

# Setting Boundaries

## What IS A BOUNDARY?

A boundary is an invisible "barrier" between you and other people – limits beyond which you will not go and beyond which others are not welcome.

It is healthy to have a good sense of where your feelings and opinions start and stop, and where the other person's feelings and opinions start and stop.

It is especially important to know how to set boundaries with "difficult" people – particularly with those individuals who are critical, controlling, manipulative, demanding or aggressive.

## How DO I COMMUNICATE MY BOUNDARIES TO OTHER PEOPLE?

Here are some words to use:

- I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH THAT. ....
- I DON'T WANT TO . . . . .
- I'VE DECIDED NOT TO . . . . .
- THIS IS WHAT I NEED. ....
- THIS IS HARD FOR ME TO SAY . . . . .
- I UNDERSTAND YOUR POINT OF VIEW BUT . . . . .
- I FEEL UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT . . . . .
- I'D RATHER NOT. ....
- YES, I DO MIND. ....
- I'D PREFER NOT TO . . . . .
- IT'S IMPORTANT TO ME. ....
- I'LL THINK ABOUT IT. ....
- THAT'S UNACCEPTABLE. ....
- I GUESS WE SEE IT DIFFERENTLY. ....

## Who DO I NEED TO BE ESTABLISHING CLEAR BOUNDARIES WITH?