

HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES

Often, we are so concerned about ensuring that everyone around us has our undivided time and attention that we sacrifice our own mental health to do so. How do we continue supporting those around us without it taking a toll on our wellbeing? The answer is setting boundaries.

What are boundaries?

Setting boundaries is a life skill that creates a guide for how we would like to be treated and what we agree or disagree with based on our limits and needs. Some examples of setting personal boundaries include:

- Not answering work calls outside of work hours.
- Following through with your decision when you say NO to something.
- Boundaries around how we are spoken to. Often, when we are an emotional support network for someone; we tolerate unpleasant ways of being spoken to. In this situation, it is essential to communicate with the person that you are here to support them, but you won't be spoken to in that manner.

How do we begin putting boundaries in place?

Establish your boundaries:

Within the different areas of your life (work, family, friends) brainstorm your non-negotiable boundaries and start from there.

These are boundaries that you are unwilling to compromise and need immediate action.

Communicate your boundaries:

When communicating your boundaries, it's important to be clear and straightforward while managing your emotions (avoid raising your voice). When positively communicating boundaries, it's best to state/ request what you want over what you don't. An example would be "I can take work calls from 9 am-5 pm between Monday and Friday" or "I am here to support you through respectful communication"

Commit to your boundaries:

It is important to follow through with your boundaries, even if it sometimes causes you to feel shame and guilt. If you are not committing to these boundaries, others won't take them seriously and will test your limits.

