

# FULL RESPECT LIVING TOOLKIT – THE ESSENTIALS OF LIVING RELATIONALLY

Adapted from Terry Real <http://www.terryreal.com/store/full-respect-living-tool-kit>

## 3. STAY IN THE CIRCLE OF HEALTH

Staying in the **circle of health** means that we are **practicing healthy self-esteem and boundaries**. An awareness of where we go when we are anti-relational is a prerequisite to staying in the circle of health. The **Relationship Grid** helps us to understand our default position relevant to others. The **vertical axis** reflects self-esteem, from feeling “less than” (or toxic shame) to feeling “better than” or grandiose. The **horizontal axis** represents **boundaries**, from not appropriately containing ourselves and/or not appropriately protecting ourselves (boundaryless) to shutting everything out (walled off).

Some people find that when they are at their worst, they reside mostly in one quadrant, whereas others feel that they skip around to all quadrants from day to day or more often than that. Wherever it is we go, we get there quickly by knee-jerk, unconscious reactions. Someone say or does something that we don't like, and sometimes WHOOSH!, we are triggered. When we are “in the whoosh”, we move away from the circle of health, and act out, such as trying to control someone (upper right quadrant), or dismissing him or her completely (upper left quadrant).

### YOUR PRACTICE

- ❖ The **Relationship Grid is PRESCRIPTIVE**: Once you know where you are, you know what you need to do to get to the centre and stay in the circle of health. If you are feeling **less than**, bring yourself up from shame. If you're feeling **better than**, bring yourself down from grandiosity. If you are **boundaryless**, pause and reset your boundary. If you are **walled-off**, take a deep breath and re-engage.
- ❖ The circle of health is where we can **sustain our relational practice**, a place to move toward in difficult moments and live in or return to in good moments.

<http://www.storiedmind.com/recovery/terrence-real-depression-self-esteem-relationship-grid/>

