

# ***Becoming a Resilient Scientist***

## **SERIES**

### **Workbook III:**

# **Self-Advocacy & Assertiveness for Scientists**

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**This workbook is intended to accompany *Becoming A Resilient Scientist*  
Unit 3: Self-Advocacy & Assertiveness for Scientists**

**It is most effective when it is used after attending/watching the workshop lecture. The exercises in this workbook are designed to help you process and solidify what you've learned in the lecture and to provide you with additional resources. Although it is encouraged that you complete the exercises, it is not required.**

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Part 1

# **ASSERTIVENESS**

# ASSERTIVENESS

## Assertiveness

is the ability to:

- **Express** one's feelings and **state** one's rights and needs while respecting the feelings, rights, and needs of others.
- Use communication that is **direct, open, and honest** to address situations that concern you.
- **Set appropriate boundaries** that feel right given the context and situation.



# ASSERTIVENESS

## IMPACT OF FAMILY & CULTURE ON ASSERTIVENESS

1. What did you learn about being assertive and having difficult conversations from your **families and cultures**?
2. Which messages are **generally helpful** to you now and **which are not**?



### KEY CONCEPT

*Letting go of maladaptive behaviors takes commitment and practice, but it can absolutely be done!*

# ASSERTIVENESS

## MY OWN ASSERTIVENESS

1. Think about an important relationship at work or at home. Consider a time when **you struggled to be assertive** and communicate your needs effectively with the person you have this relationship with. Focus on what happened, why it happened, how it made you feel and anything you wish went differently.

2. Now, focus on a time **you were assertive** and communicated your needs effectively. Focus on what happened, why it happened, how it made you feel and anything you wish had gone differently.

3. Now, focus on a time when **you decided not to be assertive** and to do nothing. But the problem did not go away, and possibly even got worse. Focus on what happened, why it happened, how it made you feel, and anything you wish had gone differently.

# ASSERTIVENESS

## ASSERTIVENESS REFLECTION

For this reflection, consider settings, people, emotions, and internal thoughts that hinder assertiveness.

*I find it **most difficult** to be assertive when:*

*I find it **easiest** to be assertive when:*

# ASSERTIVENESS

## BARRIERS TO ASSERTIVENESS

Factors that make it **harder** for me to be assertive include:

(check all that may apply)

- My belief that it is not OK for me to be assertive
- My belief that I do not have the right to be assertive in this context
- Uncertainty of what I need or want in the moment
- Fear of displeasing others or not being liked
- Fear of losing work, opportunities, references, friends
- Challenges with tolerating uncomfortable emotions
- Difficulty with emotional regulation in this context
- Cognitive distortions that create stories which hold me back
- These cognitive distortions generally are \_\_\_\_\_
- My struggle with hierarchy and power dynamics
- A lack of assertiveness experience and skills
- A lack of confidence when it comes to this particular context
- Fear of being viewed negatively i.e., looking 'stupid' / like a troublemaker
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

.....

I can **mitigate** these barriers for myself by:

(check all that may apply)

- **Introspection**

- Telling myself that \_\_\_\_\_
- Reframing my thoughts to \_\_\_\_\_
- Journaling to support decision-making
- Using risk-rewards scaffolds

- **Using tools and strategies**

- Assertiveness tools, such as \_\_\_\_\_
- Coping tools, such as \_\_\_\_\_
- Specific communication strategies, such as \_\_\_\_\_

- **Strengthening my ability to** \_\_\_\_\_

- **Utilizing my support systems, including** \_\_\_\_\_



# ASSERTIVENESS

## INDEPENDENT & INTERDEPENDENT SELVES

*Tied to Cultural Normals & Scripts*

### INDEPENDENT SELF

- Individualism
- Self is viewed as separate from others
- Focus on needs of the individual
- Value uniqueness, autonomy, getting the work done, meeting individual needs
- Relationships with boss, colleagues are more equal and fluid
- Communication tends to be more direct
- Higher willingness to be assertive

### INTERDEPENDENT SELF

- Collectivism
- Self is viewed in relation to others
- Focus on needs of the group, harmony
- Value community, tradition, obligation, respecting authority, saving face
- Relationships with boss, colleagues are more unequal and fixed
- Communication tends to be more indirect
- Lower willingness to be assertive



Do you tend to lean more towards an **(independent / interdependent)** self-construct? For the following, think in terms of your family/work/social norms, how you communicate, psychological & emotional impact, motivation, etc.

