


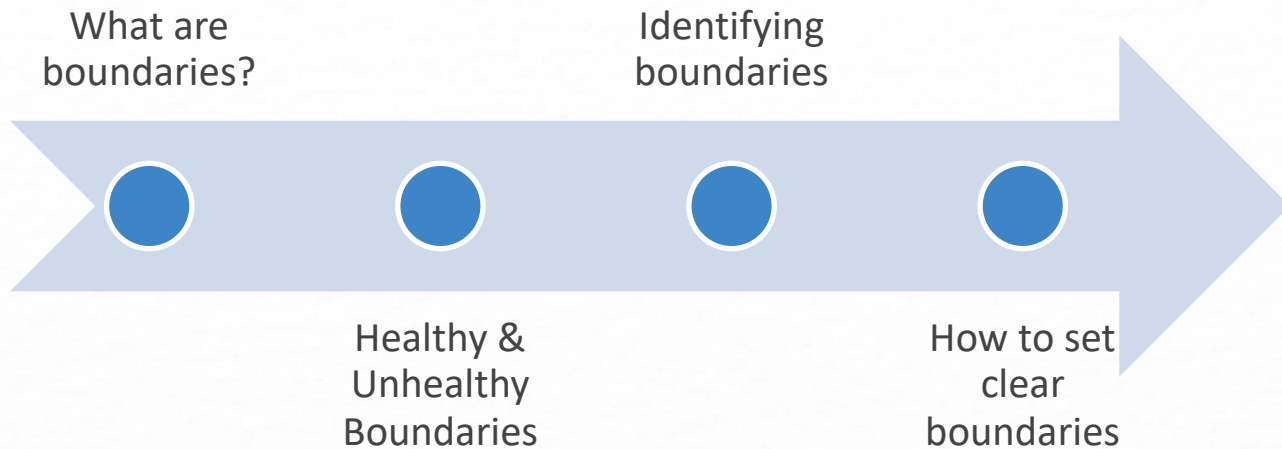


# Boundaries

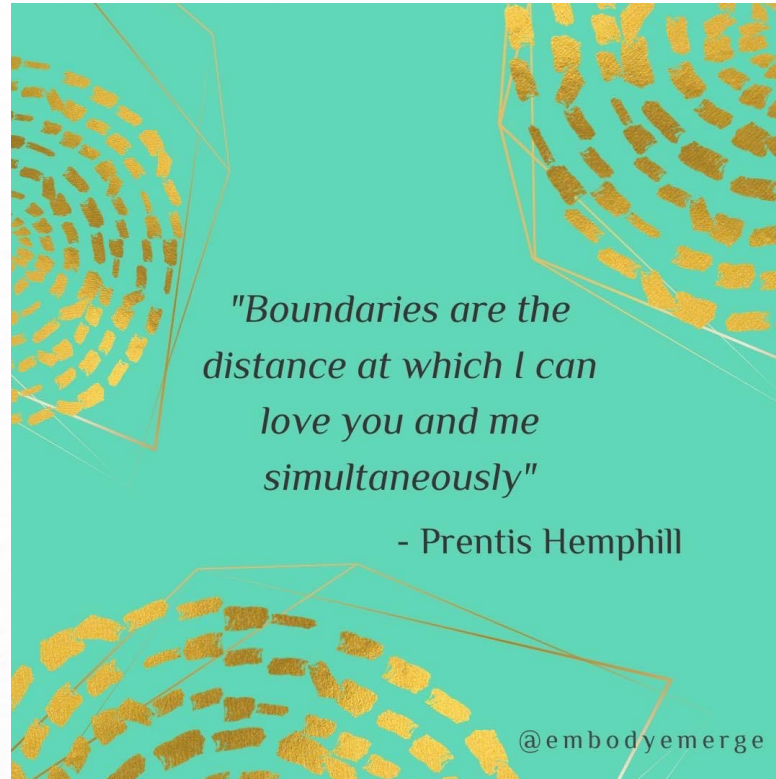
Employee Assistance Program  
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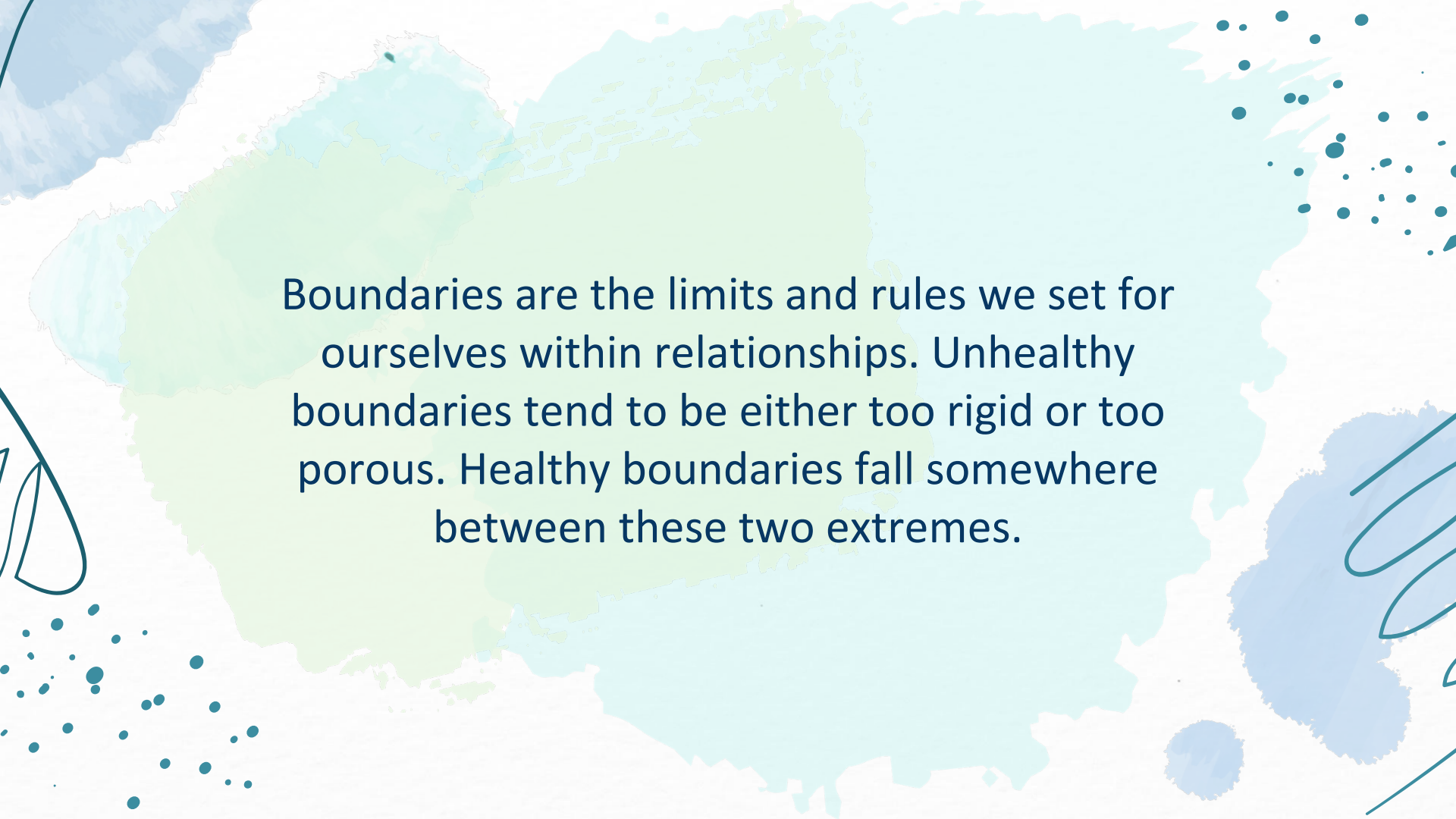


# Today's Agenda



# What are Boundaries?





Boundaries are the limits and rules we set for ourselves within relationships. Unhealthy boundaries tend to be either too rigid or too porous. Healthy boundaries fall somewhere between these two extremes.

