

The Power of No

Boundary-setting for resilience and healthier relationships

Boundaries, and the Art of the Polite Decline

Have you ever felt like someone's taken advantage of you? Felt obligated to take on more than you should, especially during busy times like holidays or near deadlines? Said "yes" to something you don't have time (or don't want) to do, then blown your lid when things got too stressful?

If you answered yes to any of these, it might be time to reexamine your boundaries.

Boundaries can help us better manage how, when, where, (and on whom and what) we spend our time and energy. Rather than being restrictive, the right boundaries can be expansive, helping us to derive much more meaning, productivity, and fulfillment from those things and people we do spend time on. But, for many of us, the notion of politely declining is an unsettling one.

Boundaries

Limits we set for ourselves to facilitate reasonable, safe, and healthy ways of interacting with others.

Don't Be Afraid of the No

If you bristle at the idea of setting boundaries, don't worry—that's a natural response for many of us, for various reasons:

- Saying no is commonly and incorrectly associated with being selfish or callous.
- Boundaries always trigger a responding emotion.
- A yes will bring a smile from the person doing the asking, and a no will probably have the opposite effect. So, we might find ourselves saying yes when we shouldn't to make someone else happy or to avoid conflict in the moment.

勇於說不

設定界線，建立心理韌性和更健康的人際關係

人際界線，與禮貌拒絕的藝術

您是否曾經感覺別人在佔您便宜？總覺得必須扛下更多非分內的事，尤其在假期或到期日逼近這類忙碌的時刻？即使沒時間（或不想）做，還是會說「好」，然後在壓力過大時忍不住爆炸？

如果以上皆是，也許是時候該重新檢視一下您的人際界線。

良好的人際界線可以幫助我們如何、何時、何處、（以及對誰和什麼事）更好地運用時間和精力。正確的界線並不會侷限我們，反而為我們開拓空間，幫助我們從耗時費神的人際往來中，獲得更多意義、更有成果和成就感。然而，對大部分人來說，禮貌地拒絕這種觀念，仍是不習慣和不容易做到的。

人際界線

我們為自己所設下的人際界線，用以協助與他人進行合理、安全、和健康的互動。

別害怕說不

如果設立界線的想法讓您感到不安，別擔心——這是很多人都有的自然反應，原因有很多：

- 「說不」普遍被錯誤地與自私或冷酷無情連結在一起。
- 界線經常會觸發情緒反應。
- 向提出要求的人說好，會換來微笑，說不，可能適得其反。所以，我們可能會身不由己地說好，即使當下不應該只為了討好對方，或避免衝突。



- It's possible that we never learned how to set boundaries or say "no," especially to authority figures.

Although setting proper boundaries can feel stressful at first, over time and with practice it can help bolster our resilience and promote wellbeing. It's not wrong to want to do things for others; but when we want to please too much, and at our own expense, good intentions can leave us feeling resentful and exhausted.

The antidote? A thoughtful no.

The Art of Setting Healthy Boundaries

If setting and respecting your own boundaries is new to you, trying it can feel a little unnatural at first. These tips can help you learn how and when to say no.

- Use your inner yes/no compass. Before responding to a request, imagine a compass in your head that can point to either Yes or No. If you agree to this request, and your needle points to Yes, how does it make you feel? Anxious? If your needle points to No, how then? At ease? Take a moment to breathe mindfully, pause, and reflect before answering.
- Set your calendar in concrete. When drawing up your calendar, go all in by mapping out not just your work responsibilities, but also time for personal things like chores, leisure activities, gym time, and dinners with the family. Having definitive plans can make it easier to say no without guilt when conflicting requests come in.

Remember, discomfort is fleeting, but resentment can last forever. When someone asks you for something you can't or don't want to do, take a deep breath, and remember that the discomfort of a no will pass in a moment. Conversely, the repercussions and resentment of saying yes can affect your health, happiness, and wellbeing long into the future.