- **Pros** of this self-construct include: \_\_\_\_\_
- **Cons** of this self-construct include: \_\_\_\_\_
- How does my **dominant self-construct** align with my present world/culture(s)?
  - What is the same?
  - What is different?
- In the workplace or in my relationships, do I sometimes **switch** between the two self-constructs, either in my thinking and/or in my behavior?
  - How do I make that switch between my independent and interdependent selves?
  - How do I identify when it would be helpful or appropriate to do this?
  - When is it not helpful or appropriate to switch?
  - What makes switching easy to do?
  - What makes it hard to do?

# ASSERTIVENESS

## SOCIAL IDENTITIES & ASSERTIVENESS

Our **social identity(ies)** can be a factor in how others view our assertive behaviors and in the decisions we make about being assertive.

*Social identities include race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, (dis)abilities, religion/religious beliefs/spirituality, social class/socioeconomic status, nationality/nation of origin/citizenship, age/generation (and any other identities dear to us)*

What assumptions based on your social identity(ies) do you think **others make** as you set boundaries and are assertive?

In deciding when and how to be assertive, in what ways do you factor in **your social identity(ies)**?

# Part 2

# **ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY**

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## STRATEGIES FOR ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION

- **"I"-Statements:** Taking responsibility for your wants and needs AND expressing them clearly.
- **Empathic Listening:** Periodically summarizing what we think the communicator thinks, feels, means and needs without necessarily agreeing.
- **Negative/Positive Inquiry:** Using questions to probe the meaning of feedback when you want/need more information to facilitate your learning.
- **Fogging:** Calmly responding with a minimal response focusing on any truth in the statement without being defensive or argumentative.
- **Stuck Record:** Repeating what you want, time and time again, without raising the tone of your voice, becoming angry, irritated, or distracted by side issues.



# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## MY ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION CHECKLIST

*When communicating a need or want, I can pay attention to:*

### **Body/Visuals:**

- Sit/stand in a confident posture
- Have hands in a relaxed and confident, nonthreatening position
- Maintain genuine facial expressions
- Hold head and eyes in a way that reflects confidence, but is congruent with my cultural values and self-construct

### **Voice/Tone:**

- Speak at a comfortable pace, clearly, and confidently
- Maintain a respectful, genuine, and forthright tone
- Speak in clear comments and statements
- Do not phrase statements as questions
- Do not ramble or be vague

### **Reciprocation:**

- Listen with empathy and understanding
- Be willing to compromise, but maintain boundaries
- Calmly ask if your request was clear to ensure it was understood
- Repeat what you have heard to ensure you heard correctly
- Ask questions
- Summarize

### **Baseline Maintenance:**

- Remember your clear ask
- Focus on outcome goals
- Breathe, and breath some more
- Avoid reacting emotionally
  - Pause, self-soothe when needed
  - Use grounding techniques
- Take your time to think before responding. Respond logically

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## PREPARING TO MAKE AN ASSERTIVE "I" STATEMENT

In "I" statements, we clearly express what it is that we want and need. In order to be able to do this effectively, we must do some preparation first:

- **Identify what you are thinking** and feeling. Remember that our thoughts AND our feelings influence our behaviors.
  - For more on this you can revisit *Workbook II: Cognitive Distortions*
- **Decide on your clear ask**
- **Decide on timing** and on the appropriate **medium** (*face-to-face, virtual, or written*) to deliver your assertive statement.

### AN IMPORTANT CAVEAT

*In workplace communication, it may not be appropriate or feel safe to express what you are feeling. In that situation, you can keep the "I feel" portion of the statement silent, keeping it in your mind as you voice the rest of your I-Message.*

## REFLECT

Think about a current situation where you need to be assertive.

*The situation I need to be assertive in:*

*My clear ask:*

*The pros and cons of whether I should deliver my message in-person, virtually or in-writing:*

*On the next page you can PRACTICE the words you would actually say.*

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## PRACTICING SELF-ADVOCACY

### Using "I"-Messages

- Identify how you feel. You can either start your verbal message with an "I feel" statement, or, as discussed on the previous page, this may be acknowledged inside your head
- Describe the action/situation, not the person, that led you to feel this way
- Express what you need or want to replace the action

Sample script structures:

- "(I feel\_\_\_\_.) When \_\_\_\_\_, I \_\_\_\_\_ . I am asking you to \_\_\_\_\_."
- "(I feel\_\_\_\_.) When \_\_\_\_\_, I \_\_\_\_\_ . I need \_\_\_\_\_."

