

Self-care Toolkit

Setting boundaries



This worksheet is designed to assist you in developing your personal skills to better manage your current situation.

If you are having trouble understanding this worksheet or need support, please call a MensLine Australia counsellor on 1300 78 99 78.

Things to think about

We set personal boundaries because they are an important ingredient of healthy relationships. Boundaries demonstrate where you end, and another person begins. It is like an invisible line that is drawn in a relationship. Setting boundaries help to reduce confusion and be clear about what we will and will not do. They can help us challenge another's opinion without resorting to abuse or feeling overwhelmed.

Before we communicate healthy boundaries with others, we must first set boundaries with ourselves. Our boundaries are based on our beliefs and our values. If boundaries are clear and healthy, they sit well with us.

Boundaries are a type of goal. A goal is something that you wish to achieve. In the case of a boundary, it is a line which we will not cross or let others cross. You achieve your success by repeatedly not crossing that line or letting others cross a line.

Activity

The first step to setting boundaries is to set some for yourself. Think of a boundary that you want to set for yourself.

1. **Define what you want to do: exercise, eat less junk food, stop being abusive, not drink so much.** *Example: I want to stop being abusive*

2. **Identify your boundary – What must you stop doing to achieve what you want?**
Example: I will not raise my voice in anger

3. **How will you know if you are about to cross the line?** *Example: I will listen to my tone of voice and whether it is getting louder*

4. **This week monitor how well you stay within the boundary and if and when you crossed it. If it didn't work – how do you get back on track without throwing in the towel or giving yourself a hard time? This is a learning process, and if you did struggle to stop the behaviour, the fact that you set the boundary in the first place is a good start.**

This worksheet is part of a series on anger management, communication and self-care. You may find it useful to complete other worksheets in this series. For more information or assistance, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78