



Podcast Guest: Alison Cook, PhD

Podcast Theme: Boundaries for Your Soul

Book, co-authored with Kimberly Miller MTh LMFT: *Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies*



"Is there a Spirit-led self within you that emanates love and can lead your inner and outer life? Is it possible to love your inner enemies in the same way that Jesus extolled you to love your outer ones? In this beautifully-written book, Cook and Miller not only show you how to do that but also make a strong case that doing so creates enormous inner transformation and peace, turning former enemies into valuable allies. I am thrilled with the way they have translated my work for a Christian audience and believe this book is an extremely important contribution to our culture's healing."

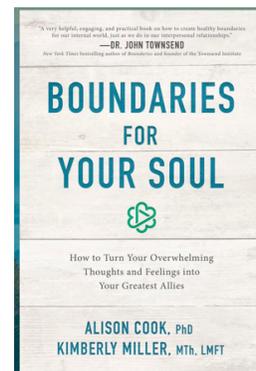
Richard C. Schwartz, Ph.D.

Developer of the Internal Family Systems (IFS) Model of Psychotherapy

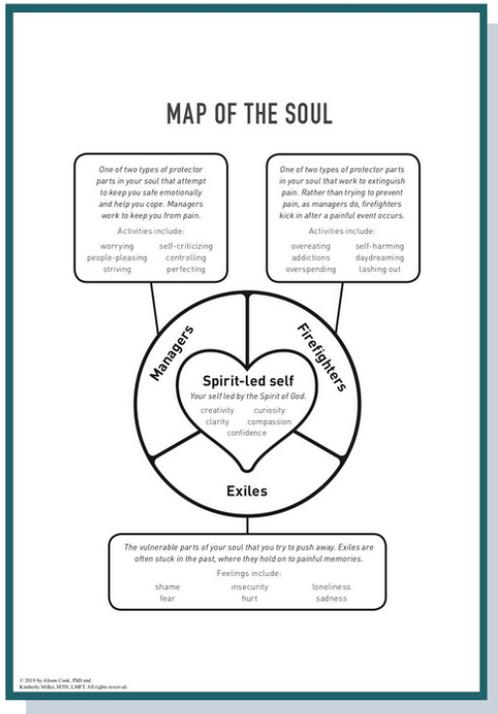
What if your overwhelming emotions hold the keys to your success?

Do you control your feelings or do your feelings control you? Many people allow guilt, anger, or self-criticism to dominate their inner lives and adversely affect their relationships. Maybe you've tried to deny these aspects of yourself that you don't like. You might insist, "I need to get over it," or "I've got to stop thinking that way." But this approach rarely works. In fact, it usually makes things worse. You want to exemplify wholeness, but don't always know how to bring calm to the turmoil within.

Boundaries for Women - Video Course



Giveaway: Listeners can sign up for my IFS freebie bundle here: <https://www.alisoncookphd.com/ifsbundle/> and I will pick 1 winner.



5 Steps to Calm Overwhelming Emotions - Webinar



Bio: Alison Cook, MA, PhD is a counselor, speaker, and the co-author of *Boundaries for Your Soul: How to Turn Your Overwhelming Thoughts and Feelings into Your Greatest Allies*. For over 15 years, Alison has helped women, ministry leaders, couples, and families learn how to heal painful emotions, develop confidence from the inside out, forge healthy relationships, and fully live out their God-given potential.

Alison earned my M.A. in counseling from Denver Seminary and a Ph.D. in religion and psychology from the University of Denver. I'm certified in the Internal Family Systems model of therapy and have a certificate in spiritual leadership from [Leadership Transformations, Inc.](#) My counseling practice is located in the greater Boston area, where I specialize in the integration of faith and psychology.



She's Better Than Me

Many people wrestle with feelings of envy, inferiority, or comparing themselves to others. It's easy to fall into the trap of lamenting inside, "She's better than me." In this perspective-shifting message, Alison explains how no one can take your place in this world. Every woman was given a unique journey to walk that is incomparable. Listeners will learn how to:

- Turn off the internal negative voice and transform the inner critic to an inner encourager
- Forge healthy relationships with safe individuals
- Develop confidence from the inside out

Opening of Podcast: Read from Introduction to *Boundaries of the Soul*:

“Since the 1970’s, the concept of boundaries has emerged as one of the most helpful contributions to the counseling community. You may already be familiar with this concept of setting external boundaries with others, such as maintaining healthy emotional distance and saying no when it’s appropriate to do so. Have you considered, however, that just as you can set boundaries with other people, you can also set boundaries with overwhelming parts of yourself?”

