



WISECARER
Beyond Caregiving, Into Wellbeing

MANAGING BOUNDARIES

Mental health matters. Taking care of someone can be incredibly rewarding, but it can also come with emotional strain, especially if you or your loved one is experiencing anxiety or feeling excessive worry. This Tip Sheet may give you some helpful info.

What Are Boundaries?

Boundaries are only there for one thing: to look after you. Boundaries are limits and guidelines we set for ourselves in our lives. They help us to communicate our needs, protect our time and emotions, and maintain balance in our lives. A lack of boundaries only serves others' interests and never our own. A lack of boundaries benefits everyone but you.

- Ask yourself, "Am I rewarding unhelpful behaviour?"
- Remember, "What gets repeated gets rewarded."



Why Boundaries Matter for Carers

Without clear boundaries, carers often experience burnout, frustration and exhaustion physically and emotionally. Setting boundaries can help you:

- Avoid overcommitting to too many activities or obligations
- Protect your mental and physical health
- Strengthen relationships
- Be more mindful and patient as a carer for the person you look after

Keep in mind that you can

- Say 'no' to tasks you can't manage
- Schedule regular breaks or time off
- Communicate with someone when you need help or support
- Limit conversations or contacts that drain your energy
- Prioritise your own health appointments and recovery (the doctors, beach walk, etc.)

Setting and Maintaining Boundaries

- Be Clear and Kind: Use assertive but respectful language.
- Practice Saying No: You don't have to explain everything to everyone.
- Start Small: Begin with one or two simple boundaries that are easy to do.
- Stay Consistent: Mixed signals can confuse others and where you stand.
- Context: Adjust based on the situation or person/ relationship
- Seek Support: Talk to a professional or peer support group if you need more help with enacting them.

Examples of how things you can say

- "No, I can't make it today, hope you have a great time"
- "Thank you for the offer, but I can't make it"
- "I'm not comfortable discussing that"
- "I'm not available now, but maybe we can reschedule for (specific time)"
- "Please don't call me on the weekends, as I'm not available"

Remember

You are not being difficult or selfish by setting boundaries. You are choosing to care for yourself, so you can continue caring for others. **Boundaries** are a form of love for yourself and those you support.

Helpful Resources

[HelpGuide.org](https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships/boundaries.htm)

HELPGUIDE

Article on setting boundaries and types of boundaries in relationships

[Visit Site](https://www.helpguide.org/articles/relationships/boundaries.htm)



ARAFMI QLD

24/7 mental health carer helpline & support groups

[Visit Site](https://www.arafmi.org.au/)



SANE AUSTRALIA

Mental health blog on how to set boundaries with someone you love

[Visit Site](https://www.sane.org.au/blogs/mental-health-basics/setting-boundaries-with-someone-you-love)



SANE CARER FORUMS

Safe, anonymous mental health online forum for the carer community - boundaries topics listed

[Visit Site](https://www.sane.org.au/online-forums/carers-forum)

We gratefully acknowledge all the partners, **Queensland Mental Health Commission, ASPIRE, Gold Coast University Hospital and Southern Cross University.**



Queensland
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