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# Boundaries & Relationships Workbook

This free boundaries and relationships workbook brings four of our worksheets into one printable PDF: see where people-pleasing costs you, decide on a boundary and the words to say it, practise saying hard things with I-statements, and plan what to do when you feel anger rising. Print it once and work through it at your own pace.

## What's inside

1. **People-Pleasing Worksheet.** Start by seeing where you say yes on autopilot, and what it costs you.
2. **Boundaries Worksheet.** Decide on one boundary, write it as something you'll do, and plan the exact words.
3. **I-Statements Worksheet.** Practise saying how you feel and what you'd like, without blame, so it's more likely to be heard.
4. **Anger Management Worksheet.** For when it gets heated: know your early warning signs and what you'll do at each level.

## How to use it

- Pick one relationship or situation to work on, not your whole life.
- Practise the words out loud before you need them.
- Expect some pushback the first time. It doesn't mean the boundary is wrong.
- If you're ever unsafe, your safety comes first: get support before you say anything.

### If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at **findahelpline.com**. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.

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# My People-Pleasing Worksheet

Six short exercises to move from an automatic yes to a kindness you actually choose.

## 01 How much am I people-pleasing?

How often do I say yes when I really mean no?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Hardly ever — Almost always

The person, or place, where I find it hardest to say no:

## 02 Where it shows up

Tick the ones you recognise, then add your own. Naming the habit takes some of its automatic power away.

- [ ] Saying yes when I'm already stretched
- [ ] Apologising for things that aren't my fault
- [ ] Going quiet to avoid a disagreement
- [ ] Cancelling my own plans to fit someone else's
- [ ] Feeling responsible for how other people feel
- [ ] Struggling to ask for help or hand things over
- [ ] Changing what I think to match the room
- [ ] Over-explaining or justifying a simple no

Other ways it shows up for me:

## 03 What it has cost me

People-pleasing usually costs you something; we just don't often add it up. Think of recent times you said yes when you meant no.

| What I did to keep the peace | What it actually cost me<br>time, energy, resentment, self-respect |
| --- | --- |
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## 04 The fear underneath the yes

Under most people-pleasing is a quiet fear of what happens if we don't. Follow it down one honest step at a time.

If I said no to this person, I'm afraid they would...

And if that happened, what am I most afraid it would mean? (about me, or about the relationship)

## 05 A small, honest no

Change comes from small reps, not a dramatic confrontation. Pick one low-stakes situation this week, and write what you'll actually say.

The situation where I'll hold a limit:

What I'll say, kept short and kind (no long justification):

## 06 What I actually want

When you've spent years tracking what others want, your own wants go quiet. Ask them directly.

Something I want or need that I usually keep to myself:

One small way I'll honour it this week:

### When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Whose approval are you working hardest to keep, and what would it cost you to need it a little less?
- When you imagine saying the small no, what does the fear predict, and how often has that prediction actually come true?
- What might you have time and energy for if you weren't carrying everyone else's comfort?

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# My Boundaries Worksheet

Six short steps to go from 'I need better boundaries' to one clear boundary you can say and keep. If someone in your life is controlling, threatening or violent, a boundary can make things more dangerous: talk to a domestic abuse service first (England 0808 2000 247, Scotland 0800 027 1234, Wales 0808 80 10 800, Northern Ireland 0808 802 1414, US 1-800-799-7233).

## 01 Where do I need a boundary?

Tick the areas where you've been giving more than you want to. Then add your own.

- [ ] My time (evenings, weekends, last-minute favours)
- [ ] My energy (being everyone's listener or fixer)
- [ ] Work creeping into home (messages, emails, being on call)
- [ ] Money or belongings (lending, paying, sharing)
- [ ] My body or space (touch, privacy, my room or desk)
- [ ] Topics I don't want to discuss (weight, plans, my relationship)
- [ ] How I'm spoken to (criticism, jokes at my expense, raised voices)

### How often do I feel resentful after saying yes?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Hardly ever — Almost always

## 02 The signals

Resentment, dread and exhaustion are often the first sign a limit is missing. Think of recent moments when you felt one of them.

| The situation | What I felt<br>resentment, dread, drained, guilty |
| --- | --- |
| | |
| | |
| | |

The one I'll work on first (pick something small):

## 03 My boundary, as something I'll do

Write the limit as your own action, not as a rule for someone else. You can keep this boundary whatever they do.