# Types of Boundaries



## Physical

Protecting our personal space.



## Emotional

Protecting our own emotional well-being.

## Material

Protecting our personal belongings.



## Workplace

Protecting our ability to do our work without interference or drama.



## Sexual

Protecting our needs and safety sexually.

## Time

Protecting the use, and misuse, of our time.



# Healthy vs. Unhealthy Boundaries

## Healthy Boundaries

- Knows your needs & feelings are just as important as the needs & feelings of others.
- Says “no” & is accepting when others say “no”.
- Knows personal wants & needs & can communicate them.
- Shares personal information in an appropriate way.

## Rigid Boundaries

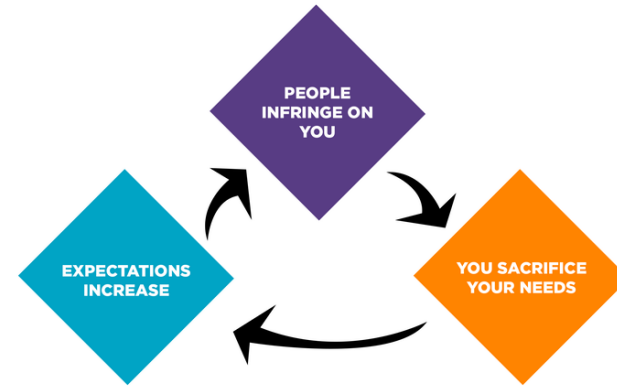
- Unlikely to ask for help.
- Keeps others at a distance.
- Surface-level relationships.
- Reluctant to share or be vulnerable.
- Inflexible rules about what you will & won't do.
- Difficultly trusting others.

## Porous Boundaries

- Always puts other people's needs before your own.
- Difficultly saying no or accepting when others say no.
- Feels responsible for other people's feelings and/or happiness.
- Allows others to mistreat you.
- Overshares personal information.

