

# INTRODUCTION

## WHY ARE BOUNDARIES IMPORTANT?

**Honor who we are** - Setting boundaries is an acknowledgement that our needs are valid, and we are worthy of having them met. When we move through the world without boundaries, we may disregard our needs so that we can meet the needs of others.

We also often dismiss our needs as unimportant or identify as someone who isn't worth all the trouble. When we set boundaries, we are honoring the fact that each of us are precious and worthy of care and safety.



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**Protect ourselves** - Boundaries help protect us from outside influence and manipulation. In other words, when we set strong boundaries, we are less likely to be coerced into behaving in ways that conflict with our authentic self.

They also help protect us by ensuring that our needs are met and that we are not overextending ourselves in a way that only serves others.



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**Help us avoid burnout and bitterness** - When we overextend ourselves or allow someone to repeatedly violate a boundary, we will start to feel burned out and bitter.

By setting and upholding boundaries, we protect ourselves from these undesirable states of mind.



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**Improve our relationships** - One of the main reasons we are reluctant to set boundaries is fear of damaging our relationships (de Azevedo Hanks, 2016). However, when we are in a healthy relationship, setting boundaries improves the relationship.

Being clear and direct about our needs provides a greater sense of trust and connection.

Additionally, the person we are in relationship with can feel more comfortable knowing that they aren't going to accidentally trample a boundary they didn't know we had.



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**Self-care** - Boundaries are a critical piece of self-care. Setting boundaries honors the fact that we are human beings with needs that are worthy of being met.

When we are able to fully recognize our humanity in this way and fully engage with our authentic self, we are better able care for and nourish ourselves.



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Throughout this course, we will touch on many more of the ways in which boundaries can improve our lives.

We will also learn more about what boundaries are, where they come from, how to identify where we need boundaries, and how to set and keep our boundaries.



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# MODULE 1

## EXPLORING THE BOUNDARIES OF OUR LIVES

Our lives are defined by the boundaries we set. In this module we will talk more about what boundaries are, why they are important, and the different types of boundaries we might need to set.

MODULE 1.1

# **BOUNDARIES AND PERSONAL IDENTITY**



# BOUNDARIES AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

The boundaries we set are an important part of our identity. Our identity is comprised of who we think we are (Schwartz et al., 2011). The way we define ourselves usually includes our values, goals, beliefs, and behaviors. Our boundaries are a reflection of our values, goals, and beliefs, and govern our behaviors.

# BOUNDARIES AND PERSONAL IDENTITY

When we lack boundaries, we allow others into a space where they are not welcome and where they can start to substitute pieces of our self with whatever serves them best. This isn't to suggest that everyone you lack boundaries with are out to harm you. Often the people that take advantage of our boundarylessness don't realize they are doing it. However, whether nefarious or not, the end result is that we behave in ways that are discordant with what we truly want and who we truly are.