Examples:

- *"When I don't get any feedback on my work, I don't know how to improve. I am asking you to give me some suggestions about what I could do to make my work better so I can grow as a scientist."*
- *"I feel disrespected in the lab when derogatory comments are made about women scientists. I need to feel and be safe in the workplace and am asking you to acknowledge what happened and discuss ways to address this."*

Compose what you might actually say in the scenario you reflected on from the previous page:

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## PRACTICING INQUIRY & COUNTER DIALOGUE

### USING POSITIVE AND/OR NEGATIVE INQUIRY

1. *Note your appreciation* of the feedback
2. *Share takeaways* that you gathered from the feedback
3. *Ask for clarification* on specific focal points

Sample scripts:

#### **+** Positive Inquiry

*"I appreciate your thoughts on \_\_\_\_\_. Your thoughts are invaluable to me. It would be helpful to me if you could explain your thoughts on \_\_\_\_\_ a bit more, so they can better help me to continuously improve and develop as a scientist."*

#### **-** Negative Inquiry

*"I appreciate your thoughts on \_\_\_\_\_. Although this was difficult to hear, I respect and value your feedback. In order to improve, I would really like to get more input from you. Could you give me some more concrete examples or thoughts on what specifically I can improve upon?"*



### RESPONDING TO COUNTER DIALOGUE WITH EMPATHETIC LISTENING

1. *Listen* with empathy and understanding
2. *Clarify*, summarize, validate, and connect the components of the feedback
3. *Acknowledge* both sides, compromise, reach a shared outcome

Sample scripts:

#### **Clarify/Summarize:**

*"I hear you saying \_\_\_\_\_, is that correct?"*

*"What I heard you say was \_\_\_\_\_. Did I get everything?"*

#### **Validate/Connect:**

*"I understand. I'd imagine you're feeling/your thoughts/your position is \_\_\_\_\_."*

*"What you are saying makes sense. I get that \_\_\_\_\_."*

#### **Acknowledge/Compromise:**

*"It seems like you're feeling \_\_\_\_\_, while I'm feeling \_\_\_\_\_. What if we \_\_\_\_\_?"*

*"Now that I understand that you \_\_\_\_\_ and you understand that I \_\_\_\_\_. Let's agree to\_\_\_\_\_."*



# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## THE **7C'S** OF COMMUNICATION

When facing an important or potentially challenging exchange, **organizing your thoughts and planning** what you will say ahead of time (and how you will say it) can be extremely helpful to the situation.

**The 7C's of communication** identified in the book, *Effective Public Relations* (2000), can be used as a guide in preparing your approach to such discussions:

### **CLEAR**

*What is the purpose of this conversation? What do I hope to get from it?*

### **CONCISE**

*How can I succinctly state what I need to get across?*

### **CONCRETE**

*In order to be precise, what details do I need to add?  
What details can be excluded?*

### **CORRECT**

*Are my discussion points and details accurate?*

### **COHERENT**

*Do my thoughts flow in a structured and logical manner?  
Do my points connect and align?*

### **COMPLETE**

*Am I missing any information that is necessary for an informed response?*

### **COURTEOUS**

*Does my message sound assertive, yet open?  
Is it friendly, yet professional?*

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## USING THE **7C'S** OF COMMUNICATION

### Pre-Planning an Important Conversation

DISCUSSION TOPIC/GOAL:	
To be...	This is what I will say and how I will say it...
CLEAR	
CONCISE	
CONCRETE	
CORRECT	
COHERENT	
COMPLETE	
COURTEOUS	



# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## COMMUNICATION STYLE TYPES



PASSIVE	AGGRESSIVE	PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE	ASSERTIVE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Put the needs of others in front of my own needs</li> <li>• Soft-spoken, quiet</li> <li>• Afraid of “rocking the boat”</li> <li>• Go along to get along</li> <li>• Avoid the spotlight or standing out</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overbearing and forceful</li> <li>• Unwilling to compromise</li> <li>• Unwilling to listen/interrupts</li> <li>• Disrespectful</li> <li>• Dominate through humiliation and bullying</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Say one thing and mean or do another</li> <li>• Sarcasm</li> <li>• Subtle undermining</li> <li>• Quiet sabotage</li> <li>• Gossip and badmouth</li> <li>• Indirect refusal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Set and maintain boundaries</li> <li>• Wholehearted listening</li> <li>• Willing to compromise</li> <li>• Clearly and confidently ask for wants/needs</li> <li>• Give (and expect) respect</li> </ul>



### Reflection questions:

*Which communication style best describes me?*

*Does my style change depending on the environment/people I am communicating with?*

*Which communication style has been most effective in getting me what I want/need?*

*Which communication style has been least effective in getting me what I want/need?*

*What barriers keep me from communicating assertively?*

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## COMMUNICATION STYLE DIFFERENCES

In addition to identifying our own communication style, it is also important that we **understand the communication style of others**. This can help us avoid misunderstandings, confusion, or conflict and allow us to adapt our style as needed/appropriate per situation.

