

Therapeutic Friendship

How to use this card:

*Pass this card around. Each person please state your name and read a small section of the content on *Therapeutic Friendship*:*

Boundary 8: Therapeutic Friendship

The role of therapeutic friends is to provide support to each other on an as-needed basis, as cooking mentors, walking partners, willing ears, and supporters of those who are journaling or doing Suppers experiments.

Simone's Story: Therapeutic Friendship

If there's one thing I've learned in recovery it's that I have a disease of disconnection. Even though I'm not the best connector, I know I need the support of other people, especially when I'm making uncomfortable but necessary changes. For a while, my identity hinged on the not doing of something – not drinking. I celebrated one-week, one-month, one-year anniversaries of not drinking. While there was considerable satisfaction in these milestones, I felt bad that so much of my energy went into the *not doing* of something.

When I heard there was a program that promoted healthy eating so people could feel more comfortable in their bodies, I knew exactly what they meant. Although I was done with alcohol, I was still always searching for the next little fix, food, sex, or thrill of any kind. But after the rise there was always the crash.

At Suppers I have been taken under wing by a community of "food sleuths." The members form therapeutic friendships based on helping each other get their needs met so their bodies can heal. This is how we do service. In my case, the help I needed most was finding out which foods were my worst triggers for craving baked goods and which foods put me in a quiet good mood (square meals, like roasted turkey, yams, and greens). I also needed help getting over feeling sorry for myself because I did go through a period of feeling deprived.

Suppers doesn't ask much of me. The clearest, easiest thing I can give to the program is provide friendship services and support the growing population of people who look to their diet and lifestyle for solutions.

Continue around the table by briefly sharing how you relate to the Suppers boundary of Therapeutic Friendship.

Pretend the group has decided to go sugar-free for one week and discuss how you could support each other.

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

- If you were in a relationship that was therapeutic for you, what would be happening?
- What makes a relationship feel "therapeutic" for you?
- Name something you're good at or enjoy doing that might be therapeutic for another person in relationship with you.

Ideas for Next Steps:

Experiments and Observations:

- Do a thought experiment: Imagine what it's like to provide "willing ears" to someone who needs to be heard.
- Do a thought experiment: Imagine your need for "willing ears" is being met. Who is listening and what is happening?
- Do the experiment: Arrange for an exchange of therapeutic friendship in which both parties seek to understand the other's needs for feeling fully expressed and being heard.
- Do a thought experiment: Imagine yourself in the mentor role, what are you teaching?
- Do the experiment: Offer to mentor someone who will benefit from your wisdom and discuss how this form of giving feels.

Between Meetings:

- Read how other Suppers members related to this concept.
 - Read [Joni's Story](#) about having Dor in her fridge, page 113 in the 2nd edition of *Logical Miracles* and on the Suppers website.
- In a quiet moment, reflect on relationships you have or have had that you characterize as healing.