- 我們可能永遠學不會設立界線或說不，尤其是面對權威人士的時候。

雖然設立適當人際界線，一開始會感覺緊張，透過練習，一段時間後，可以強化我們的韌性，使我們得益。想為他人付出並沒有錯，然而委屈自己，過度討好，原本的好意，最後可能讓我們感到憤恨不平或精疲力盡。

有什麼解方呢？請禮貌地說不。

設立健康人際界線的藝術

如果設立並尊重自己的界線，對您來說是新的嘗試，剛開始可能會覺得有些不自然。以下的竅訣可以幫助您學習如何，以及何時說不。

- 運用內心的是/非羅盤。在回覆對方的要求前，想像腦子裡有一個指向「是或非」的羅盤。如果您同意對方要求，指針指向「是」，心裡的感受如何？會不會焦慮不安？如果指針指向「非」，又有什麼感覺？是不是鬆了口氣？花幾分鐘深呼吸，停一下，思考後再回答。
- 設定明確的行事曆。當您在制定行事曆時，不要只劃出工作職責的項目，也應把家務，休閒活動，運動健身，家庭聚餐等個人事務的時間涵蓋在內。有明確的計畫，可以在面對時間衝突的要求時，沒有罪惡感地予以拒絕。

記住，不舒服是暫時的，但委屈的怨氣卻可以持久不散。當有人要求您做無法或不想做的事，先深吸一口氣，記得「說不」帶來的不舒服一下子就會過去。想反地，「說好」後必須承擔的後果和怨憤，會對您的健康，快樂和身心有長遠的影響。

Be aware of harshness bias. According to psychologists, we believe people judge us more negatively than they do in reality. This applies to boundaries too. People tend to respect us more rather than less when we set healthy limits.

Just for a minute, don't live in the moment. You have a 6 a.m. work call tomorrow, and your friends just invited you for drinks tonight. Before you say yes to drinks, imagine what it will feel like the next morning after spending the night out. (Hint: probably not great.) You can decline the invitation by saying, "Thank you for asking, but I have an important early meeting tomorrow, and it will be better if I head straight home after work."

Rehearse your no mantra. Research shows that if we consciously prepare ourselves to give a specific answer to new requests, we're more likely to honor and maintain healthy boundaries. Try practicing a polite no phrase in your head and out loud so that it's ready when you need it. Something like: "I wish I could help with that, but I can't in good conscience take on any more tasks this week."

Like many healthy habits, setting boundaries takes more effort at first but should get easier with practice.

Invest time to build your boundary skills now, and you might be amazed at how much time, effort, and resilience you'll gain in return.

This information is intended for informational purposes only and should not be used to replace professional advice.

留意「嚴苛誤謬」。心理學家認為，我們內心認為別人對我們的評價，通常比實際情況來的嚴苛。我們看待人際界線也是如此。當我們設下健康的界線，人們反而會給我們更多尊重。

想一想，及時行樂代價高。您明天有一個清晨六點的電話工作會議，而您的朋友正邀您今晚去喝一杯。在您答應之前，先想像一旦出門夜歸，明天一早會是什麼狀況（暗示：應該不怎麼美妙。）您可以這麼說來婉拒邀請：「謝謝您的邀請，但是我明天一大早有個重要的會議，我還是下班後直接回家比較好。」

預習如何說不。研究顯示如果我們有意識地，預先想好如何回覆新的要求，我們比較容易守住並維持健康的界線。試試看在腦海裡練習禮貌的拒絕用語，並且大聲說出來，當您需要時便能脫口而出。比方這麼說：「我很想幫忙，但天地良心，我這個星期實在沒辦法再接更多工作了。」

如同許多健康相關的習慣，一開始設立界線很花力氣，但經過不斷練習，會越來越輕鬆。

現在就投入時間，建立設定人際界線的技巧，將來您在時間，精力和心理韌性上，或許會獲得令您驚喜的回報。

以上資訊僅為傳遞知識，不得用以取代專業意見。