

Member's Role

How to use this card:

Pass this card around. Each person please state your name and read a small section of the content on the Member's Role:

Boundary 7: Member's Role

The role of members is to honor each other's competence and determine for themselves the path they'll each take to a healthier life. The steps will include listening, experimenting, self-observing, sharing if they care to, and deciding their course for themselves. Members honor each other's personal and emotional space and respect the privilege of being invited into someone's home by observing house rules.

Gina B's Story: The Role of Members

I am torn between wishing there were more men at meetings and then not feeling comfortable sharing when men do come to meetings. There are all kinds of things I don't want to share in mixed company, and breast cancer is one of them. I have arrived at an age when my friends are starting to get diagnosed.

But there I was at Suppers, where I'm supposed to be working on my listening skills and honoring everyone's personal and emotional space. So when breast cancer came up at a meeting one night and there were a couple of men there, I had one of those uncomfortable growth opportunities.

I have to give the men credit for showing up after a long day at work (why I need to give them more credit than I give the working women, I don't know). One of them said, "Everything I know about breast cancer I learned from a man." He had a good friend whose wife had been treated for it. What blew me away was that this man knew more about tumors and nodes and centimeters and radiation and chemo and herbs and medications than I did. For him to have known all that he must have had some very intimate conversations with his friend and his friend must have been willing to share some very personal details. This man spoke with such compassion for his friends that it blew all my prejudices about how men communicate right out of the water.

I decided that very night how I was going to work at being a better member of a group. I had two goals: to be more present in my listening and to be more real in my sharing. Even if a man talks in more typical guy fashion, I can listen to the content and stop judging the delivery.

Properly executing my role as a member of a group is important because the quality of the job I do determines the benefits I receive.

Continue around the table by briefly sharing how you relate to the Suppers boundary of the Member's Role.

Describe the personal pathway to better health you are designing. How do actively practicing nonjudgment and knowing you will not be judged play a role?

Discussion Prompts (Each person select a prompt that works for you.)

- Describe your listening style and note if and how you'd like it to evolve.
- Describe how you handle it when you observe someone who is about to make what you think is a bad mistake.
- Share your definitions of "personal space" and "emotional space".

Ideas for Next Steps:

Experiments and Observations:

- Do a thought experiment: Imagine yourself listening to another person speak with the sole intention of listening some more.
- Do a thought experiment: Think of how you attend when others speak; note differences in how you listen based on their age, sex, or opinions.
- Do the experiment: Watch yourself as you listen and note patterns about your listening style in your journal or make mental notes to share at a meeting.

Between Meetings:

- Read how other Suppers members related to this boundary.
 - Read [Birdie's Story](#) about being a Liar, page 135 in the 2nd edition of *Logical Miracles* or on the Suppers website.
 - Read [Kathy's Story](#) about supported experiments and observations, page 215 in the 2nd edition of *Logical Miracles* or on the Suppers website.