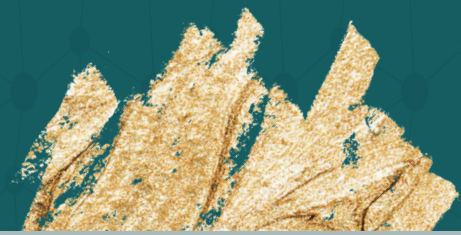


BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNICATING AND SUSTAINING BOUNDARIES FOR YOURSELF AND OTHERS



“Self-care is not the opposite of self-compassion. It’s the opposite of self-neglect. Self-neglect is sacrificing yourself to serve others. Self-care is making sure that helping others doesn’t hurt you. Setting boundaries doesn’t mean you are self-centered. It means you are self-aware.” —Adam Grant

Healthy boundaries are a crucial part of our mental health and overall well-being. They help us define our individual needs, along with identifying what is (and what isn’t) okay in our lives. Our boundaries can be either physical or emotional, ranging from loosely-held to rigid. Whether a boundary is considered healthy or not is dependent upon each person and their needs.

Identifying and setting boundaries is a very personal experience. Only you can determine what they are for you, both personally and professionally. And, as we evolve in our lives, our boundaries often do too. So, setting aside intentional time for reflection on a bi-annual basis can be incredibly valuable.

Boundaries for Yourself

The gateway to setting boundaries with those around you is first found in the ability to set boundaries for yourself. Without an understanding of our own needs and limitations, we cannot effectively communicate or sustain our boundaries for others.

Examples of Boundaries for Yourself:

- Not answering work emails on the weekend, or after 7pm
- Limiting social interactions that leave you drained/overstimulated
- Not purchasing things you cannot afford
- Not staying up past your bedtime
- Unfollowing accounts on social media or removing yourself from text chains that negatively impact you
- Limiting unhealthy foods/drinks that don’t provide fuel for your body and brain
- Prioritizing time to rest and recharge throughout the day
- Maintaining self-discipline in the goals you set for yourself
- Not taking on more that you have the capacity to manage
- Blocking/deleting an ex-partner (or toxic friend) from social media accounts and phone
- Making a conscious effort to shut down self-critical thoughts
- Not utilizing alcohol and/or drugs as a means of numbing your feelings

A boundary I could set for myself is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

RELATIONSHIP BOUNDARIES



Relationship Boundaries define how we want to be treated by others. These are established by first determining what we are comfortable with and what we will allow (and what we won't) in the relationship.

Relationship Boundary examples can sound like:

- "I am not okay with you discussing private matters like this with your friend/with people at work. This is private to me/us, and I would like to keep it that way, please."
- "I wish I could read your mind, but I can't. Can you please clarify your expectations of me right now?"
- "I would appreciate it if we could talk this through instead of leaving it unresolved. I worry that if we don't, it will only build up resentment between us."
- "When I am done with the workday, I need 45 minutes alone to rest and recharge."
- "When I come into the house and the dishes are in the sink, I feel stressed because I feel like I have so much to do already. I really need us to figure out a solution together."

A Relationship Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .

TIME BOUNDARIES



Time Boundaries are important for protecting and prioritizing our time at work, home, and socially. They help in not overcommitting and placing emphasis on what matters most to us in our lives. These can include such things as buffers to allow time for relaxation and rest, how much time we allow for different people in our life, our expectations of how others respect our time (lateness, meeting length, asking for favors, etc.), and how much time we choose to spend on a particular task.

Time Boundary examples can sound like:

- "I will call you, but I can only chat for 15 minutes today."
- "Please let me know in advance if you are running late. A text/DM works."
- "It was really great to have you over and catch up, but I have to get ready for bed now as I have an early day tomorrow. Thanks again for coming! This was fun."
- "Thank you so much for the invitation, but I can't make it. I look forward to connecting next time!"

A Time Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .



MENTAL BOUNDARIES



Mental Boundaries are an important foundation around giving and receiving respect.

Everyone has different personal thoughts, beliefs, and opinions (what we at EDGE Leadership refer to as a “Shared Background of Obviousness”), so seeing eye-to-eye is simply not always possible. These boundaries help us to be able to accept when others don’t agree with us, and vice versa.

Mental Boundary examples can sound like:

- “It’s okay if you don’t agree with me.”
- “I respect your perspective even though I have a different one.”
- “I hear you and think it’s okay that we can agree to disagree.”
- “I cannot convince you that my opinion is the correct one, just as you cannot convince me of the same. And that’s okay.”
- “It’s okay if we disagree, but I still need you to speak to me with respect, please. Here’s what that looks like to me . . .”

A Mental Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .

COMMUNICATION BOUNDARIES



Communication Boundaries are necessary for relationships, both personal and professional. They establish what we will allow in our lives while protecting us, not only from potentially unhealthy and harmful behavior of others, but also from living in resentment of others not following our (often invisible) expectations. It can even be our expectations of how someone is allowed to speak to us, what we will and will not allow. It may also establish how we speak to ourselves and others.

