

Set a Clear Boundary

Couples communication and boundaries | Adults | 10 to 15 minutes

Describe a limit and a response that remains within your control.

A boundary describes what you will participate in and how you will care for your own limits. It can be kind and firm. You do not have to persuade someone that your limit is reasonable before taking it seriously.

Identify the limit

Choose a specific situation, such as late-night work messages, requests for money, or conversations involving insults. Notice what you need to protect: rest, privacy, time, safety, or another value.

Keep the response within your control

Example: "I can discuss this when we can speak without insults. I am ending this call now." A boundary is different from controlling another person's friendships, clothing, money, or movement.

Consider consequences and support

A clear statement may not change another person's behavior. Plan what you can realistically do and who can support you. If setting a limit may trigger danger, work privately with a qualified professional or advocate on a safer approach.

The situation and the value I want to protect

The limit I want to communicate

The action I control if the limit is crossed

Support or practical barriers I need to consider