

# Setting Boundaries



BODY BRAVE  
recovery for **every** body



# ***What are boundaries?***

**BOUNDARIES ARE  
BASIC GUIDELINES  
THAT PEOPLE CREATE  
TO ESTABLISH HOW  
THEY WILL ACCEPT  
OTHERS BEHAVING  
AROUND THEM.**

# Boundaries

*PHYSICAL*

*MENTAL*

*SEXUAL*

## **TYPES OF BOUNDARIES**

*EMOTIONAL*

*RELATIONAL*

*FINANCIAL*

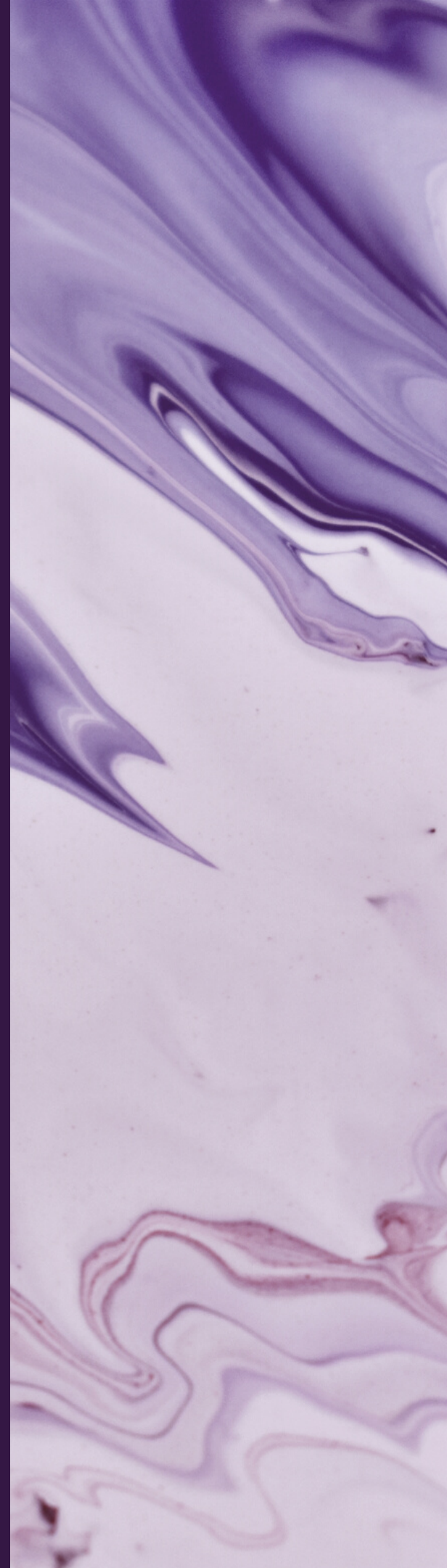


**Okay  
but...  
why do I  
need  
them?**

- **health of both/all individuals in a relationship**
- **health of the relationship itself**
- **avoid feelings of resentment**
- **avoid relational withdrawal**
- **practice self-respect**
- **clarify and communicate your values and beliefs**
- **develop independence**
- **avoid burnout**
- **gain greater sense of personal identity**


# SIGNS YOUR BOUNDARIES MAY BE VIOLATED:

- you are saying yes when you want to say no
- others are speaking for you or over you
- you take ownership for others' decisions
- your basic needs are not being met





# **Boundaries in Eating Disorder Recovery**

A vertical strip on the left side of the image features a purple marbled pattern with swirling shades of light and dark purple.

**“Boundaries are one of the most important pieces in eating disorder recovery not only because they teach others how we want to be treated but also because they teach us how we want to treat ourselves.**

**Boundaries are what allow us to move into the recovery world and continue taking steps towards what we want and what we need.”**

LOOKING GLASS FOUNDATION



# GENERAL BOUNDARIES

- not working past a certain time
- asking that someone knocks when they enter your room
- keeping a certain amount of your free time for yourself
- agreeing to disagree
- opting for handshakes instead of hugs from people
- not letting someone borrow your belongings
- being home at a certain time
- being willing to spend a certain amount of money







# RECOVERY BOUNDARIES

- not allowing people to comment on your food choices
- not tolerating conversations about diets/weight loss
- negotiating what is and is not okay to discuss concerning physical appearance
- asking for notice when you are going to a restaurant, shopping, etc
- requesting/negotiating personal space
- expecting respect and patience from people around you as you navigate recovery
- expecting respect about choices made for your health



# **Boundary Inventory**









## RIGID

- avoids intimacy and close relationships
- unlikely to ask for help
- has few close relationships
- very protective of personal information
- may seem detached, even to romantic partners
- keeps others at a distance to maintain sense of safety





- overshares personal information
- difficulty saying "no" to requests from others
- overinvolved in other's problems
- dependent on the opinions of others
- accepting of abuse or disrespect
- complies with others to maintain sense of safety





# HEALTHY

values own opinion

doesn't compromise values for others

shares personal information in ways that feel comfortable

knows personal wants/needs, and communicates them

accepting when others say "no"

# Identifying Your Boundaries



*identifying your boundaries*

# **identify your values**

What do I need from those around me?