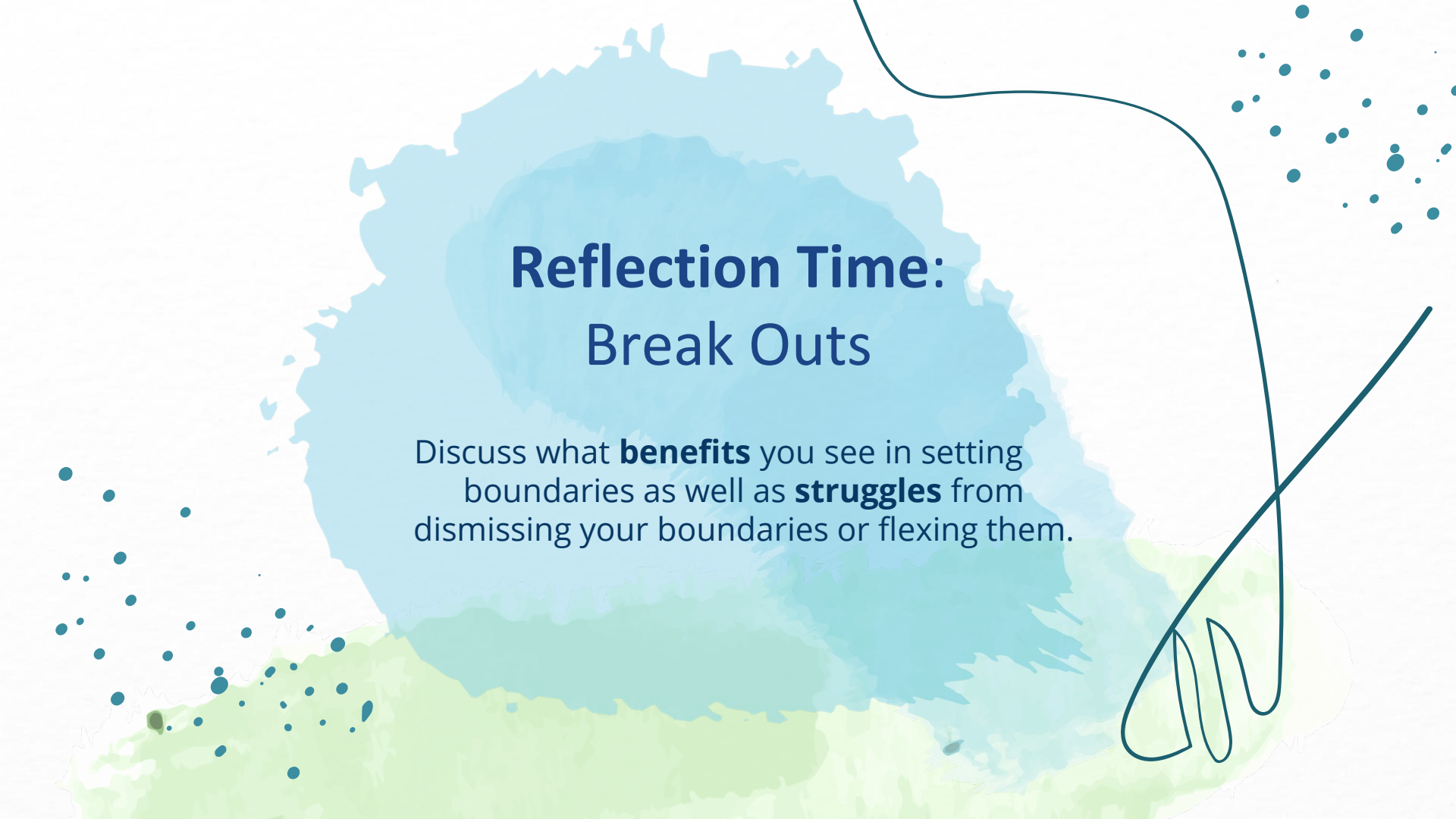


## THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF UNHEALTHY WORK BOUNDARIES









## Reflection Time: Break Outs

Discuss what **benefits** you see in setting boundaries as well as **struggles** from dismissing your boundaries or flexing them.

# How Do You Identify Your Own Boundaries?

- Think about areas in your life where you're experiencing problems
  - Do you constantly feel exhausted?
  - Do you feel resentful of your supervisors' intrusions?
  - Do you feel uncomfortable around a co-worker?
- Tune into your emotions
  - How are you feeling right now?
  - What is your body telling you?
- Tune into your thoughts
  - Maybe you have more self-critical thoughts when you're with a certain person.
- Ask others
  - Observe other people's boundaries, they can provide examples.
- Get clear on your values
  - Identify what matters most to you.

# How to Set Personal Boundaries

**Self**

Connect with yourself and explore what you need to feel safe with others and with yourself

**Define**

Identify and name your desired boundaries

**Communicate**

Express what you need and your boundary

**Simplify**

Stay simple without overexplaining or justifying your boundaries

**Consequences**

Set the consequences for crossing your boundaries and why they are important

- ❑ Be clear about what you want
- ❑ Be direct. Don't apologize.
- ❑ Expect resistance. Don't let it deter you.
- ❑ Boundary setting is ongoing.
- ❑ Practice saying "No"
- ❑ Boundaries are for your wellbeing, not to control others.