Instead of 'they need to...', my boundary is 'I will...':

e.g. 'I'll answer non-urgent messages in the morning', not 'they must stop messaging late'

Why this matters to me:

## 04 The words I'll use

Plan it before the moment arrives. Keep each part short and kind. You don't need a long justification.

What's happening (just the facts):

How it affects me:

What I'm asking for, or saying no to:

Why it helps (us, or me):

Put together, in my own words:

## 05 If it's crossed

The follow-through is the boundary; the words just announce it. Decide now, so you're not deciding under pressure. If following through could put you at risk, don't: talk to a domestic abuse service instead (England 0808 2000 247, Scotland 0800 027 1234, Wales 0808 80 10 800, Northern Ireland 0808 802 1414, US 1-800-799-7233).

**If the boundary isn't respected, what I'll calmly do:**

e.g. end the call, leave, hand the task back, repeat it once

**What I'll tell myself when the guilt kicks in:**

## 06 Practise it

When and where I'll say it:

How confident do I feel about saying it?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all — Completely

Afterwards: what actually happened, and what I learned:

### When you're done, a moment to reflect

- What did you fear would happen when you set the boundary, and what actually happened?
- Where else in your life might the same boundary, or a gentler version of it, help?
- What would change if you trusted that people who care about you can handle a clear, kind no?

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# My I-Statements Worksheet

Five short steps, from a blaming 'you' to an honest 'I', ending with how the conversation went. The formula: I feel ___ when ___ because ___. I'd like ___. If someone in your life is controlling, threatening or violent, speaking up can make things more dangerous: talk to a domestic abuse service first (England 0808 2000 247, Scotland 0800 027 1234, Wales 0808 80 10 800, Northern Ireland 0808 802 1414, US 1-800-799-7233).

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## 01 Turn 'you' statements into I-statements

Write down things you've said, or wanted to say, that start with 'you'. Then rewrite each one with the formula. Example: 'You're always late' becomes 'I feel stressed when we're late for things, because I hate letting people down. I'd like us to leave ten minutes earlier.'

| The 'you' statement<br>What I said or thought | The I-statement<br>I feel... when... because... I'd like... |
| --- | --- |
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## 02 Find the feeling underneath

Blame often sits on top of a softer feeling. Tick the ones that fit the situation you most want to talk about, or add your own.

- [ ] Hurt
- [ ] Ignored or unheard
- [ ] Worried or anxious
- [ ] Let down or disappointed
- [ ] Overwhelmed or stretched
- [ ] Embarrassed
- [ ] Lonely or left out
- [ ] Frustrated
- [ ] Taken for granted

Any other feeling, in my own words:

## 03 Practise for a real situation

Pick one conversation you'd like to have. Build the I-statement one part at a time, then put it together. Keep the 'when' part to what happened, not what you think it means.

Who it's with, and what it's about:

I feel...

when... (what happened, just the facts)

because... (why it matters to me)

I'd like... (one clear, doable request)

Put together, in words that sound like me:

When and where I'll say it (a calm moment, not mid-argument):

## 04 What I'll say if they push back

They might argue, get defensive or bring up something else. Decide now how you'll stay calm. One technique from assertiveness training is the broken record: repeat your main point in the same few words, kindly, without a new reason each time.

| What they might say | What I'll calmly say back |
| --- | --- |
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My one-line broken record:

e.g. 'I hear you. I'd still like us to put phones down at dinner.'

If it gets too heated, what I'll do (e.g. suggest a break and a time to come back to it):

## 05 After the conversation

Come back to this once you've said it. Whatever happened, you practised a hard skill.

### What I said, and how they responded:

### How well did I say what I meant?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not at all — Exactly as I meant it

### What went well:

### What I'd try differently next time:

### When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which 'you' statement comes out of you most often, and what feeling is usually underneath it?
- Who is it easiest for you to be honest with, and who is it hardest? What's the difference?
- What are you afraid will happen if you say how you really feel?
- What would it be like to be heard, even if you didn't get what you asked for?

