

Attachment Boundaries Worksheet

Almost everything that gets called a boundary is a request. "I need you to text me back within the hour" is a request; it depends entirely on the other person doing something. A boundary is a statement about what you will do, which is why it works even when they do not cooperate — and why so much boundary advice fails, because it teaches people to issue requests and then feel betrayed when they are not granted.

Who this is for: You have read about boundaries, agreed with all of it, and still cannot work out what to actually say on Thursday evening.

The exercises

1. Request or boundary?

Sort what you want into the two columns.

The five things I most want to change:

Sorted — which are requests?

Which can be rewritten as something I will do?

Which one have I been treating as a boundary when it is a request?

2. Write it in one sentence

Short, specific, and no case attached.

Boundary one: "When ____ happens, I am going to ____."

Boundary two:

What I want to add that I am going to cut:

Read it aloud. Does it survive without the explanation?

3. Deliver it at the right time

Not mid-argument, and not by message.

When exactly — day, time, setting:

The first sentence, word for word:

What I will say if they ask why right then:

What I will not do in the silence afterwards:

4. What happens when it is crossed

The exercise everyone skips, and the only one that matters.

First time it is crossed, I will:

Is that something I will genuinely do? If not, make it smaller:

Second time:

What I do if it becomes a pattern rather than an incident:

5. The ultimatum check

Four questions to ask before you say it.

Is this about my behaviour or theirs?

Would I still want it if they responded perfectly?

Once, or as a final warning?

Proportionate to this, or carrying six months of other things?

This worksheet is free to print, photocopy and share, including with clients. It is self-reflection material, not a diagnosis, an assessment or a substitute for professional support. If a relationship involves fear, control or coercion, or if working through this raises more than feels manageable, please speak to a doctor, a therapist or a domestic abuse service.