

When we think it's time to set a boundary, we can first check in with our bodies' physical responses. Physical signs such as increased heart rate, stomach upset, or a lump in the throat indicate that we may need to draw or reinforce a new limit. Growing resentment or frustration indicates feeling uncomfortable or dissatisfied with a circumstance. When resentment builds, it can be a helpful signal that we're craving something different. In this space, pay attention to when there are opportunities to take action to protect ourselves. Engaging in self-awareness and listening to our gut is vital in this process.

How to get started.

Obstacles we may encounter.

One of the primary obstacles to setting boundaries is the self-doubt that may arise when we desire to put our needs first. We may fear negative repercussions if we aren't used to setting them. Feelings of guilt and shame around setting a boundary often come from an ingrained sense of self-punishment where we believe we do not deserve the kind of treatment we desire. However, effective boundaries are a potent way to ensure that maintaining a relationship is not happening at the expense of oneself. And while discomfort is sure to arise, there is nothing inherently wrong with setting a boundary, as long as the motive is not about controlling the actions of others.

- When you have a full plate, saying "no to taking on more."
- Declining plans that exceed your capacity and energy.
- Rejecting urgency from others.
- Taking time to respond to texts/emails, and letting others know.
- Not staying late at work.
- Taking vacation time and sick days.
- Making space to rest/decompress.
- Defining mutual needs in a connection.
- Communicating a need for space.
- Breaks from screen time.
- Choosing not to discuss sensitive topics or emotions.

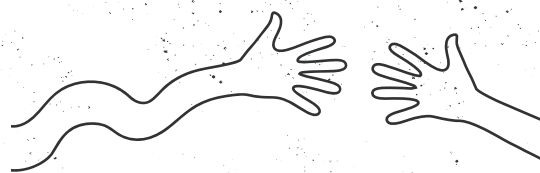
Examples can include.

What are boundaries?

Boundaries are the limits we set to help define what we're comfortable with and how we expect to be treated by others. They are enacted to protect ourselves and let others know how we will respond if they are crossed. They can be between ourselves and others or between ourselves and our mind, body, and inner world. These rules help align us with our needs, respect our experiences, and clarify our priorities. Healthy limits are clear and consistent, and we can openly ask for what's needed to feel most supported. Most importantly, these guidelines are not meant to control others but to set expectations for our own actions. Effectively setting boundaries can be one of the most potent tools to conserve our well-being.

Balancing between rigid and soft is also essential, as both extremes can have negative consequences. Boundaries may even need to shift over time as circumstances and environments change. We recommend limits with soft edges as they can be more flexible and adaptable, which makes them easier to adjust when new information arises. Extending flexibility and empathy will help avoid rigidity. Allowing a degree of nuance and understanding within this practice can help us prevent unnecessary conflict. We can approach boundaries as a mutual cooperative decision to preserve a connection rather than a way to protect oneself.

Finding a balance.



A GUIDE TO

Better Boundaries



Navigating boundaries becomes complex when we encounter environments at odds with our core principles. This can include situations where we feel compelled to compromise our values, engage in activities that contradict our beliefs, or have obligations to invest our time and energy into situations that challenge our capacity. Boundaries may only be effective in circumstances compatible with our authentic selves. Navigating what's misaligned requires a deep understanding of our values and principles. If we continue to feel discomfort, even once we establish a boundary, this may indicate a need to re-evaluate our environment. In these situations, we may need to seek new circumstances that resonate.

When they're not enough.

"Boundary setting helps you prioritize your needs over other people's wants."

—LAUREN KENSON