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# My Anger Management Worksheet

Six steps to a plan you can actually use when anger starts to build. If your anger has led to hitting, threatening or controlling someone, also talk to the Respect Phoneline (UK 0808 8024040). If someone is hurting you, call a domestic abuse service (England 0808 2000 247, Scotland 0800 027 1234, Wales 0808 80 10 800, Northern Ireland 0808 802 1414, US 1-800-799-7233).

## 01 My triggers

A trigger is whatever tends to set your anger off. Tick the ones you recognise, then write your own, along with why they get to you.

- [ ] Being interrupted, ignored or not listened to
- [ ] Feeling criticised, blamed or judged
- [ ] Something that feels unfair
- [ ] Being disrespected or talked down to
- [ ] Delays, queues, traffic or things not working
- [ ] Noise, mess or too many demands at once
- [ ] A particular person, or a particular topic
- [ ] Being tired, hungry, unwell or in pain
- [ ] Alcohol, or coming down from it

| My trigger<br>As specific as I can | Why it gets to me<br>What it seems to mean |
| --- | --- |
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## 02 My anger thermometer

Picture a scale from 1 (completely calm) to 10 (an explosive loss of control you regret). Your warning signs change as you go up. Notice them in your body (a racing heart, a hot face, a clenched jaw), your thoughts ('how dare they', replaying it) and what you start to do (pacing, raising your voice). For each level, write your own signs and what you'll do there.

| Level | My signs | What I'll do at this level |
|---|---|---|
| e.g. 1-3, 4-6, 7-8, 9-10 | Body, thoughts, what I do | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

The number where I stop thinking clearly, so I need to take a time-out before it:

## 03 My time-out plan

A time-out means stepping away before you reach the top of your thermometer, then coming back. It isn't the silent treatment and it isn't walking out for good. If you can, agree it in advance with the people you live or work with, so they know you'll return. If leaving the room isn't enough to keep everyone safe, that's a sign to get help (see the note at the top).

What I'll say to call a time-out:

e.g. 'I'm getting too angry to talk well. I'm going to take 20 minutes, then I'll come back.'

Where I'll go:

What I'll do while I'm away (something calming, not going over it in my head):

When I'll come back, and how I'll pick things up or agree to talk later:

Who I'll agree this plan with in advance:

## 04 Calming skills that work for me

Pick skills that slow your body down. Research suggests calming activities help with anger more than ones that rev you up, so hitting a pillow or 'letting it all out' isn't on this list. Tick the ones you'll try, then choose your top three.

- [ ] Slow breathing, with the out-breath longer than the in-breath
- [ ] Counting to 10 before I say anything
- [ ] Dropping my shoulders and unclenching my jaw and hands
- [ ] Cold water on my hands or wrists, or holding something cold
- [ ] Stepping outside for fresh air, or a slow walk
- [ ] A grounding exercise (5 things I can see, 4 I can hear ...)
- [ ] Tensing and relaxing my muscles, one group at a time
- [ ] A calming phrase I say to myself
- [ ] Writing down what I'm angry about, then putting it away
- [ ] Talking to someone who isn't involved
- [ ] Eating, drinking water or resting if I'm running on empty

My top three:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

## 05 An assertive way to say it afterwards

Once you've calmed down, the thing that made you angry may still need saying. Saying it assertively means being clear and honest about what you feel and need, without attacking or blaming. An I-statement keeps it about you rather than them.

What happened (just the facts, no 'you always'):

I felt ...

because ...

What I'd like, or what I need, is ...

Put together, in my own words:

## 06 Review my week

Each time anger shows up this week, add a line. At the end of the week, look for patterns, not proof that you've failed.

| Day and situation | Highest level<br>1 to 10 | What I did | What helped, or what I'd change |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
| | | | |
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What I'll keep doing, and what I'll change in my plan:

### When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which warning sign usually comes first for you, and how early could you catch it?
- What's often underneath your anger: hurt, worry, tiredness, feeling ignored?
- Who do you want to be when you're angry? What would that person do at a 5?
- Which relationship would feel different if your time-out plan worked?

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