

TOUGH TALK TOOLKIT



COMMUNICATING BOUNDARIES

If a person who you want in your life is crossing your personal boundaries, one thing you can do is communicate each boundary really clearly.

The aim is to communicate where your boundaries are for a specific behaviour, so they know when it's not ok, or when it's sometimes ok.

1. Communicate the **boundary** and the **behaviour**:
*e.g. It's **not ok** to [say that] or bring up [that topic] or touch me.*
2. If a behaviour is sometimes ok, communicate any **conditions**: *e.g. **Ask first** and I will tell you if it's ok.*
3. Remind the person of the boundary if they cross it. It can take a few attempts for someone to learn a boundary.
4. Thank the person for following a boundary or the conditions you set, and taking no for an answer.
5. You may choose to widen a boundary, adapt it, or even change it completely. Communicate any changes to them.



It's important to not feel guilty for saying that someone's behaviour is not ok. It may be upsetting for the other person at first, but with time it can improve your relationship. It can be helpful to be prepared with an explanation for the boundary, but you don't have to explain it. It's much more empowering to say yes because you want to, rather than feeling obliged to please someone. Boundaries can take time to develop, but if someone intentionally crosses one of your boundaries with full awareness of it, then that person is intentionally harming you.