

Setting Healthy Boundaries: This IS Self-Care!

Steps:

1. Decide what the boundary you need is
2. Practice what you need to say before you say it
3. Have support in place before and after your boundary conversation
4. Use simple and direct language to communicate your boundary.
5. Back up your boundary with action.
6. Think about ways to position yourself in a time and place that minimizes the opportunity for your boundaries to be crossed (IF possible)

Tips:

1. Just do it!
2. Be direct, calm, firm, and respectful.
3. Do not debate, justify, over explain, or apologize for the boundary you are setting.
4. Back-up your boundary setting with action. Stay firm.
5. Develop a support system of people who respect your right to set boundaries.

Examples:

1. Setting a boundary with an angry person:
"You may not yell at me. If you continue, I'll have to leave the room."
2. Setting a boundary with personal phone calls at work:
"I've decided to take all personal calls in the evening in order to get my work done. I will need to call you later."
3. Say no to extra commitments:
"Although this organization is important to me, I need to decline your request for volunteer help in order to honour my family's needs."
4. Setting a boundary with someone who is critical:
"It's not okay with me that you comment on my weight. I'd like to ask you to stop."
5. To buy yourself time when making tough decisions:
"I'll have to sleep on it; I have a policy of not making decisions right away."
6. To back out of a commitment:
"I know I agreed to head up our fundraising efforts, but after reviewing my schedule, I now realize that I won't be able to give it my best attention. I'd like to help find a replacement by the end of next week".
7. To set a boundary with an adult child who borrows money:
"I won't be lending you money anymore. I love you and you need to take responsibility for yourself."