

Frontline Wellness Program – The Coping Club

Topic: Boundaries

Material:

The Stress Bucket - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KYC5SsJjx8>

Personal boundaries are guidelines, rules or limits that a person creates to identify reasonable, safe and permissible ways for other people to behave towards them and how they will respond when someone passes those limits.

Brene Brown on Boundaries - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TLOoa8UGqxA>

Fact: Boundaries aren't mean or wrong. It's kind and respectful to tell people what's okay and what's not okay with you. This sets clear expectations. According to Brene Brown, Ph.D., people with strong boundaries are the most compassionate.

Struggling with boundaries looks like:

Struggling to say no when you want to

Not listening to yourself/ going against your judgment

Indecision for fear of letting others down

Giving in too easily

Not being clear with others

Subordinating your needs to others

Withholding from others

Closing self off from connection

Struggling to reach out

Struggling to make meaningful connections

WE NEED BOUNDARIES TO...

establish
our identity

develop
autonomy
and improve
decision-making

experience
good mental
& emotional
health

maintain
privacy and
independence

experience
healthy
relationships

stay organized
and manage
time effectively

protect
emotional and
physical space
from intrusion

practice
self-care and
self-respect

communicate
our needs in
a relationship

make time
and space
for positive
interactions

experience
more
fulfillment

share
personal
information
gradually

Why is it important to set boundaries at work?

It's important to set boundaries at work in order to maintain a good work-life balance and raise your work satisfaction. Setting boundaries at work involves establishing personal goals and limits that you share with your colleagues in order to keep good mental health practices while working.

Benefits

Raises productivity: we can focus on your own tasks and avoid workplace distractions

Lowers work-related stress: manage many workplace issues by establishing limits and boundaries

Maintains a reasonable workload: helps you focus on your job responsibilities and work a fair amount of hours

Reduces the risk of burnout: Setting boundaries related to these causes can lessen the risk of burnout.

Sets an example for others: may lead to a happier workplace culture

Physical boundaries

Physical boundaries relate to your physical workspace and your body. These rules establish your expectations for how people interact with you, and they often relate to space and touch. Examples of physical boundaries include:

Respecting personal choice regarding PPE (eg. masks, shields)

Shaking someone's hand rather than hugging them

Closing your office door to signal that you are busy/on a call

Going for a solo break during lunch

Asking for help with physical tasks when needed

Emotional Boundaries

Emotional boundaries help you process your emotions at work. They help you separate your feelings from how someone else may feel without negating the need for empathy. Examples of emotional boundaries include:

- Avoiding engaging in someone's bad mood
- Reflecting on our own emotions and how we are expressing them
- Choosing appropriate disclosure and with who (eg. co-worker, client/patient)
- Talking to your manager about how you prefer to receive feedback

Mental boundaries

Mental boundaries support your mental energy and help you focus when working. They typically relate to your opinions, thoughts and values at work. Examples of mental boundaries include:

- Establishing the set hours you work (eg. leaving work on time)
- Not gossiping with colleagues at work
- Setting time in your calendar indicating that you're busy
- Prioritizing your own needs (eg. not accepting overtime)
- Work/life balance (eg. take your vacation)
- Consider where you are burning your mental energy (home vs work)

Be Assertive

- Step 1. Be as clear and as straightforward as possible. Remain calm. Be mindful to focus on problem/challenge rather than the person
- Step 2. State your need or request directly in terms of what you'd like, rather than what you don't want or like.
- Step 3. Accept any discomfort that arises as a result, whether it's guilt, shame, or remorse

Set priorities

In order to set boundaries, it's helpful to first consider what your priorities are. This can include identifying both your personal and professional priorities,

Example: You leave work on time so that you can prioritize spending time with family in the evening. Spending too much time in meetings, committees rather than doing patient care

Understand your workload

It's important to understand the tasks that comprise your workload as well as the number of daily duties you can reasonably handle. Understanding both of these aspects can allow you to set better boundaries regarding your job tasks and help you remain productive throughout the workday.

Consider timing how long it takes you to complete tasks or counting how many tasks you can complete per workday. This can help you establish a regular working pace and help set expectations for your role.

Set limits

- Leaving work on time
- Not bringing work home
- Not taking on over-time
- Caseload, tasks, meetings

Identify your job responsibilities

When establishing boundaries at work, be sure to identify your job responsibilities in order to set limits that don't interfere with your duties. This practice also may allow you to notice if you're taking on additional responsibilities without credit. Discuss your responsibilities with your supervisor to ensure that you're continuing to meet their expectations and negotiate any additional accommodations you may need to set healthy work boundaries.

Contact Us:

Interested in 1:1 counselling? Self-refer at
https://www.waypointcentre.ca/programs_and_services/frontline_wellness_program
To connect with group facilitators email frontlinewellness@waypointcentre.ca

Resources: