

# Personal and Professional Boundaries

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## Goals for Today:

- 1) Be able to define boundaries, both personal and professional
- 2) Develop an understanding of 7 types of boundaries
- 3) Understand and practice steps to setting an effective boundary

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## What are boundaries:

### Personal Boundaries

- "Personal boundaries are sets of guidelines that determine how we interact with others, how we take care of ourselves, and how we allow others to treat us. These boundaries are essential for maintaining emotional, physical, and mental well-being."

### Professional Boundaries

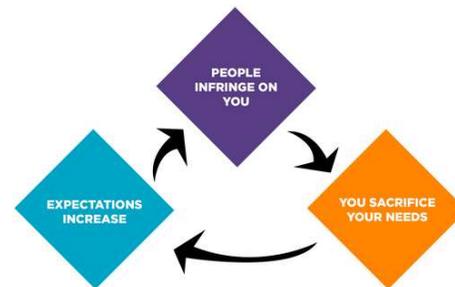
- "Professional boundaries are a set of guidelines, expectations and rules which set the ethical and technical standards in the work environment. They set limits for safe, acceptable and effective behavior by workers."
- "Professional boundaries are crucial for establishing a healthy work environment and ensuring that work-related stress does not bleed into personal life."

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## Why are professional boundaries important?

- Raises productivity
- Reduces work related stress
- Aids in maintaining a reasonable workload
- Reduces risk of burnout
- Helps produce a positive work culture

### THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF UNHEALTHY WORK BOUNDARIES



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**Emotional Boundaries:**  
how emotionally available are you to others

**Material Boundaries:**  
Boundaries surrounding giving/lending to others

**Internal Boundaries:**  
Energy expended on self vs. others

**Conversational Boundaries:**  
Topics you do and don't feel comfortable discussing with others

**7 TYPES OF BOUNDARIES**

- TIME:** How much time you spend with someone or doing something. "I can only stay for 30 minutes"
- MENTAL:** Freedom to have your own thoughts, values, and opinions. "I respect your perspective although I do not agree"
- EMOTIONAL:** How emotionally available you are to others. "As much as I want to support you right now, I do not have the emotional capacity"
- MATERIAL:** Monetary decisions, giving or lending to others. "I already lent you money last week, so not again right now"
- INTERNAL:** Self-regulation, energy expended on self vs. others. "I have been social all week, I need the weekend to myself"
- CONVERSATIONAL:** Topics that you do and do not feel comfortable discussing. "I would rather not be a part of this conversation"
- PHYSICAL:** Privacy, personal space, your body. "I prefer not to hug people I do not know"

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**Physical boundaries:**  
Privacy, personal space

**Time Boundaries:**  
Amount of time you spend with someone/doing something

**Mental Boundaries:**  
Freedom to have your own thoughts, values and opinions

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# Boundaries Continuum

Porous Boundaries	Healthy Boundaries	Rigid Boundaries
Has difficulty saying no to other people's requests.	Accepts it when others say no to them.	Avoids intimacy and close relationships.
Over-involved with others' problems.	Seeks support when appropriate.	Unlikely to ask for help.
Dependent on the opinions of others for self-worth.	Values own opinions and perspectives.	Offers an opinion and then uses the silent treatment to manipulate compliance.
Fears rejection if they do not comply with others.	Doesn't compromise their values for others.	Cuts people off easily. 'It's my way or the highway.'
Over-shares personal information.	Share information appropriately.	Very protective of personal information.
Accepts abuse or disrespect.	Communicate their wants and needs clearly.	Is aloof and detached even with romantic partners.

We can score our personal boundaries on a continuum stretching from 0 to 10 with zero indicating no boundaries (e.g., accepting abuse) and 10 indicating a barrier or wall (e.g., ghosting).