The table below is intended for practice in **maintaining positive interactions** when dealing with others and their communication styles.



For this exercise, think of **people in your life** (or even in your favorite book, show, etc.). Complete the table with these people and their communication styles in mind. In the future, use these reflections and ideas to help you communicate effectively with others that use similar styles.

Communication Style	PASSIVE	AGGRESSIVE	PASSIVE-AGGRESSIVE	ASSERTIVE
Person with this style				
Indicators/ How I know this				
How I can adapt communication with this person				
How I can avoid frustration with this person				

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## WORKPLACE COMMUNICATION SKILLS

### *Self-Assessment*

The table below includes a list of **effective workplace communication skills**. For each of these skills, reflect on your *strengths* and on areas where you would *like to improve*. You may find it beneficial to return to this list in order to process specific experiences of effective or ineffective communication, as answers may change based on context, setting, parties involved, etc.

#### **Consider:**

*Workplace norms*

*Timing/setting*

*Personalities*

*Cultural norms*

*Emotions/moods*

*Relationships*

*Differing styles*

*Purpose of communication*

*Reciprocation*

Skill	My strengths in this skill	My areas of growth	Action plan for improvement
Verbal clarity			
Non-verbal communication			
Assertiveness			
Active listening			
Collaborative Effort			
Empathy			
Openness			
Attitude			
Decision-making			
Conflict Resolution			

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## ACT IT OUT: DIFFERENT SELF-ADVOCACY STYLES

It is not uncommon for more passive people to feel that speaking assertively will make them look *unkind, pushy, or unpleasant*. At the same time, more aggressive people may feel as if speaking assertively will make them look *mEEK, weak, and unworthy*. **One way to challenge these distortions** is to practice different styles of communication in a way that allows us to hear and see ourselves just as others would.

### Practice Examples

You can use your own practice scenario or you could use one listed below:

1. *A colleague uses your lab bench on the days you work from home. When you come back to the lab, you have trouble finding your necessary supplies in their usual locations.*
2. *A friend borrowed \$100 from you six months ago and you need/want it back.*

### The Set-Up

1. Find a private space to do this practice exercise.
2. You are going to pretend that you are speaking to this friend, colleague, or supervisor in a private environment where you are not afraid to be your authentic self.
3. You want to be able to see/hear yourself as the other person would; To do this, you could use a medium-to-large wall mirror or look into a camera as you film yourself.

### The Exercise

1. Starting with a **PASSIVE** voice, look in the mirror/camera and try to communicate your need. Remember to speak using typical passive tones and mannerisms, such as:

- *Quiet voice*
- *Unsure/run around requests*
- *Eyes averted most of the time*
- *Low body tone/slouched posture*
- *Fidgeting*

*continued on next page*

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## ACT IT OUT: DIFFERENT SELF-ADVOCACY STYLES

2. Next, try using an **AGGRESSIVE** voice. Look in the mirror/camera and try to communicate the same need. Speak using aggressive tones and mannerisms, like:

- *Loud and overbearing voice*
- *Angry face*
- *Blunt, bullying tones*
- *Disrespectful words*
- *Using your body to intimidate (point fingers, clench fists, get close, flex...)*


3. Finally, using an **ASSERTIVE** voice, look in the mirror/camera and communicate the same need. Speak using assertive tones and mannerisms, such as:

- *Confident shoulders and stance*
- *Good eye contact and genuine, respectful facial expressions*
- *Confident tone (not loud, but not soft)*
- *Using "I" messages and a clear ask*



## REFLECT

Ask yourself:

1. Which communication style felt **most empowering** to enact? Most respectful? Most likely to be received well?
  2. What do you need in order to **strengthen** this style and to become more **comfortable** using it in various settings?
- 

# ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION & SELF-ADVOCACY

## SELF-ADVOCACY IN THE WORKPLACE

What is your experience with self-advocacy in the workplace?  
How might **social identity** factors impact your experience?

