

# Don't "Should" on Yourself

Tips and Tricks to Help set Boundaries

Holiday Help Guide

Katelyn Filice, MACP, RP (Qualifying)



# Shoulding Yourself?

- “Should Statements”
  - characterized by imposing fixed ‘rules’ on how the self, others, and the world should operate, coupled with overestimations of how awful it would be if these expectations are not met. Terms such as “should”, “must”, and “ought to” often appear in this style of thinking.
- Common outcomes include feelings of increased:
  - Anxiety
  - Depressed mood
  - Shame
  - Guilt
  - Anger
  - Frustration

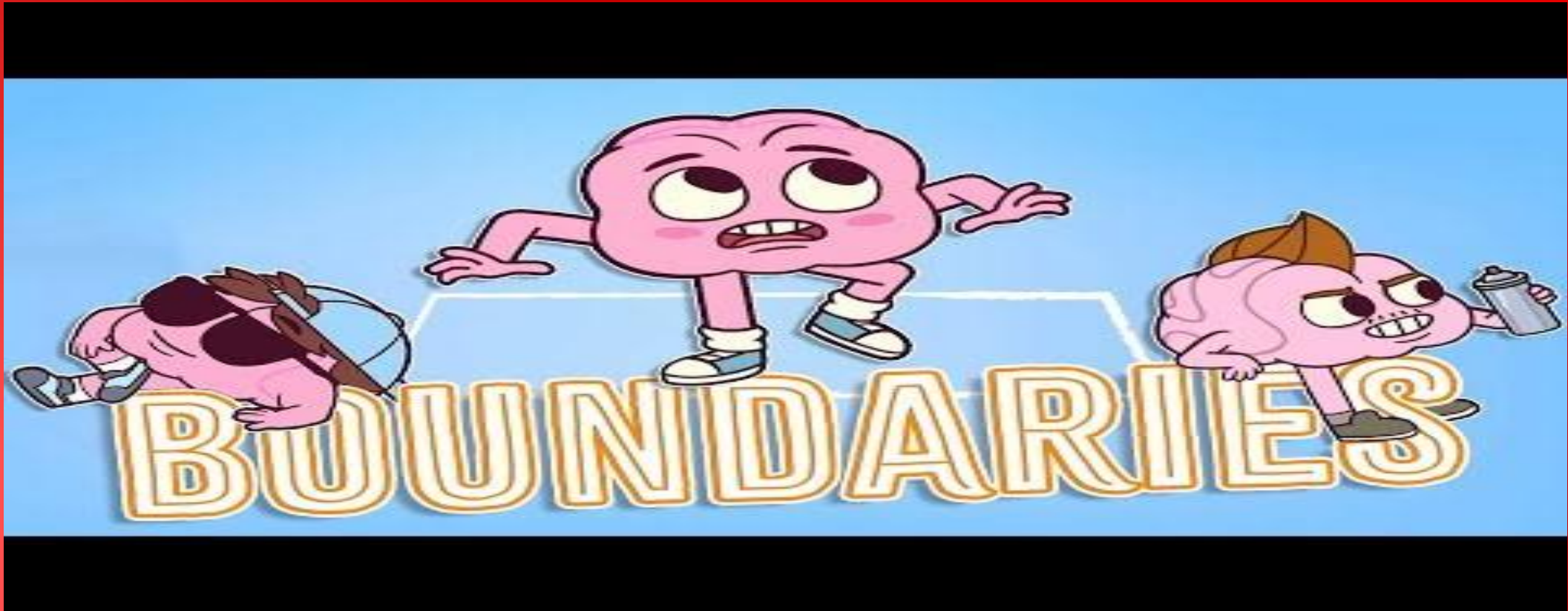


# Therapeutic Tools for Addressing the Shoulds

- **Decentering:** Increasing awareness; labeling the process present in the thinking rather than engaging with the content.
- **Cognitive Restructuring:** Self-monitoring; consider the evidence supporting the “should” statements and reflect on whether these are helpful judgments.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis:** What are the pros and cons of thinking this way?
- **Changing the Terms:** Experiment with substituting words like “should” or “must” with more flexible terms like “prefer” or “wish”. Perception is powerful.
- **Setting and Maintaining Personal Boundaries**



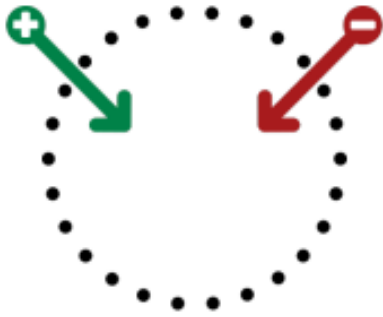
# What are boundaries?



