



BOUNDARIES

Lingo for Courageous Consideration

The problem with boundaries is they make us look or feel like a jerk, so often we don't set them or hold them. We do, however, ruminate over our boundaries. We often armor up because we assume that people will dislike our boundaries or we soften in other areas (letting go of our boundaries) just to prove that we are really not a jerk.

Stephen Covey, in his book, *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, defines maturity as the balance between courage and consideration. Too much courage and you're a jerk to others, too much consideration and you're a jerk to yourself. Boundaries seem like statements of excessive courage at the expense of consideration, but with the help of a line or two, they can be set with **Courageous Consideration**. See which ones you like best.

IF YOUR ANSWER IS... SAY THIS....

MAYBE

Let me check my calendar and get back to you.

Let me think about it and get back to you.

NO

Thank you, but I'll have to decline.

I'm sorry, I'm not able to do that. (Smile and wave.)

Sounds interesting, but I can't fit that in my calendar.

Thanks for the opportunity but that won't be necessary.

I'd like to help out here, but I just can't do it justice right now. Have you asked...?

I would love to but my plate is full.

I really appreciate you asking me, but my time is already committed.

I'm maxed out.

Actually, I'm not comfortable with this.

This is not acceptable to me.

This won't work for me.

Not at this time.

I've decided not to.

I'm drawing the line at...

After some serious thought, I've changed my mind.

It's not okay with me that you comment on my weight. I'd like to ask you to stop.

I know I agreed to head up our fundraising efforts, but after reviewing my schedule, I now realize that I won't be able to give it my best attention. I'd like to help find a replacement by the end of next week.



BOUNDARIES

Lingo for Courageous Consideration

IF YOUR ANSWER IS... SAY THIS....

YES and NO

Sounds fun. I hope to join you next time.

I want to do that, but I'm not available until April. Will you ask me again then?

I'm no longer taking calls on the weekends. I will, however, return your message first thing Monday morning.

I'm happy to volunteer today. Who's got next week?

I love our conversations but honestly, I'm distracted half the time. Can we plan a monthly lunch without distractions so I can set aside time and be engaged?

Thank you but I'm turning my focus toward corporate events. I can put you on my waiting list for unpaid speaking events.

WHEN YOU'RE DEALING WITH... SAY THIS....

NOSY NELLIES

That, my friend, is a secret.

Wouldn't you like to know. (Smile and wink)

We are hanging in there. Thanks for asking. (Change to work subject)

I really appreciate that you're concerned, but I don't want to talk about it too much, but I'll let you know if there's ever something going on that will impact work. Thanks for understanding."

ANGRY ANDREWS

I'm sorry you feel that way.

I understand that you are frustrated and I would like to be here for you. But please do not take your anger out on me.

What do you need right now?

AN ANGRY YOU

This might sound harsh, because I've bottled up my feelings, but I'd like to express a concern.

This might be more direct than you're used to, but I've been feeling resentful and I don't want to feel that way towards you. Here's what's going on.

At the end of your monologue ask, How are we doing?

I've been feeling frustrated about doing most of the chores around the house. I understand that you're busy, but I need help. How can we make this work?

I'm having a hard time sleeping when your music is on. Can you use headphones? Or I can help you move the speakers to another room. Which would you prefer?