Porous Boundaries 0/10 Rigid Boundaries 10/10

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### Boundary Style 1: Porous Boundaries

- Communicates passively
- Overly trusting of others (including strangers)
- Overshares personal information
- Has difficulty saying "no" to others
- Overly involved in others problems
- Avoids conflict by giving in to others
- Does not assert personal values

### Boundary Style 2: Healthy Boundaries

- Takes time to build trust with others
- Shares personal information appropriately
- Able to say "no" when needed
- Values both own and others opinions
- Accepts conflict as normal part of life
- Stands by own values and can adapt
- Communicates assertively

### Boundary Style 3: Rigid Boundaries

- Keeps people at a distance
- Untrusting of others
- Guarded
- Says "No" to others most of the time
- Detached from others
- Avoids conflict by pushing others away
- Has inflexible personal values
- Communicates aggressively

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# Steps to Setting a boundary

1. Define the Boundary
  - *By examining each type of boundary*
2. Communicate the Boundary
  - *By speaking our boundary to those it impacts*
3. Consistently uphold the Boundary
  - *By holding firm to your values and needs*
4. Establish consequences for violation of the boundary
  - *Create a plan for if your boundary is not respected*

- **Action:** Setting work email notifications to "silent" on non-work hours
- **Action:** Walking away when someone intrudes on a physical boundary.
- **Action:** Sending regrets to an event invitation, even though others might judge you if you don't attend.
- **Phrase:** "I can't do it right now, but I can do it tomorrow morning."
- **Phrase:** "That's not something I can do for you, but here are some others who might be able to help you."
- **Phrase:** "What you just said feels disrespectful, and I won't keep talking with you if that continues."

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## OUT OF MY CONTROL

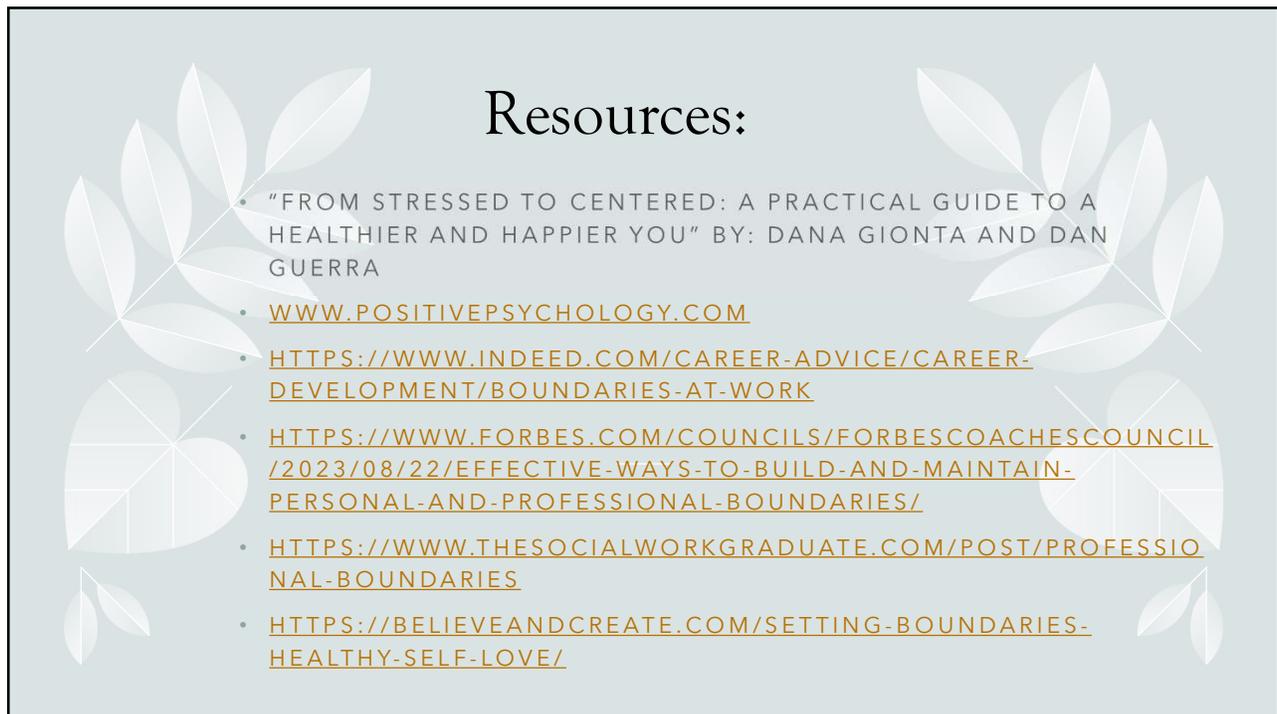


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