

## How to Set & Maintain Healthy Boundaries for Wellness

Wedgwood's Wraparound Team

*Setting healthy boundaries can be tough for anyone at first. In setting them you may think: "Is it possible?", "Do I have time?", "Am I being disrespectful?", "If I set them, will they still want me around?", "I feel guilty" ... However, setting healthy boundaries is crucial for the physical, emotional, and mental wellbeing of us all. It involves defining personal limits and communicating them clearly, allowing you to prioritize your needs and protect your energy. Remember, setting boundaries is not only a matter of self-care but also a vital step in maintaining healthy relationships with those around you. Over time, you'll find they become more habitual and require less effort!*

### WHAT IT TAKES:

#### 1. Self-Awareness:

##### ▶ Identify your needs:

- Ask yourself - What do I need to feel comfortable, safe, and respected? What are my physical, emotional, and mental limits?

##### ▶ Recognize your triggers:

- Ask yourself - What situations or behaviors tend to make me feel overwhelmed or stressed?

##### ▶ Understand your values:

- Ask yourself - What is important to in my relationships? In my life? Do I have people that support those same values?

#### 2. Recognizing the type of boundaries needed:

- ▶ **Time boundaries:** Setting aside specific times for work, leisure, and personal activities.
- ▶ **Emotional boundaries:** Deciding how much emotional availability you are willing to offer and when.
- ▶ **Physical boundaries:** Respecting your personal space and communicate when someone is crossing your physical boundaries.
- ▶ **Work-life boundaries:** Separate work tasks from personal time to prevent burnout.

#### 3. Communication:

- ▶ **Be clear and direct:** Use "I" statements and to express your needs and feelings without blaming others.
  - "I feel \_\_\_ when \_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_. What I need is \_\_\_\_\_."
- ▶ **Practice assertive communication:** Be firm and confident when stating your boundaries but remain respectful of others.
- ▶ **Explain your boundaries:** Share the reasons behind your limits, especially when they are not easily understood.
- ▶ **Communicate early and often:** Don't wait for a problem to arise to set boundaries; establish them from the beginning of a relationship or situation.

#### 4. Enforcement

- ▶ **Follow through:** If you set a boundary, be consistent in enforcing it. *Need help? Get support.* Boundary setting can get even trickier if you or a loved one lives with a mental health condition or has a history of trauma, especially if you share a living space together.
- ▶ **Don't be afraid to say "no":** Prioritize your needs and say no when necessary, without feeling guilty.
- ▶ **Be willing to compromise:** While it's important to hold your boundaries, be open to finding solutions that meet the needs and boundaries of everyone involved. Check in regularly with the people around you.
- ▶ **Practice self-compassion:** Remember to be kind to yourself when navigating boundary-setting, as it can be challenging.

#### 5. Maintenance

- ▶ **Regularly check in with yourself:** Are your boundaries still serving your needs? Make adjustments as needed.
- ▶ **Seek support:** Talk to trusted friends, family members, or a therapist about challenges you face in setting boundaries.
- ▶ **Practice self-care:** Engage in activities that help you relax, recharge, and maintain your mental health.

*If setting boundaries makes you uncomfortable or anxious, start small. You 100% deserve to say "no" without feeling guilty, but it can take practice! Start by setting a small boundary in a space that feels more manageable and work your way up.*