

## SETTING BOUNDARIES: HOW TO SET BOUNDARIES SO YOU CAN ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS

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It's incredibly helpful to sit back every now and then and think about the boundaries you need to set in your life in order to stay energised and achieve your goals. Use the questions below to reflect on what boundaries you might want to put in place.

### 1) **Get clear on your Goal(s)**

The first step is to think about what goal(s) you want to achieve. Are we talking about fitness, healthy eating, career, work or all of it? Identify the goal(s) that are important to you that you are in danger of not hitting and jot them down. For example, a work life balance goal might be 'to work less in the evenings'. Make sure it is specific - 'only 2 evenings in a week rather than five, for 2 hours max, finishing before midnight'. And, get clear on when you want to achieve it by - 'I want it to be the norm by August'.

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Example Goal: For it to be the norm by August to only work 2 evenings a week, for 2 hours max, and finish before midnight.

Now reflect on why this Goal is important to you, identify the benefits to you of achieving it and cost to you of not achieving it.

To continue with the example already used:

#### **Why is it important?**

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#### **What are the benefits?**

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#### **What is the cost?**

I will begin to resent my work. I'm going to keep feeling shattered. This has a knock on impact to healthy eating & exercise. I'll lose this precious time in my life to be more connected with my family and friends. I'll feel like I am missing something. I'll kick myself if I don't!

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Refer back to your goal and why it is important to help keep you motivated to stay on track.

## 2) **Identify limiting assumptions**

Think about what is stopping you from achieving this goal right now. Reflect on the following questions which explore some assumptions you might be making.

a. What are you assuming that stops you from achieving this goal? What else, what else?

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b. Which of these assumptions is most stopping you from achieving your goal?

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c. Is this assumption true?

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d. What could you assume that is also true and more liberating?

I could assume instead that I have the ability and control to determine what I spend my working hours focussing on.

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e. If you knew that this new assumption (from question d) was true, how would you go about achieving your goal.

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### 3. **Pause and say 'No' more**

For many of us, one of the biggest barriers to achieving our goals is not being able to say no with clarity and confidence but rather we say yes for fear of offending others. Before you agree to do something, try and get into the habit of creating a pause. Use some of the responses below or come up with a couple that work for you that buy you time.

- “Let me think about that.”
- “I need to check something first so let me come back to you on that”
- “I’ll get back to you once I’ve had a chance to think about it properly.”
- “Sounds great however let me check a few things before I commit.”

Now revisit your goal and why it is so important to you. Determine whether saying No is the right thing for YOU to do.

When you say Yes to others, make sure you are not saying No to yourself.” ~ Paulo Coelho

If it is, then here are some graceful and clear ‘No’ responses that might work for you.

- It doesn’t work for me right now.
- I’m not able to make it this Sunday/this week/month/year.
- I’ve got too much on my plate right now.
- Thank you for thinking of me, I’m sorry I can’t at this time.
- It’s too bad I’m busy, but please let me know how it turns out.
- Perhaps another time, let me know what next week looks like for you.
- No thank you, but it sounds lovely.

### 4. **Course correct**

No one is perfect and life is messy. Although this is an exercise in setting boundaries and sticking to them, we all falter now and then so notice when your boundaries need resetting and do just that – hit the reset button and try again.

