



Episode 161: The Problem with Boundaries

How often do you tell yourself, 'I'm gonna go home on time today', but you stay late at work anyway?

We know we need boundaries. Boundaries help us maintain our well-being and productivity. The real challenge is not in setting boundaries, but in dealing with the consequences. The fear of backlash, guilt, or inconveniencing someone makes it difficult to keep our boundaries up.

This episode explores the value of boundaries. We'll discuss why we let our boundaries crumble at the worst of times. But that's not all — we'll also demonstrate how to use power language to keep your boundaries from going down in flames.

This episode is perfect for anyone having a hard time saying 'no' to other people. No one should burn out at work. Let's figure out the problem with boundaries and how to get around it.

Podcast links

[Just Say No](#) Toolkit

[We Can Do Hard Things Podcast](#) with Glennon Doyle

[THRIVE Weekly Planner](#)

Check out our [Permission to Thrive CPD membership](#) for doctors!

[Email Rachel](#) or reach her on [LinkedIn](#) or [Twitter](#).



Quote to remember:

“The major reason we fail to set boundaries is not necessarily because of people-pleasing, because of other people's reaction. It's due to the own internal stories that we tell ourselves in our heads when we say no.”

What You Will Learn

Saying “no” may feel hard. We will discover that bearing short-term pain can lead to long-term benefits instead of the other way around. Healthcare workers need to learn when to say no and maintain the boundaries they set for their own good.

This activity offers valuable insights and lessons for people striving to maintain healthy boundaries in their personal or professional lives. The first activity sparks self-reflection by examining past struggles with boundaries. Uncovering the underlying causes and mindsets in these experiences helps participants foresee potential challenges. It develops proactive and self-aware solutions for future boundary-setting.

The second activity emphasises the importance of aligning boundaries. This alignment fosters intentionality. It ensures that people protect their well-being while staying true to their values. It promotes making conscious choices about where to invest time and energy.

The third activity showcases the power of assertive power language in maintaining boundaries. By revisiting past situations and rephrasing your responses, you can rewire your thoughts around saying 'no' to people. It is an effective way of facing boundary-related challenges.

These exercises can help you learn the value of setting boundaries. They will know how to align them with their priorities and use power language to reinforce their decisions. By mastering the art of boundary-setting, people can improve ties, mental health, and overall well-being. Ultimately creating a more balanced and fulfilling life.



Activity: Balancing Boundaries and Priorities

Think of a time you didn't maintain one of your boundaries. Describe what happened and answer the following questions.

1. What was the boundary?
2. What do you think would have happened if you had enforced that boundary?
3. What happened when you let that boundary crumble?

List your top three priorities in your professional and personal life. How do these priorities reflect in your boundaries?

For example:

Professional Priority – Maintain a healthy work-life balance.

Boundary – Leave work by 6:30 PM to spend time with family and have personal time.

Personal Priority – Prioritise physical and mental health.

Boundary – Dedicate at least 1 hour daily to exercise, meditate, or engage in a hobby.



1. **Priority:**

Boundary:

2. **Priority:**

Boundary

3. **Priority:**

Boundary:

Do you find it easy to maintain all these boundaries? If not, think about what happens when you don't. Here are some guide questions to help you along:

- a. Why does the boundary crumble?
- b. What do I think would happen if I enforced the boundary?
- c. How do I feel, and what are the effects on my priority when I let the boundary crumble?

Identify three situations where you could have used power language to maintain a boundary better. Rewrite your responses in those situations using power language. It can be like, "I choose not to do this", or "I won't be able to attend."

1.

2.

3.



CPD time claimed:

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