

Boundaries Practice Guide

Protect your well-being. Honour your needs.



What Are Boundaries?

Boundaries are the limits we establish to protect our time, energy, attention, and well-being.

Recognizing what we are and are not comfortable with enables us to identify our limits, honour our needs, and inform how we choose to respond. Boundaries are not about changing the situation or influencing the outcome. Rather, they are an affirmation of our needs, limits, and right to choose what we will and will not engage with.

Discern. Detach. Disengage.

Discern

Boundaries begin with awareness.

Before we can set a boundary, we need to recognize what makes us uncomfortable and what we are no longer willing to tolerate.

Reflect:

What interactions or experiences leave you feeling uncomfortable, resentful or drained?

What are you no longer willing to tolerate?

Detach

Not everything requires your attention, energy, or responsibility. Detaching creates space from what is holding our attention.

Reflect:

What do you find yourself repeatedly thinking about?

What interactions, situations, or events do you become caught up in?

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Naming these is the first step to detaching from. We can change what we are not aware of.

Create space by noticing, naming and engaging with breath.

Then gently shift your attention toward something meaningful or within your control.

What are meaningful experiences or activities you engage with?

Disengage

Disengaging involves choosing a response that honours your needs and boundaries.

We need not justify, defend, apologize, or explain ourselves.

Responses are often brief, direct, and respectful. They focus on what you will do rather than trying to change the other person.

Some examples include:

- I'm not comfortable with that.
- That doesn't work for me.
- We will need to agree to disagree
- Let's talk about something else.
- I need some time to think about it.
- Or just **No** as a complete sentence.

When Additional Boundaries Are Needed

Sometimes people do not respect our limits.

In these situations, a boundary may involve communicating what action you will take if a behaviour continues.

Some examples include:

- I've asked you to stop. If you continue, I will leave.
- I'm not prepared to discuss this further. I'll see you tomorrow (then leave)
- I need some time to think about it. I'll get back to you when I'm ready.

Reflection

Where in your life might these responses be useful?

Healthy boundaries support self-respect, well-being, and meaningful relationships.