*Social identities include race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, neurodiversity, (dis)abilities, religion/religious beliefs/spirituality, social class/socioeconomic status, nationality/nation of origin/citizenship, age/generation (and any other identities dear to us).*



What are some things that **help you** as you advocate for yourself?  
Then, what things make it **more challenging** to advocate for yourself?





Part 3

# **BOUNDARIES**

# BOUNDARIES

## THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING BOUNDARIES

*When we set boundaries, we determine:*

- Which **actions, statements, and behaviors** we will accept from others and which ones we will not.
- What we **will and will not share** with others.



*Setting healthy boundaries helps us to avoid:*

- **Over-working** ourselves physically or mentally
- **Taking on** someone else's emotions/thoughts
- **Violating** any personal/professional ethics
- **Receiving** input that is incorrect and/or unwarranted
- **Doing** things we do not want to do



# BOUNDARIES

*Boundaries are learned throughout childhood, from our families, culture, and prior experiences.*



Some things that could get in the way of our ability to set boundaries are:

- 1. Cognitive distortions**

(Think **HATS!** Refer to *BRS Lecture II & Workbook II*)

- 2. Gaps in our emotional literacy**

(Think **AIR/RABBITS!** Also in *BRS Lecture II & Workbook II*)

- 3. Lack of self-confidence**

- 4. Lack of assertiveness skills**

- 5. Our view of hierarchy**



# BOUNDARIES

## IMPACT OF FAMILY & CULTURE ON SETTING BOUNDARIES

How is my current understanding of boundaries shaped by my **families and culture(s)**?

- *What learning is often helpful to me?*
- *What learning is not always (or ever) helpful to me?*

# BOUNDARIES

## UNDERSTANDING MY BOUNDARY MINDSET

We set boundaries in order to **preserve** our...

*Rights*

*Cognitive energy*

*Comfort*

*Ethics*

*Safety*

*Physical energy*

*Values*

*Sense of self*

In other words, boundaries are something that **every** human...

- ✓ *Needs*
- ✓ *Is entitled to*
- ✓ *Should respect*



Understanding your boundary mindset will help you to better **determine, communicate, and maintain** the boundaries you set for yourself.

Some ways to think about your boundary mindset:

- *I define boundaries as...*
- *Boundaries that I learned in my childhood include/relate to...*
- *Boundaries that I learned through my culture include/relate to...*
- *Boundaries that I learned through personal experience include/relate to...*
- *My comfort level in setting personal boundaries can best be described as...*
- *Some mental blockages that keep me from setting boundaries include...*
- *I know that I need to set a boundary when...*
- *I balance setting healthy boundaries and being kind to others by...*
- *I appreciate it when others set clear healthy boundaries with me because...*
- *When I set and maintain healthy boundaries, it makes me feel...*

# BOUNDARIES

## BOUNDARY-SETTING

**There is more than one type of boundary.** Therefore, you may need to set more than one boundary at any given time. Use the charts below and on the next page to organize and state clear, specific needs in moments when your boundaries are being crossed. You may use this for one or more boundaries being crossed at the moment.



Example (blank chart on next page):

<b>BOUNDARY TYPE</b>	<b>Right now, I need to...</b>	<b>In order to...</b>	<b>I will ensure this is maintained by...</b>
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	<i>Allow contact only when I feel safe, such as pats on the arm</i>	<i>Feel respected and safe &amp; Tend to my sense of security</i>	<i>Extending my hand for a fist bump instead of shaking hands when I don't feel OK doing that</i>
<b>MENTAL</b>	<i>Limit the amount of news media I take in</i>	<i>Avoid the 'rabbit hole' &amp; Maintain my own opinions</i>	<i>Limiting news intake per day to 10 min per day, then engage in purposeful, healthier activities</i>
<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	<i>Stop taking responsibility for the emotions of others</i>	<i>Feel at peace &amp; Decrease any unwarranted stress</i>	<i>Reflecting on what is within my control. And on what is not under my control, including the choices that others make. Letting go of what is not in my control</i>
<b>TIME / ENERGY</b>	<i>Stop work at a reasonable time each day</i>	<i>Make more time for myself &amp; Decrease my stress and anxiety</i>	<i>Setting my phone alarm to buzz at 4:55pm, not opening my work computer when I get home, and avoiding comparing my hours to other people's</i>
<b>MATERIAL</b>	<i>Stop feeling pressured to lend my belongings to my roommate</i>	<i>Feel respected &amp; Avoid harboring resentment</i>	<i>Telling my roommate that I am not comfortable lending my belongs so often and will be saying 'No' more often</i>