Welcome Alison

Possible Questions and Discussion Points

1. One of the many reasons I am honored and so happy to have you on the podcast is to speak to my community, *Stronger Every Day*, about the idea of “setting boundaries with overwhelming parts of yourself.” In the introduction, you also reference the watershed book series by Henry Cloud and John Townsend, “Boundaries,” and how they helped

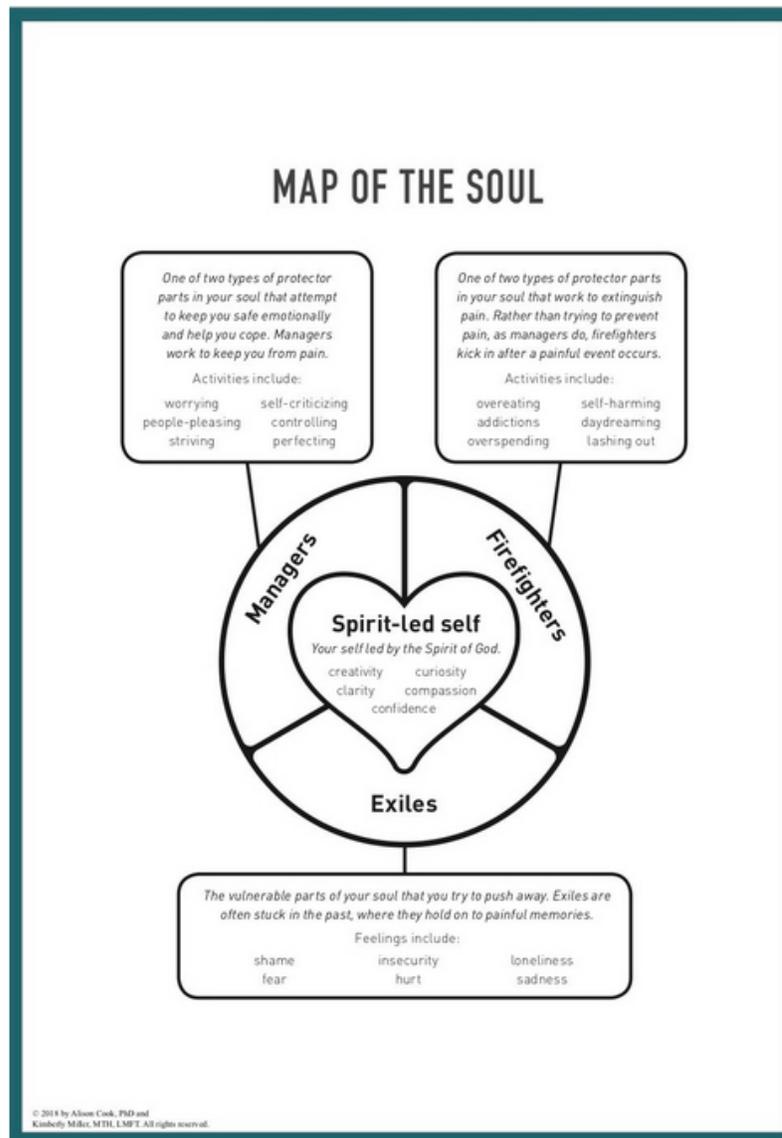
popularize the helpful concept of boundaries. You write, “Throughout this series, they acknowledge the *inner work* that accompanies setting healthy external boundaries with others. A chapter called ‘Resistance to Boundaries’ in their original book gives some examples of internal boundary issues that are important to address: angry reactions, guilt messages, unresolved grief and loss, fear of anger, and fear of the unknown.

- a. Can you share more about your idea of “setting boundaries with overwhelming parts of yourself” and,
 - b. What “Spirit-led self-leadership” is all about?
2. Your book is “the first book that focuses entirely on applying boundaries concepts *to your internal thoughts and feelings.*” As a resource for writing this book, you used the Internal Family Systems model (IFS), developed by Richard Schwartz, PhD.
- a. Share with us what this model is about and why you considered it a resource for your work on inner boundaries.
 - b. Is that how you came to see “the parts of the soul” as “members of an internal family”?
3. Help us understand what “the soul” *actually* is and what it means to “care for the soul.”
*Note: I want to lead listeners to your “Internal Boundaries Quiz”—are your emotions too close or too far? (p. 13)
4. I LOVE YOUR “You-Turn” process. Please share more (p. 9).



5. You write, “**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” (p. 23).
 - a. On a regular basis, I hear clients having a really hard time with this mindset, “I have a choice. I can choose,” especially those who have experienced childhood trauma of any degree. Help us with this “I have agency.”

6. Please explain/teach/share with us “The Map of the Soul” (pp. 32-35).



Possible Closure.

Alison, I LOVE your entire work on “baptized imagination” (p. 39) and how this is an integral component of spiritual growth and formation. Can we clarify this for listeners?

Other Great Concepts/Thoughts:

- Constellation of Parts
- Befriending Yourself
- What are burdens? (p. 95) “Burdens are the extreme beliefs, feelings, or even physical problems that parts of you take on as a result of painful experiences. You can develop burdens anytime, but they often develop in childhood. Three types of burdens:
 - Belief Burdens
 - Feeling Burdens
 - Physical Burdens
- God Put Boundaries on Chaos (p. 139)—do you see this in any way helping us frame this global pandemic?