



Module III: Maintaining and Adjusting Boundaries

1. Consistency and Follow-Through

Importance of consistency in maintaining boundaries is to

- Building trust with yourself and others when your actions align with your stated boundaries. You become believable.
- Establishing clear expectations and being consistent sets clear expectations. It communicates to others that your boundaries are important and non-negotiable, reducing the likelihood of misunderstandings or repeated boundary violations.
- Self-Respect and Confidence: Consistently upholding your boundaries reinforces your self-respect and boosts your confidence. It affirms your commitment to your own well-being and reinforces the idea that your needs are valid.
- Preventing Boundary Erosion: Inconsistency can lead to boundary erosion, where your limits gradually become blurred or ignored. Consistency helps prevent this, ensuring that your boundaries remain strong and intact over time.

Strategies for follow-through

- Reminders – written, friends, support groups
- Accountability partners

2. Dealing with setbacks and recommitting to boundaries

- Acknowledge the Setback: Recognize that setbacks are a normal part of the process. Instead of being overly critical of yourself, approach the situation with self-compassion and understanding.
- Reflect on the Cause: Consider what led to the setback. Were you in a vulnerable situation? Did someone pressure you? Understanding the cause can help you address the root issue and prevent future setbacks.
- Reevaluate Your Boundaries: Sometimes, setbacks occur because boundaries need to be adjusted. Reflect on whether your boundaries were too rigid or too loose and make necessary adjustments to align with your current needs.

- **Recommit with Intention:** After a setback, consciously recommit to your boundaries. Remind yourself of the importance of your boundaries and the positive impact they have on your well-being.
- **Practice Self-Forgiveness:** Let go of guilt associated with the setback. Forgive yourself and focus on moving forward with a renewed commitment to maintaining your boundaries.
- **Keep looking at your beliefs and where they come from**
 - Are they valid now?
 - What other belief would work better for me now?
- **Get support to help you recognize what you are unable to see at that time**

3. **Adjusting Boundaries as Needed** - Recognizing when boundaries need adjustments.

Flexible yet firm boundary setting

- **Know Your Core Values:** Understand what is non-negotiable for you and base your firm boundaries on those core values. This clarity helps you maintain your boundaries while allowing flexibility in less critical areas.
- **Communicate Clearly:** When setting boundaries, be clear about what is non-negotiable and where there is room for flexibility. This clarity helps others understand where they stand and reduces potential conflicts.
- **Evaluate Situations Individually:** Not all situations require the same level of firmness. Assess each situation individually to determine whether flexibility is appropriate, while still protecting your core values and needs.
- **Use "If/Then" Statements:** Incorporate conditional flexibility by using "If/Then" statements. For example, "If we can agree on this, then I'm willing to be flexible on that." This approach balances firmness with adaptability.
- **Regularly Reassess:** Life changes, and so do our needs. Regularly reassess your boundaries to ensure they still serve you well. Adjust as necessary while maintaining firm limits where it matters most.

4. **Dealing with Boundary Violations**

How to respond when boundaries are crossed

- **Address It Immediately:** When a boundary is crossed, address it as soon as possible. Delaying the conversation can lead to resentment and confusion.
- **Stay Calm and Focused:** Keep your emotions in check and focus on the specific behavior that crossed the boundary. Use calm, assertive language to express how the action affected you.
- **Reiterate Your Boundary:** Clearly restate your boundary and explain why it is important to you. For example, "I need to remind you that I value my alone time, and I felt uncomfortable when that was not respected."
- **Set Limits if Necessary:** If the boundary continues to be crossed, communicate any limits that will follow. For example, "If this happens again, I will need to limit our interactions." This is a

great place to reiterate that a boundary is something YOU do not something you are asking of the other person. We are the action takers.

- **Follow Through:** If limits are necessary, follow through on them. This reinforces the seriousness of your boundary and helps prevent future violations.

Reinforcing boundaries with assertiveness

- **Use Confident Body Language:** Your body language should match your words. Stand tall, maintain eye contact, and use a firm, steady tone to convey confidence.
- **Practice Clear Communication:** Be clear and direct in your communication. Avoid being passive or aggressive. Use "I" statements to express your feelings and needs without placing blame.
- **Set Limits:** Clearly define what you will and will not accept. For example, "I'm not comfortable discussing this topic. Let's talk about something else."
- **Stay Consistent:** Consistency is key to reinforcing boundaries. If you set a boundary, stick to it. Inconsistency can weaken your boundaries and send mixed signals to others.
- **Repeat if Necessary:** Sometimes people need to hear your boundary more than once. Don't hesitate to calmly repeat your boundary if it's not respected the first time.
- **Practice Self-Awareness:** Be aware of your own feelings and reactions. If you feel your boundary is being tested, take a moment to breathe and respond calmly and assertively.

Personal Action Plan

- Creating a personalized boundary-setting plan – what is especially important to you?
- Setting specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals
- Tracking progress and adjusting the plan as needed



Thank you for your interest in learning about boundaries. This course is a great beginning to growing your knowledge of the topic and finding places to begin practicing the tools outlined here. It can feel overwhelming to change how we interact with others, but when we have awareness about ourselves, and practice one skill at a time, we can influence our internal and external lives. I am grateful for your presence, and it has been my pleasure to be able to share this information with you.

Kim