# BOUNDARIES

## BOUNDARY-SETTING: REFLECT

Now, fill the chart out with your own inner dialogue:

BOUNDARY TYPE	Right now, I need to...	In order to...	I will ensure this is maintained by...
PHYSICAL			
MENTAL			
EMOTIONAL			
TIME / ENERGY			
MATERIAL			



# BOUNDARIES

## BOUNDARY-SETTING TYPES

Boundary-setting type typically falls into one of three (3) categories:

1. **Rigid boundaries:** Very unwavering and often too strict.
2. **Lax boundaries:** Almost nonexistent and often too flexible.
3. **Healthy boundaries:** Support our wellbeing, are appropriate to the circumstances, and are neither too rigid nor too lax for the situation.

*Use the reflection questions below to determine your boundary-setting type, in which contexts these boundary types tend to be more prevalent, and why this is the case.*



RIGID BOUNDARIES	HEALTHY BOUNDARIES	LAX BOUNDARIES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More of a 'wall' than boundary</li> <li>• Will not compromise or budge</li> <li>• Unrealistic &amp; unhealthy</li> <li>• Overly protective to the point of rudeness or being closed-off</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Values self and opinions</li> <li>• Unwilling to compromise morals and values</li> <li>• Respects others and self</li> <li>• Compromises when warranted</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trouble saying "No"</li> <li>• Easily swayed or taken advantage of</li> <li>• Fear of rejection if seen as disagreeable</li> <li>• Unwilling to strongly commit to and communicate needs</li> </ul>

