

PRACTICAL GUIDE

Gentle Boundaries: Words You Can Use

A small collection of scripts for honoring your time, energy, and choices in everyday conversations.

Use the language that sounds like you. A boundary can be kind and clear at the same time.

KEEP WHAT FITS

A boundary for time and capacity

When your calendar or energy is full.

WHEN YOU NEED TIME

"I'd like to think about it before I commit. I'll let you know by Friday."

WHEN YOU NEED TO DECLINE

"Thank you for thinking of me. I can't take that on right now."

WHEN YOU CAN OFFER LESS

"I can help for 20 minutes, but I can't own the whole project."

WHEN PLANS CHANGE

"I need to reschedule. Can we find another time next week?"

A reminder: You can edit these words until they sound like you.

KEEP WHAT FITS

A boundary for relationships and conversations

When you want connection and room to breathe.

WHEN A TOPIC FEELS TOO HEAVY

“I want to talk about this, and I need a little time to gather my thoughts first.”

WHEN YOU NEED A CALMER CONVERSATION

“I can keep talking when we can both speak respectfully.”

WHEN YOU NEED SPACE

“I care about you. I’m going to take some time for myself and check in later.”

WHEN YOU ARE NOT READY TO EXPLAIN

“I’m not ready to share more about that right now.”

A reminder: You can edit these words until they sound like you.

KEEP WHAT FITS

A boundary for texts and everyday asks

When access to you starts to feel constant.

WHEN YOU CANNOT REPLY IMMEDIATELY

"I saw your message. I'll respond when I have a moment to give it my attention."

WHEN YOU PREFER ANOTHER TIME

"I'm offline for the evening. I can talk tomorrow."

WHEN SOMEONE ASKS FOR FREE LABOR

"I'd be glad to discuss working together. Here's how to book my services."

WHEN A REQUEST IS NOT YOURS TO CARRY

"I won't be able to do that, but I hope you find the support you need."

A reminder: You can edit these words until they sound like you.

MAKE IT YOURS

Practice a sentence you could use.

Choose one situation from your life. Write a clear sentence and a gentler version if that helps you say it.

The situation:

What I need to communicate:

My words:
