

The Basics of Boundaries



What is a boundary?

A boundary is a **personal limit** on what you are comfortable with

Boundaries can be **strong** and should never be pushed or they can be **loose** and flexible.

Boundaries change over time and can be different depending on how we feel, where we are, or who we interact with.

Boundaries help us have healthy relationships. You deserve people who respect your boundaries.

What is not a boundary?

A boundary is not about controlling another persons behavior. Boundaries are **about you** and **how you interact with the world around you.**

Your boundaries should be **focused on you**, and **not another person.** For example, say “I need..” instead of “You need to stop doing...”

Request: “Can you please speak to me more calmly?”

Boundary: “I can’t continue the conversation when you raise your voice at me.”

Ultimatum: “You need to stop yelling at me”

Types of Boundaries

Physical Boundaries: how we are okay and not okay with being touched

Mental Boundaries: how we protect our own beliefs, ideas, and dreams

Emotional Boundaries: how we like to be treated by others

Sexual Boundaries: like physical boundaries but relating to sex

Material Boundaries: how we like people to respect possessions and financial limits

Time Boundaries: how we set limits on our time and energy

Respecting Boundaries

Don't push boundaries.

If someone tells you “no” or sets a limit say “ok” and don't press any further

Don't assume

Be curious and ask about boundaries. “can I borrow this?,” “are you okay with this touch?” “do you have time or energy for this conversation?”

Apologize when you violate boundaries

When you accidentally violate someones boundary acknowledge your mistake, apologize, and take responsibility

How do I identify my own boundaries?

- Imagine a situation where you feel safe, comfortable, and relaxed.
 - what parts of your body, mind, time, and space are comfortable?
 - what parts of your body, mind, time, and space, are being respected?



- Imagine a situation that feels uncomfortable, stressful, and overstimulating.
 - what parts of your body, mind, time, and space are uncomfortable?
 - What parts of your body, mind, time, and space are being disrespected?

Examples:

- “I need time to myself”
- “I want to use condoms during sex”
- “I need be asked before someone borrows my stuff”
- “I can’t continue the conversation when insult me.”

Identify your boundaries

What you are or aren't comfortable doing or anything that works to protect your mind, body, and energy

Begin a conversation

You can frame the conversation around your needs or comfort.

You can simply say; "this is a boundary I have"

State your boundary

Say your boundary clearly centering it in yourself. Don't feel obligated to explain why this boundary is necessary