### Reflection Questions:

*Which is your typical boundary-setting type when it comes to...*

*Work?*

*Family/intimate relationships?*

*Friends/members of a mutual group (clubs, sports, school, etc.)?*

*Yourself?*

*Does hierarchy impact your boundary-setting type?*

*What challenges do you find in setting healthy boundaries?*

*Why do you think these challenges are present?*

*How has setting too lax or too rigid boundaries impacted you in the past?*

*How do you communicate your boundaries to others?*

*How do you maintain boundaries to be true to yourself?*

*Have you ever had to change your boundary-setting type to do so?*

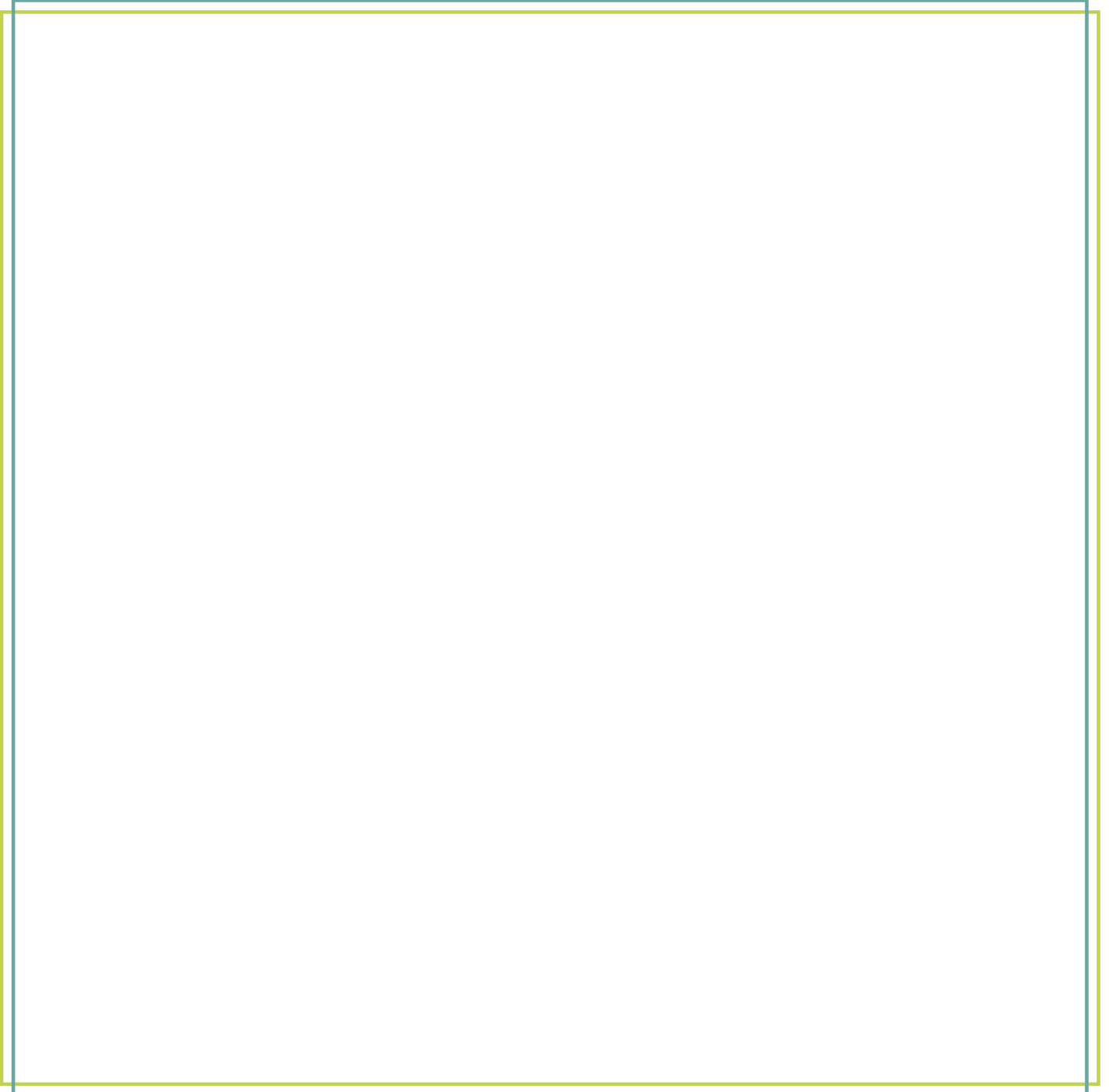


# BOUNDARIES

## MAINTAINING BOUNDARIES: SAYING "YES" & "NO"

What boundaries would help me handle any **current situation(s)** I find myself in?

- *What would I **love to say no to** right now?*
- *What would I **love to say yes to** right now?*



# BOUNDARIES

## PRACTICING SAYING "NO"

When saying "No", **do not over-apologize** and do not invite someone to "ask again" at a later time unless you mean it.



### Some effective ways to say "No":

*"I have a lot going on and really can't take on anything new right now."*

*"My current situation makes it difficult for me to..."*

*"I can't participate in this. Maybe another time."*

*"I would like to help you with \_\_\_\_\_, but this is a very busy time for me. Let's schedule a time to meet and talk about it."*



Think about a current situation **where you need to say "No"**.

In the box below, craft your 'No-Statement' and practice saying it outloud.

# BOUNDARIES

## SAYING "NO" OR "NOT NOW"

### *Practice Scripts*

#### **1. When you are asked to agree or not agree about something:**

- Take a breath, stop, and think
- Keep your needs, boundaries, and long-term desired outcomes in mind
- Remember that you have the right to say "No" and to be respectfully received in that right
- Do not over-apologize, give false hope, or provide unnecessary detail

#### **Sample script:**

*"I do not have the capacity to fulfill that at this time."*

*"I appreciate you thinking of me but I do not have the bandwidth at this point. Perhaps check with me at a later time and I might be available."*

*"Right now, I am committed to other projects. If you still need someone in a month, check with me and hopefully I'll have more time."*



#### **2. Responding when you don't know how to respond:**

- Explain that you need some time to consider their points and that you can reconvene in a short while or at a specific time
- Broken Record: repeat your needs
- Fogging: restate/summarize without agreeing
- Acknowledge the point/question, show appreciation for it, explain that you understand the importance of it, then share that you need more info before responding in full



#### **3. Calming strategies to use in the moment:**

- Pause (breathe, take a sip of a beverage, look away, etc.)
- Deep calming breaths
- Self-soothe by holding/massaging your own hand or arm
- Focus on your body and what you are feeling, label it
- Slow down your breathing, speaking, and thoughts
- Touch your clothing, a desk, a pencil, etc. and focus on the texture, coolness or warmth, etc.
- Visually or aurally focus on an object or sound in the room for a grounding pause
- Repeat a mantra to yourself
- Focus on your intentions, needs, and boundaries

# BOUNDARIES

## ESTABLISHING YOUR BOUNDARIES

What **specific actions** do I need to take to begin putting helpful boundaries into place now?