Tips to Help Set Healthy Boundaries



## **Reflection Time: Break Outs**

What boundaries would help you feel  
safe and/or take care of yourself?  
(Personally, and Professionally)

## Boundaries sound like:

mellow doodles



I will end this phone call if you continue to shout at me.



I need time to think about it. I'll come back to you.



I can stay for half an hour.



I don't respond to work emails at the weekend.



Thank you for your offer, unfortunately I can't make it.



I'm not comfortable with that. If you do it again I will have to leave.



I'm not comfortable discussing that. Please do not discuss it with me.



I respect your opinion but this is my life and my decision.

## Boundaries sound like:



@the.holistic.psychologist

"I understand you are angry, but do not speak to me that way"

"I won't be able to make it"

"I would appreciate you not bringing this up anymore"

"If you text me, I'll text back at a time that works best for me"

## Boundaries include an action:

"If this continues, I won't be spending time here"

"If you cannot respect what I'm asking, I'll need space"

"If you continue to pressure me or attempt to guilt me, I'm going to have to end this conversation"

## Boundaries Feel like:

confusing, terrifying, and guilt ridden  
(if we come from codependent dynamics)

# Examples of Boundaries



## More Examples



# Boundary Setting



## Physical

Honor people and your own boundaries regarding touch.  
Take time off work.  
Have a "tell" to show peers that you're busy.



## Emotional

Share how you like to give & receive feedback.  
Avoid absorbing someone else's bad mood/emotional outburst.  
Create an emotional separation between your identity and your work – *You are more than what you do.*

## Material

Honor people & your own workplace, especially if sharing work-stations.  
Respect's people's property.  
Honor "borrowing" agreements & return people's property.



## Workplace

Set your working hours and stick to them.  
Offer credit/recognition to people for their work.  
Delegate work when necessary.



## Sexual

Do not ask or question someone's sexuality or gender identity.  
Jokes of sexual nature are unacceptable in the workplace.  
Violence is not to be joked about.

## Time

Set limits for work conversations outside of work hours.  
Disengage from work during your time off.  
If you are struggling to be productive, take a "recovery" break.





# Shifting Boundaries

## Initial Boundary

You often agree to work extra hours to help a coworker.

You often don't take a lunch break to complete tasks.

You allow a coworker to speak with you about personal matters frequently throughout the day.

## New Boundary

You cut back on hours so you can spend more time with your family.

You start making sure you take a lunch break even when busy.

The talking distracts you from your tasks, so you set a limit on how often you talk throughout the day.



**Boundaries by Nedra Glover Tawwab**

# Practice: Break Outs

1. You have a supervisor that texts you all hours of the day, outside of your work hours.
2. A colleague talks down on you in a meeting.
3. You are scheduled to end your shift at 4:30 PM. At 4:25 PM your supervisor gives you a report and says it needs to be completed before you leave. This is the 3<sup>rd</sup> time this has happened this week.
4. You have a colleague who overshares and dumps their personal life on you every shift causing you to feel uncomfortable.

# Takeaways

It can be hard to figure out what boundaries need to be set

Boundaries keep us safe

Boundary setting is a skill that takes practice

We all need boundaries

Boundaries help us focus on what's most important to us

Boundaries improve relationships by creating clear expectations & responsibilities

# Further Your Learning



## The Holistic Psychologist

Boundaries: Why You Need Them & How to Set Them

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dXvlwXMNbXI>



## Career Contessa

8 Ways to Establish Healthy Boundaries at Work

<https://www.careercontessa.com/advice/healthy-boundaries-at-work/>

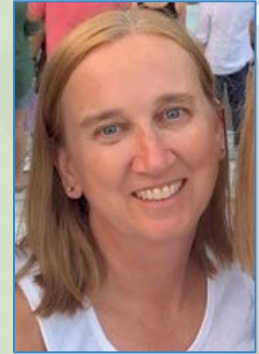
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# Getting Connected



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For free 24/7  
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Call (800)236-7905

Please Give Us Your Feedback!



Thank you!