What relationships feel the most valuable and safe for me?

What behaviours or actions make me feel valued or appreciated in a relationship?

What are deal-breakers in my relationships?



I VALUE: Friends who ask me how I am.

Friends who are sensitive to the fact that my needs may change and it is not a reflection of how much I value the relationship but just a part of me and my recovery.

Relationships that allow me to be spontaneous when I feel comfortable.

Friends who don't ask questions about behaviours that might seem odd to them, but accept them as a part of me.



*identifying your boundaries*

# **identify your rights**

- To feel safe in a relationship
- To have your privacy and boundaries you have created, respected
- To be heard and listened to
- To feel validated
- To be appreciated and valued
- To respect that the answer “no” means “no”
- To have your needs met
- To be treated respectfully- absence of emotional, physical, or verbal abuse



## I HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

Say no when something is beyond my capacity.

Talk to my friends about my needs in our relationship.

Challenge myself to ensure that I am respecting my friend's boundaries.

Change my mind when it comes to my needs and well-being.



*identifying your boundaries*

# **identify violations**

Are there any individuals who make me feel insecure, hurt, frustrated, sad, or angry after spending time with them or speaking with them?

What behaviours or actions would I like people to stop directing at me?

Do my friends assume I'm comfortable with certain topics that I'm not?

What things do people say about others that make me feel uncomfortable?





## A VIOLATION OF MY BOUNDARIES WOULD LOOK/FEEL LIKE:

Someone who does not even try to respect my needs or boundaries.

Someone who consistently talks about weight loss/engaging in diet culture.

Someone commenting on my body or weight.





# COMMUNICATING BOUNDARIES







# Start Small

- start with one boundary that you introduce into your life, or introducing multiple boundaries with one or two people
- adjust boundaries as you see fit
- take the time to reflect on the boundaries you have set, and how you want to going forward





# **Prepare for Pushback**

- recognize that a boundary may feel new and different to other people
- be intentional about maintaining communication about the boundary
- take this as an opportunity to discuss boundaries they may want to set





## **Be Consistent and Compassionate**

- remind and follow through with "action step"
- use "I" statements (I feel \_\_\_\_\_, when \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.)
- reiterate that you have set a boundary because you value your relationship with them

# Sentence Starters

- "I would appreciate if we could be sensitive around..."
- "I'm not comfortable with..."
- "I don't give you permission to..."
- "I don't appreciate..."
- "I feel ...when..."
- "Could we try..."
- "I'm not able to..."
- "I would appreciate if I could expect..."

"If you continue to..."



