Boundaries: clear, respectful choices | Rehearse

Rehearse a No, a Delay, or a Smaller Offer

Adults and caregivers | 8 to 15 minutes | Clinician script

Practice one clear response and a respectful repeat without overexplaining.

Practice with a trusted person, facilitator, or an imaginary listener. Choose a low-stakes request. The listener's role is to help you test words, not to pressure you until you give in.

How to use this page

Agree on one practice response. You can read from the page, use a communication aid, or stop at any time. Direct eye contact is not required.

Choose your response

Try language that sounds like you. A no might be, "I am not available for that." A delay might be, "I need to check before I answer." A smaller offer might be, "I can help with the first part, but not the whole task." Add context only if you want to.

Try one ordinary follow-up

The listener asks a mild question such as, "Could you reconsider?" Repeat the essential point or state when you will decide. You do not need to invent more reasons. Keep the rehearsal brief; do not simulate threats, harassment, or abuse.

Notice the fit

Check whether your words conveyed the choice you intended. Was the pace comfortable? Would writing be easier? Adjust one detail and try again if useful. Finish by naming how you would leave or seek support if a real interaction became unsafe.

1. The wording and communication method I want to keep or adjust

Original educational material. Not a validated assessment or treatment protocol.

PK08-04 | continued

Facilitator notes and adaptation

Use graded rehearsal only with consent and appropriate clinical judgment. Do not treat distress as evidence that the person must persist with confrontation.

About this resource

AI-assisted original draft for More Than Therapy. Version 1.0. Source and editorial checks: 27 October 2026. Independent clinical review pending; no human clinical reviewer is recorded. The references below inform concepts and do not validate or endorse this original page.

Conceptual references

PB06 | Centre for Clinical Interventions, Government of Western Australia | Assertiveness: Improving Assertiveness Self-Help Resources

https://www.cci.health.wa.gov.au/Resources/Looking-After-Yourself/Assertiveness

PB07 | Department of Health, Government of Western Australia | Assertive Communication

https://www.health.wa.gov.au/sitecore/content/Healthy-WA/Articles/A_E/Assertive-communication

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