

BOUNDARY SETTING

RECOGNIZE. COMMUNICATE. MAINTAIN. DISENGAGE.

YOUR
SPACE.
YOUR
CHOICE.
YOUR
SAFETY.

WHAT IS A BOUNDARY?

A boundary is a limit you set to protect your time, space, energy, and well-being. Boundaries help you communicate what is and isn't acceptable, and they are an important part of violence prevention.

A boundary isn't about controlling someone else's behavior. It's about deciding what you will do when their behavior crosses a line.

WHY IT MATTERS

Clear boundaries can:

- Help you recognize and respond to concerning behavior
- Give you options to disengage
- Improve your decision-making in high-stress situations
- Support your overall safety and well-being

01

RECOGNIZE

Be aware of your personal limits. Notice when someone's behavior makes you feel uncomfortable, pressured, or unsafe.

02

COMMUNICATE

Use clear, direct statements to express your boundary. You do not owe an explanation, and you do not need to be polite when your safety or comfort is at risk.

03

MAINTAIN

Be consistent. If someone repeatedly ignores or challenges your boundaries, pay attention. Their response provides important information about their willingness to respect your decisions.

04

DISENGAGE

If your boundary is not respected, remove yourself from the situation when possible. You are not required to stay, explain, or justify your decision.

EXAMPLE BOUNDARY STATEMENTS

PHYSICAL SPACE	"Please step back."
UNWANTED ATTENTION	"I'm not interested."
UNCOMFORTABLE CONVERSATION	"I'm not comfortable discussing that."
PERSISTENCE	"No."
UNWANTED CONTACT	"Do not touch me."
ENDING AN INTERACTION	"I'm leaving now."
PRESSURE	"That doesn't work for me."
EXCESSIVE QUESTIONS	"I'm not answering that."
SOCIAL SITUATIONS	"I need to go."
ONLINE OR TEXT	"Do not contact me again."*

* In some situations, it may be safer not to respond at all. If you're experiencing harassment or stalking, document the communication and consider seeking qualified assistance.

BOUNDARY RED FLAGS

Pay attention when someone:

- Ignores your requests
- Pressures you to explain your decisions
- Tries to isolate you from others
- Uses guilt, manipulation, or intimidation
- Does not respect your personal space
- Continues an interaction after you've attempted to disengage
- Makes you feel uncomfortable, unsafe, or uneasy
- Uses threats or anger to get their way

REMEMBER

You are allowed to set boundaries.
You are allowed to change your mind.
You are allowed to leave.
You are allowed to prioritize your safety without giving a lengthy explanation.
Boundaries are not an invitation to negotiate.
They are a statement of what you will and will not accept.

THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

- You cannot control another person's behavior.
- Setting a boundary is only one part of protecting yourself. Recognizing when to disengage is equally important.
- You do not owe anyone an argument, an explanation, or unlimited opportunities to respect your decisions.
- Sometimes the safest boundary is simply leaving.

PRACTICE

- Identify situations where you tend to struggle with boundaries.
- Choose one clear statement you can use.
- Practice saying it out loud, so it feels natural.
- Consider what you would do if the boundary is not respected.
- Remember that direct confrontation isn't always the safest choice. If someone is threatening, prioritize distance, disengagement, and getting help.