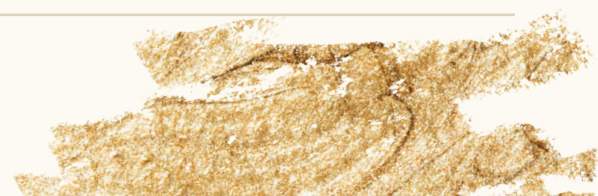
Communication Boundary examples could sound like:

- "Please stop telling me that I am too sensitive/overreacting/too emotional/chill out. It doesn't help, and it feels dismissive."
- "If you demean me or call me names, this conversation will end."
- "I know you mean well, but I can make this decision on my own. I will let you know if I need you, thanks."
- "I appreciate you sharing your experience, and I am hopeful that things will work out differently for me."
- "I am not ready to talk about this. I will let you know when I am."
- "Please do not speak to me in that tone."

A Communication Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .



EMOTIONAL BOUNDARIES



Emotional Boundaries are important for honoring and respecting the emotions and energy of ourselves and others. They allow us the space to be accountable for our own feelings. They differentiate our feelings from those of others around us, allowing us to be free from the burden of responsibility for how others feel.

Emotional Boundary examples can sound like:

- "This is not a topic that I can discuss right now."
- "I want to support you, but I have too much on my plate right now. Who else could you lean on at this moment?"
- "I am not looking for advice right now, thanks though."
- "If you are disrespectful, I will remove myself from this conversation."
- "I need to take a break from this conversation. I am feeling triggered, and I don't want to say something that I don't mean that could be hurtful."
- "It hurts my feelings when you label me as too sensitive or emotional/dramatic. Please stop."
- "I need some time alone when I am upset. Can we circle back around on this later?"
- "I love you, but I can't be your primary support system right now – I am also struggling."
- "If you swear at me, this conversation will end."

An Emotional Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .



PHYSICAL BOUNDARIES



Physical Boundaries are all about what we need in order to feel safe and comfortable. It can include the personal space we require from others or our comfort level with being physically touched. These kinds of Physical Boundaries vary widely from person to person, and even relationship to relationship. Also included are our physical needs for rest and nourishment, like eating and/or drinking. It may even be what foods or drinks you desire to put into your body.

Physical Boundary examples can sound like:

- "Please do not touch me like that."
- "Could you please take a step back. This is a little too close for me."
- "I won't be drinking tonight, but thank you for offering."
- "Please don't tell me what to eat. I know you mean well, but I promise that I can take care of myself."
- "If you need to go into my room/office/desk/car, I'd like you to ask me first."
- "When we are spending time together and we don't make time to hold hands/cuddle, I feel lonely. I really like physical affection."
- "I do not like when people comment on my appearance. Please don't."

A Physical Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .



FINANCIAL BOUNDARIES



Financial Boundaries provide a balance in the relationships between our finances, our family and loved ones, and ourselves. These boundaries set limits with a healthy understanding of how much our budget allows us to spend, sets goals for savings, and how much we are willing and/or able to donate or gift to others.

Financial Boundary examples can sound like:

- "I'd love to join. Let me take a look at my budget and get back to you."
- "I'm excited to move in together! Let's discuss how we plan to split the expenses."
- "I don't feel comfortable telling you my salary."
- "Thanks for the invite. I can't make it this time. Please keep me in mind for next time!"
- "I won't be buying a new outfit for the event. I'm wearing something I already have that I love!"
- "That restaurant is a bit too expensive for me right now. Can we eat somewhere else instead? I love XYZ restaurant."
- "I am happy to lend you the money if you are able to pay me back before the end of the year?"

A Financial Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .



HOLIDAY / SPECIAL EVENT BOUNDARIES



Holiday Boundaries are important to establish for ourselves (and our family) in order to reduce stress and anxiety. They can remove the burden of decades old traditions that we no longer deem healthy for us. These boundaries could empower us to set Time Boundaries to celebrate new traditions, as well as protect ourselves and others, physically, emotionally, and financially so the holiday/event can be full of joy and peace.

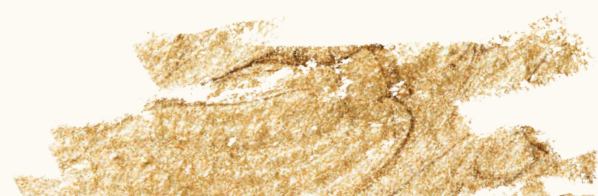
Holiday Boundary examples can sound like:

- "I'm excited to give homemade gifts this year."
- "I appreciate you thinking of me but I won't be able to make it this year. What are you looking forward to most about the party?"
- "I hear that you feel disappointed. I still love and care about you."
- "I know you are asking from a place of love, but I would prefer that we do not talk about it. Thank you."

A Holiday Boundary I could put in place is...

This is important to me right now because . . .

I know the conversation is successful if, at the end, I am walking away and . . .





*Discover how this can work for your team, department, and organization in Christy Uffelman's best-selling book **The PEER Revolution**.*

Christy is founder and CEO of EDGE Leadership Solutions, an organization that curates belonging through group coaching. Christy spent the past two decades innovating in Learning and Development with a special focus on early and mid-career leaders, amplifying to include executive and board directors as she herself reached each level. She is a recognized leader in creating connection and curating belonging. As a coach, speaker, and thought leader, Christy is on a mission to ensure that people feel less alone by making connections that matter.

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