaining loving relationships and leading godly lives.

By explaining how they walked several, individual clients through this process, the authors offer hope to those who are overwhelmed by troubling thoughts and uncomfortable feelings, hope that if properly understood and considered from a constructive perspective, they can become valuable reserves of courage and compassion, allowing us to move toward what every believer longs for—to grow in the image of Christ.

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### **André Gorgenyi says**

A thoughtful journey of self reflection and learning how to be more intentional on placing Christ at the center of all we do. The distinction of our inner and outer life is a concrete way of overcoming obstacles by turning boundaries into assets. Enjoyed the read.

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### **Justin Sundberg says**

Like the best herbal tea, this book enlivens body and soul and rights your disposition. Hurrah! What most stands out to me is its accessibility. It's so well written and so coherent. Invariably I'm unable to take in most sermons and many books because they have too much going on. This book stays on focus and circles back time and again so that the reader can really understand. It's concrete. And it's vulnerable. All of what is shared is given extra weight because the authors tell their own personal stories, too. And the other stories help us find handles into our own lives that are too often too elusive . . . or the connections could be all too obvious and therefore sometimes difficult to acknowledge or to believe that anything can be done about them. But this storytelling and its concreteness make anything that might seem overwhelming or not possible. . . possible! I also love, love how biblical it is. All the connections are so seamlessly made. (I know this seamlessness came with much hard work!!!) And the authors draw from so many other spiritual giants. And other experts. They've done all the work and reading for us and chosen the very tastiest morsels to share with us. And there was lots of humor, like the laugh-out-loud answer choices in the assessment, the call-out to any “theology inspectors” among us, and the kids driving the bus metaphor. I love this book - thank you, Alison and Kim!

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