

Boundary Statements

SIMPLE WORDS, REAL CHANGE

Boundaries help you protect your time, energy and values while remaining respectful of others. Clear, calm boundary statements can reduce stress, prevent resentment and support healthier relationships in every area of life.

A BOUNDARY IS

An act of self-respect – not a way of pushing people away.

TIPS FOR USING BOUNDARY STATEMENTS

- 1 Be clear and specific
- 2 Use a calm, respectful tone
- 3 Focus on your needs, not blame
- 4 Keep it realistic and doable
- 5 Expect some discomfort at first

AREA OF LIFE	A LITTLE CONTEXT	EXAMPLE BOUNDARY STATEMENTS
Family	Family relationships can be close and meaningful, but they can also carry pressure, guilt or unrealistic expectations. It's okay to set boundaries, even with people you love.	"I'm not available to discuss that right now." "I love you, and I also need my own space." "I won't be able to attend every family event." "I'd prefer we keep certain topics off the table."
Friends	Healthy friendships involve mutual respect. Boundaries help you stay connected while also honouring your own limits and values.	"I'm not comfortable with that, and I'd prefer not to be included." "I need some time for myself at the moment." "I value our friendship, and I need to say no to this." "Let's talk about something else."
Romantic Relationships	Boundaries create safety, respect and trust in partnerships. They help you express your needs and maintain a sense of self.	"I need time to myself, and I'll let you know when I'm ready to reconnect." "I'm not comfortable with that." "I need open and honest communication." "I value our relationship, and I also need my independence."
Work	Clear boundaries at work can reduce stress, prevent burnout and support a healthier work–life balance.	"I'm not able to take on additional work right now." "I need clear priorities to manage my workload." "I'm not available outside of my working hours." "I'd prefer to keep communication focused on work matters."
Social Situations	It's okay to choose situations, people and activities that feel good for you. You can be kind and still set limits.	"I'm not drinking tonight." "I need to head home now." "That doesn't work for me." "I'm not comfortable with that, but thanks for understanding."
Personal Wellbeing	Boundaries with yourself are just as important. They help you protect your time, energy and mental health.	"I need a slower pace right now." "I'm saying no to that so I can prioritise my wellbeing." "I need time to rest and recharge." "I'm not available for this right now."



Setting boundaries isn't about pushing people away – it's about creating the conditions for healthier, more authentic connections.

INFORMED BY

Cloud, H. & Townsend, J. (1992). Boundaries: When to Say Yes, How to Say No to Take Control of Your Life.
Linehan, M.M. (2015). DBT Skills Training Manual (2nd ed.). Interpersonal effectiveness skills.

NOTE

Evidence-informed educational resource.