**after starting the  
sentence, we need to  
end with a firm  
boundary.**

**D  
E  
A  
R  
  
M  
A  
N**





**D** Describe the situation in a simple way,  
stating only facts





**E** Express how you're feeling using "I" statements





**A** Assert your needs by asking for what you need in a clear, strong way





**R** Reinforce by making sure the person understands why this boundary matters





**M** (stay) Mindful: focus on the conversation  
and try to keep it on course





**A** Appear confident, even with our body language we can communicate ourselves





**N** Negotiate if the other person does not feel they can or should meet your need

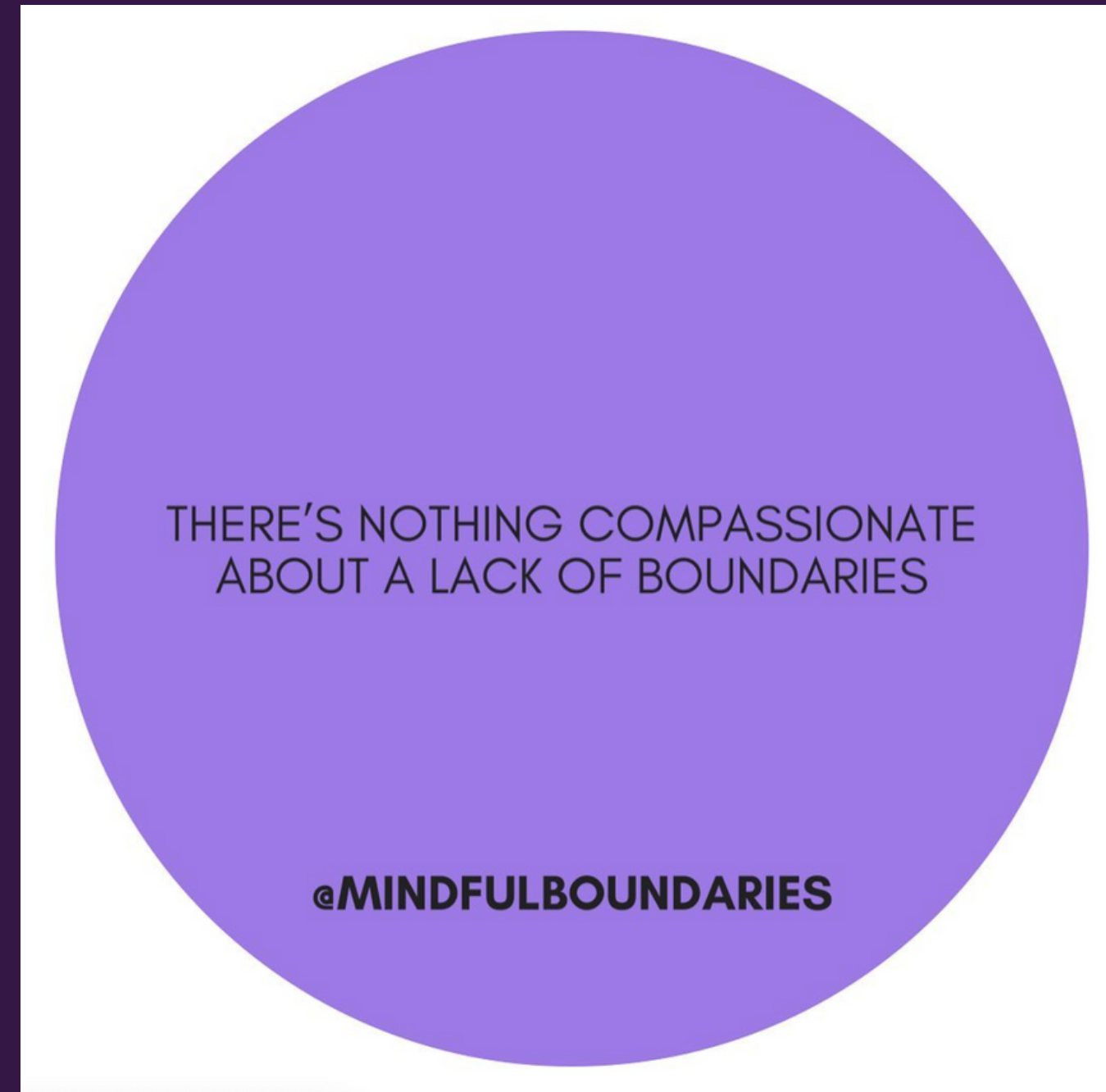






# RESOURCES

- Mindful Boundaries |  
@mindfulboundaries



# RESOURCES

- Jordan Pickell Counselling | @jordanpickellcounselling | Boundary Setting Plan mini-workbook | Workshop Saturday, November 13th at 10 am PST (fee)

When you begin setting boundaries, some relationships will fall apart because your disregarding yourself is what holds it together.

This holiday season, you might have to navigate setting boundaries around:

- comments about your body
- comments about your life choices
- racist, misogynistic, anti-queer, anti-trans, anti-fat, and/or ableist comments
- gift-giving
- COVID-19 prevention protocol
- time off work
- gatherings where estranged family members or friends are also invited
- how you will split time between groups of people



# RESOURCES

- Meghan Watson | @thrive\_withmeg



Meghan Watson, Psychotherapist  
@thrive\_withmeg

Listen to your exhaustion. Pay attention to the ways your body and mind are telling you to slow down. Your boundaries cannot set themselves. Your needs matter. You are enough in this moment.



Meghan Watson, Psychotherapist  
@thrive\_withmeg

The reasons behind your boundaries are not public information. Practice setting boundaries without unnecessary justification or over-explanation.

# RESOURCES

- Sara Kuburic | @millennial.therapist

**family boundaries  
can sound like:**

@millennial.therapist / Sara Kuburic

**friend boundaries  
can sound like...**

@millennial.therapist / Sara Kuburic



# RESOURCES

- Minaa B | @minaa\_b



Minaa B.  
@MinaaBe

Gentle reminder:

Give yourself permission to speak up and say no and also learn to accept when someone else speaks up and says no without trying to change their mind.

Boundaries navigate in two directions, not just one.

WWW.MINAB.COM

Setting a boundary might make you feel uncomfortable. It might make you feel like you're being difficult, mean or an inconvenience to others. It's a natural response to have especially as an empathetic and kind person.

@minaa\_b

@minaa\_b

# RESOURCES

- Whitney Goodman | @sitwithwhit

when someone tests your boundaries  
there are a few things you can do:

@SITWITHWHIT

- 1. Restate the boundary.** Tell them again and make it very clear. You can even ask if they understand and make sure that you're on the same page.
- 2. Give them time.** Sometimes people need a minute to adjust to our new boundaries. This isn't always careless or malicious. You can have some empathy during the process.
- 3. Remind yourself why you are setting this boundary.** When we're pushed it can be tempting to drop it all and go back to how things were before. Remind yourself why you got to this place.
- 4. Reevaluate the boundary.** Is it working for you? Is this what you want? Sometimes we might overcorrect with too strict of a boundary, or maybe you weren't strict enough.
- 5. Ignore/Accept their behavior.** If someone is really pushing your boundary and not being respectful, you may have to continue holding the boundary and ignore their behavior. There are unfortunately situations where this is necessary.

we set boundaries to protect  
ourselves, not to change  
someone else.

@sitwithwhit



# RESOURCES

- Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region  
| Nourishing Your Needs (Two Part Series on  
Boundaries) | Tuesday, November 30 & Tuesday,  
December 7, 2021 | 1:00 - 2:00 PM

**Questions?**



## REFERENCES:

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