



Setting boundaries for your wellbeing

Individuals engage in a variety of relationships, such as partners, children, friends, co-workers, neighbours, and acquaintances. Each type of relationship entails distinct interactions, responsibilities, and influences. Boundaries play a crucial role in all relationships. They can be established intentionally or may develop unconsciously.

Establishing and maintaining appropriate boundaries is essential for fostering healthy relationships. Healthy boundaries help us understand what is okay and not okay in how we interact with others. They play a key role in building our self-respect and self-esteem, which are essential for our personal growth.



Why set boundaries?

- ▶ **Protecting your wellbeing:** boundaries help you safeguard your emotional and physical health by preventing others from taking advantage of you or crossing your limits.
- ▶ **Promoting healthy relationships:** clear boundaries encourage respect and understanding in relationships, allowing for healthier interactions and reducing misunderstandings.
- ▶ **Enhancing self-respect:** by setting boundaries, you show yourself and others that you value your needs and feelings, which boosts your self-esteem.
- ▶ **Encouraging personal growth:** boundaries create a safe space for you to explore your interests and goals without external pressures, fostering personal development.
- ▶ **Reducing stress:** knowing your limits can help you manage your time and energy better, leading to less stress and a more balanced life.
- ▶ **Improving communication:** setting boundaries encourages open and honest communication, helping others understand your needs and expectations.

Creating your boundaries

Boundary setting can be challenging at first. Answer the following questions to help you define the boundaries you want to set yourself:

- ▶ Which relationships bring me stress and anxiety?
- ▶ Do I feel mistreated or taken advantage of?
- ▶ Does the appreciation I receive from others depend on how well I meet their requests?





Once you've determined your boundaries:

- ▶ **Identify your needs:** reflect on what you need in your relationships, including emotional, physical, and time-related needs. Understanding your limits is the first step in setting boundaries.
- ▶ **Communicate clearly:** once you know your boundaries, express them clearly and assertively to others. Use “I” statements to convey your feelings and needs, such as “I feel overwhelmed when...” or “I need some time to myself.”
- ▶ **Be consistent:** consistency is crucial in maintaining boundaries. Stick to the limits you set and reinforce them when necessary. This helps others understand that you are serious about your needs.
- ▶ **Learn to say no:** practice saying no when requests or situations cross your boundaries. It's okay to decline invitations or tasks that don't align with your needs or values.
- ▶ **Stay calm and respectful:** when discussing boundaries, remain calm and respectful. Avoid being confrontational and try to approach the conversation with empathy.
- ▶ **Be prepared for pushback:** some people may resist your boundaries, especially if they are used to you being more accommodating. Be prepared to stand firm and reiterate your needs.
- ▶ **Evaluate and adjust:** regularly assess your boundaries and how they are working for you. It's okay to adjust them as your needs and circumstances change.
- ▶ **Seek support:** if you find it challenging to set or maintain boundaries, consider seeking support from friends, family, or a professional, such as a therapist.

A long-term plan - follow through

At first, healthy boundaries require effort to maintain and establish. Over time, you will find they become more habitual and require less effort. You will notice that pressure to please others will fade away.

It's important to reflect on your interactions with others to ensure that the boundaries you have created are being followed, especially during busy or stressful times.

Freezer friendly burritos

Your answer to a quick, family friendly weeknight meal!
Prep time: 10 mins | Cook time: 30 mins | Makes 6

Ingredients list

- ▶ 500g beef mince
- ▶ 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ▶ 1 onion, finely chopped
- ▶ 1 capsicum, roughly chopped
- ▶ 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- ▶ 400g tin black beans
- ▶ 400g tin diced tomato
- ▶ 200g tin lentils
- ▶ 200g tin corn kernels
- ▶ 1 tbsp taco/Mexican seasoning
- ▶ 6 wholegrain tortillas
- ▶ 200g brown rice or quinoa
- ▶ 60g baby spinach
- ▶ 75g shredded mozzarella cheese

Method

- ▶ Heat a large saucepan on medium/high heat.
- ▶ Add oil and then sauté onion, garlic and capsicum until lightly brown and soft (3-5min)
- ▶ Add beef mince and break apart. Stir occasionally for 5 mins. Once beef is cooked, add in black beans, tomatoes lentils, corn and seasoning.
- ▶ Place a tortilla on a sheet of aluminium foil, add some of the cooked beef/bean mix, rice, baby spinach and top with shredded cheese. Roll into a burrito (tucking in the sides first, and then rolled from one end) and wrap in the foil.
- ▶ Serve immediately or freeze for later. Defrost in foil in the oven when you are ready to eat (15-20 mins at 150 C).



Tips:

You can easily make this meal vegetarian by using a plant based alternative and to make things easier you can buy microwave cups of rice to speed up your prep and cooking time!

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