

Care for the Caregiver

Setting Caregiver Boundaries When Relationships Are Difficult

July 30, 2026

WWW.ADVOCATEFORMOMANDDAD.COM

Caregiving Changes Relationships: Caregiver Relationship Contracts

- **What are we willing to do—or not do—for one another?**
- **How do we support one another?**
- **What are the social outlets and shared interests that bind your relationship together?**

It's The Emotions That Will Break Us!

- **Name them, claim them, then change them**
- **You can't change anyone's emotions but your own**
- **It takes work to get beyond your inner eight-year-old**

My Seven Deadly Emotions and Feelings As A Caregiver

- **Fear**
- **Overwhelmed**
- **Guilt**
- **Frustration**
- **Anger**
- **Resentment**
- **Grief**

These Emotions / Feelings Are Perfectly Normal!

- **Family history**
- **Different for each person**
- **Bubble up when you least expect it**

Relationships Are Like A Dance: Changes Require A Difficult Conversation



AD • VO • CATE
FOR MOM AND DAD

Your family of origin affects your communication skills!

- Are you the people pleaser?
- Are you the family peacemaker?
- What is your gender?
- What is your birth order?

If you have to
sacrifice your voice to
"keep the peace," it's
no longer peaceful.
You're internalizing
the chaos instead.

- Zara Bas

AD • VO • CATE
FOR MOM AND DAD

How Can You Improve Your Communication?

- **Listen**
- **One Conversation**
- **Connect**
- **Positive**
- **Results**

Follow the Rules of Fair Fighting

Be Specific

Express Your Feelings

Avoid Blame

Give Time and Listen

Be Respectful

Mind Reading

Lower the Volume

Time Out



Practice, Practice, Practice

- Practice expressing yourself in respectful words and tone of voice
- Take a breath if you feel yourself tensing up, speaking more quickly or loudly
- Listen for over generalizations
- Take responsibility for your own feelings and actions

Types Of Boundaries

- 1. Emotional**
- 2. Personal**
- 3. Privacy**
- 4. Time**

Boundaries Are The Foundation Of Self-care

It's OK to feel anger and resentment!

These and other emotions are often where you need to set a boundary.

- **Can preserve, strengthen or mend relationships**
- **Allows you to prioritize your relationships, activities and maintain mental and physical health**
- **It's ok to set people aside**
- **You have a right to a life during caregiving!**

Why Is It Difficult to Set Boundaries?

- **Do we fear a rift in the relationship?**
- **Was the relationship difficult?**
- **Do we feel guilty?**
- **Dealing with our care partners emotions**

Setting Boundaries Requires Putting Yourself First

One of the foundations of self-care!

- **Allows you to prioritize your relationships, activities and maintain mental and physical health**
- **Can strengthen relationships**
- **Sets expectations**
- **You have a right to a life during caregiving!**

Set Boundaries in a Loving Way BUT...

When asked to do something:

- Put yourself first
- Buy yourself time to say no
- If you don't intend to say yes, offer an alternative
"No but,"
- No is a complete sentence
- Both parties need to feel HEARD and VALIDATED!



Life Draining Expectations

You do not have to engage in ways that you find life draining.

- **Set a boundary**
- **Walk away**

Communication Techniques for Setting Boundary's

- Be honest and direct
- Don't make excuses for your feelings and needs
- Don't have the conversation when you are angry
- Don't use language that judges their request or blames them
- Walk away if needed
- It takes two to tango. What are you bringing to this situation?

Getting from No to Yes in a Conversation

Language and Control are paramount, approach the conversation with:

- **A nonthreatening comment or question**
- **An expression of concern**
- **A suggestion**

The Outline Of A Boundary

Name the change you need and discuss the change you need with these things in mind:

- **Language**
- **Time**
- **Place**
- **Motivation**
- **Getting from No to Yes**

Setting a Boundary Requires an Intentional Conversation

Name the change you need and discuss the change you need with these things in mind:

1. Language

- You need to, You must, You always, You never
- “I” comment

2. Expression of Concern

3. Two options or an open-ended question

Situational Awareness

- **What motivates the other person?**
- **Where is a safe space?**
- **Best time**

Give Yourself Grace



To Connect With Deb:

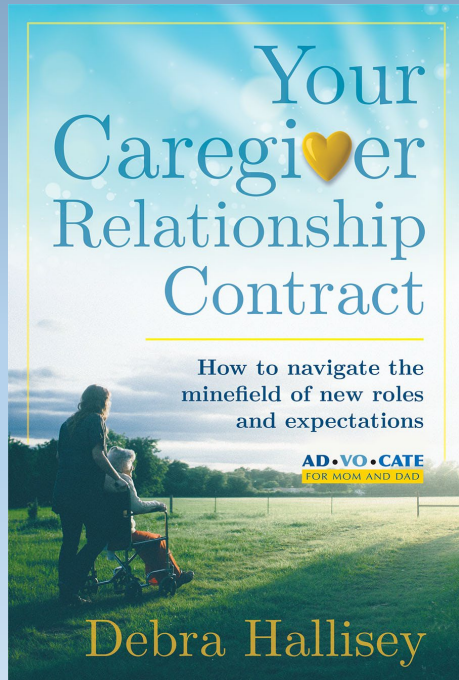
You can contact me at:

hallisdl@gmail.com

609-915-4570 – leave a message and remind me how we met!

<https://author.advocateformomanddad.com/resources/>

Available on Amazon in print and eBook format.
Search by Debra Hallisey to order



AD•VO•CATE
FOR MOM AND DAD

