

The Basics of Setting Boundaries



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What are Boundaries?

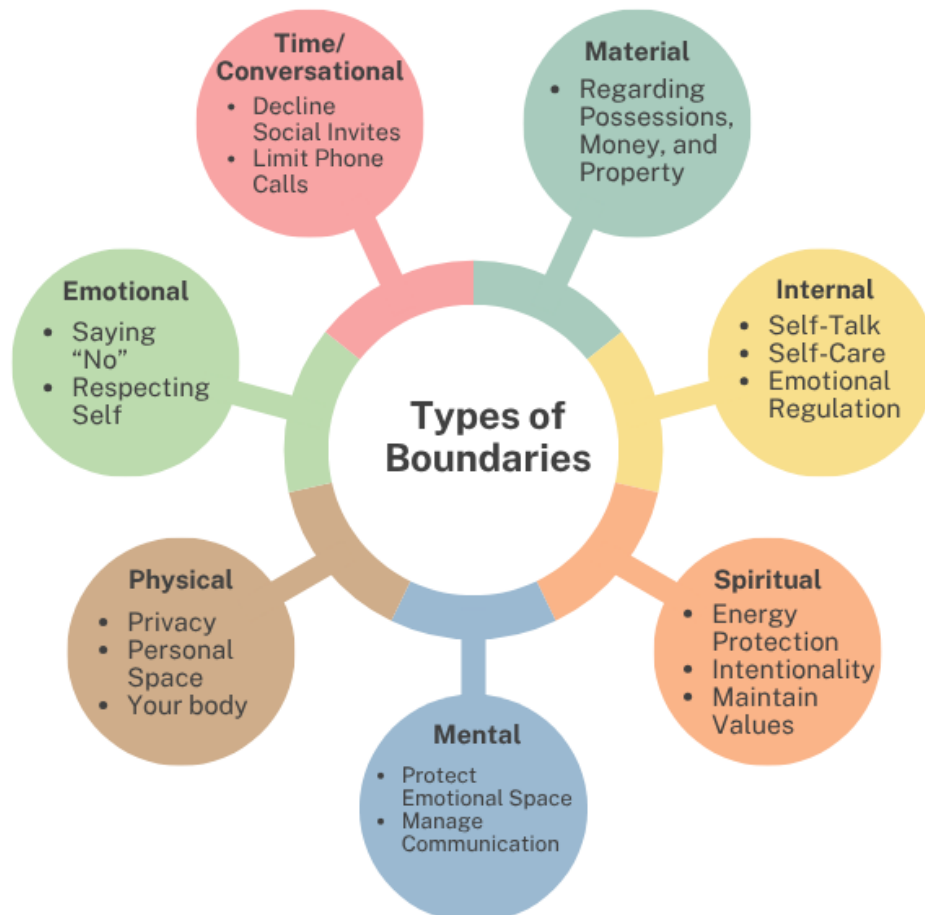
Boundaries are personal limits and rules set to define what behavior you find acceptable in relationships in hopes to protect your physical, emotional, and psychological well-being.

Why Boundaries Matter

There are many reasons why boundaries matter and the benefits they can have including:

- Influencing other's behavior towards you
- Maintain good emotional health
- Improves development of autonomy
- Helps fostering healthier relationships
- Reduces decision making
- Allows you to align your life with values and beliefs
- Maintain good mental health
- Improves development of identity
- Prevents burnout
- Can ease relational tension
- Eliminates confusion
- Helps others know exactly what you need and want

Types of Boundaries



How to Set Boundaries

In order to set boundaries, you'll need to be self-aware and clear about your expectations of yourself and others, what you are and are not comfortable with. You'll need good communication skills, to be clear, and assertive. These are the steps you could take to set a boundary:

Step 1. Define the boundary you want to set in place. Be as clear and as straightforward as possible.

Step 2. State your need or request directly in terms of what you'd like, rather than what you don't want or like. Keep it simple.

Step 3. Accept any discomfort that arises as a result, whether it's guilt, shame, or remorse. Additionally, consider the consequences you will enforce if your boundaries are crossed.

Recognizing Boundary Violations

When boundaries are violated it's completely your choice to determine how you will respond when the limits are crossed or the rules are broken intentionally and unintentionally. A few ways you can address boundary violations are:

- Removing yourself from the situation to reflect and consider how to move forward
- Enforcing consequences such as ending the conversation, taking a break from the relationship, leave the room, hang up the phone, or leave the event.
- Reminding the person of the boundary and giving them a verbal warning.
- Document violations
- Focus on what you will do moving forward, not what you want or are going to try to make them do.
- Seek support from others