

Setting Personal Boundaries

Personal boundaries define limits and responsibilities in relationships. Boundaries are essential to building personal resilience, supporting wellbeing, and creating strong relationships. Use the following approaches to increase your ability to set personal boundaries:



Setting Boundaries with Family Members/Close Friends

While friends and family members are sources of support, they also can push personal boundaries. Here are some things you can say when you need to set a boundary with your friends or family members:

- "Let me make sure I understand you correctly. You are asking for ____?"
- "Thanks for thinking of me, but I have too much on my plate right now."
- "No thank you."
- "I can't do that right now."
- "That doesn't work for me"
- "How about we do ____ instead?"
- "I am not comfortable with this."
- "I am not going to discuss or debate this."
- "This is non-negotiable."
- "I understand that you are upset."
- "I need to take a break."
- "Let's discuss this later when we're both calmer."

Start with Respect

Sometimes people that you need to set boundaries with do not realize that they are asking for too much. It is a good idea to start with a polite refusal. Then if the other person continues to push, become more insistent. You are setting a boundary because this is something important to you.

Be Confident in Your Approach

You have the right to say no to things. In fact, sometimes saying no will make your existing relationships stronger because it shows people that you respect yourself.