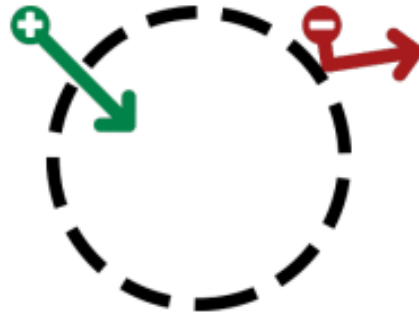
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pC5FtPX6Ngg>



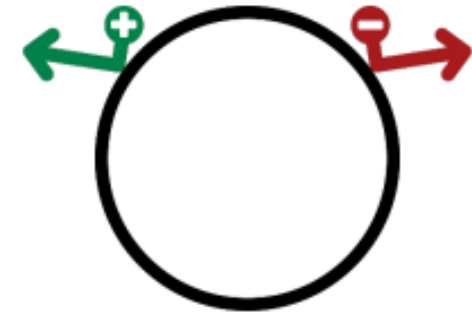
### Porous Boundaries



### Healthy Boundaries



### Rigid Boundaries



- Difficulty saying “No” to others
- Avoids conflict by giving in to others
- Does not assert personal values
- Communicates passively

- Able to say “No” when needed
- Accepts Conflict as normal part of life
- Stands by personal values, but accepts others
- Communicates assertively

- Says “No” most of the time
- Avoids conflict by pushing others away
- Has inflexible personal values
- Communicates aggressively



# Guidelines for Setting Consequences

Actions you are willing to take.

May allow for gradual change.

May be negotiable rather than rigid lines in the sand.



# Situational Examples of Setting Healthy Boundaries

Anger

- "You may not continue to yell at me. If you do, I will leave the room and end this interaction."

Buying Time

- "I have a policy of not making snap decisions. I need time to think and reflect on what I want to do. If you need an immediate answer it will be no."

Criticism

"It's not okay with me for you to make comments about my weight/appearance/ etc. Please stop. If you don't I won't be able to continue this conversation."

Extra  
Commitments

"Although this is an important matter to me, I must decline your request for my help at this time." Or "I need to honor my needs or my families needs first."

Money

"I won't be lending you any more money. I care about you but you need to start taking responsibility for yourself."



# Setting Boundaries for Yourself

Acknowledge Your Feelings



- Experiencing loss this year or grieving, its okay to feel sad. You're human and this period will not last forever.

Plan Ahead



- Make a schedule for shopping, cooking and/or other activities. Sticking to a schedule and budget, you're less likely to feel overwhelmed.

Embrace New Traditions



- As families/ relationships grow and change so do holidays/ everyday encounters. Be open to parting with traditions or things that cause you stress or that you no longer connect with, and create new memories and celebrate in different ways.

Say No



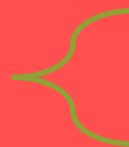
- You don't have to participate in every activity or gathering you're invited to, especially if it impacts your mental health. It's okay to prioritize your well-being over pleasing others, even those close to you.

Ask for Help



- If you're feeling sadness, trouble sleeping or anxiety despite your best efforts, talk to your doctor, seek mental health services, don't be afraid to ask for support.

Learn to let go of Family Guilt



- Not everyone has the same close relationships with their families. Sometimes those relationships can cause deep stress. If you feel you need to limit time spent



# Components of Self-Care

1. Physical Self-Care
2. Psychological & Emotional Self-Care
3. Social Self-Care
4. Spiritual Self-Care
5. Professional Self-Care



Thank you!!

Where You can Reach Us for More Support

Behavioural Sciences Centre

Phone: (807) 623-7677

300 N Lillie Street



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