Part 4

**ANGER**

# ANGER

## IDENTIFYING ANGER

***Anger** is a negative emotion associated with hostile thoughts accompanied by physiological arousal responses and can often lead to maladaptive behaviors.*

**Anger typically develops in response to unwanted actions** by a third party which are perceived to be disrespectful, demeaning, or threatening.<sup>1</sup>

**Anger can also be a response to unwanted feelings within ourselves**, such as *guilt* or *shame*; The power of anger may feel preferable to emotional pain or the sense of smallness that comes with more vulnerable or shameful feelings.

**Anger also acts as a messenger.** It tells us that something important to us is going on. When we can recognize what anger is and think about it clearly, we can respond in ways that are helpful and appropriate, as opposed to responses that might be hurtful or destructive to our close relationships.



### REFLECT

*Regarding situations that tend to trigger my anger –  
What are they (or my memories of them) telling me?*

(1) [www.APA.org](http://www.APA.org)

# ANGER

## IDENTIFYING ANGER

**Not all negative reactions lead to anger.**

Our typical range of negative responses include:<sup>2</sup>

- **Frustration:** The feeling of being upset or annoyed, often due to an inability to achieve or change an outcome
- **Irritation:** The state of feeling annoyed, frustrated, or slightly angry
- **Anger:** A strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure or hostility



### REFLECT

*When upset, annoyed, or displeased, I often react by/with:*

# ANGER

## IDENTIFYING MY ANGER

**Anger happens in our emotional, physical, and cognitive selves.**

When we learn to recognize our own anger indicators, we can more quickly and effectively identify and manage our reactive anger in real time.

My common **physical manifestations of anger arousal** are (Check all that apply):

- Racing heart
- Tightness in the chest
- Sweating or shaking
- Rapid breathing
- Tense muscles
- Stomach upset
- Headache
- Face turning red
- Scowling or frowning
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



My **anger thoughts** might include (Check all that apply):

- I am being wronged/disrespected/demeaned/rejected/abused/cheated on*
- This isn't fair*
- I am being blocked from something I want*
- I am not being heard, understood*
- This isn't going the way I wanted it to*
- I did not get the response or outcome expected*
- I thought this would be easier, go smoother*
- This is more than I can handle*
- I am overwhelmed, things are out of control*
- I didn't do anything wrong or it's their fault that I did what I did*
- It's their fault that I am angry*
- I'd rather be mad than scared*
- I'd rather be angry than exposed, vulnerable, shamed*
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



# ANGER

## MANAGING ANGER IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT

- First, recognize that you are angry.
  - **Ask yourself:**
    - *What am I feeling?*
    - *How mad am I? What is the degree of my anger?*
- Now, pause.
  - **Stop and count** to 10 or 20 or more. Long enough to be thinking rather than reacting
  - Recognize that you may need to **put the topic on hold** and come back to it at a later time
    - You can excuse yourself and step away
    - During that hiatus, take care of yourself and what is going on for you
    - Do come back and address it. *If it was important enough to generate anger in you, it is important enough to revisit when calmer*
- You may need to **release your angry energy** before you can move on to calming yourself. *Do this in constructive ways that don't pour fuel onto the fire of your anger*
  - Focus on letting the energy out and on the physical activity
  - Do NOT focus on your righteous indignation and the source of your anger



# ANGER

## MANAGING ANGER IN THE HEAT OF THE MOMENT

**REFLECT:** *Physical outlets I could use to release angry energy/tension:*  
(check all that apply)

- Take a walk or a run
- Do a tough workout
- Hit a tennis ball or baseball or shoot some hoops
- Sing, dance or make music
- Make art
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_



### ***Relax.***

*Calm your mind and your body.*

**REFLECT:** *Strategies and tools I use or could use to generate calm:*  
(check all that apply)

- Breathe. Use deep breathing techniques.
- Repeat a calming word or phrase, not a rallying cry that feeds your anger and indignation.
- Use imagery. Visualize a relaxing experience
- Journal
- Do non-strenuous, slow, yoga-like movements and exercises
- Connect with the natural world, such as with pets or being in nature
- Talk to a trusted friend or a professional
- Other



# ANGER

## MANAGING ANGER WHEN CALMER

### Reflect on what is going on.

As you think about what happened and what is going on within you, consider journaling or talking to a trusted friend.

#### The situation:

- *What is the source of my anger?*
  - *Who or what am I mad at?*
  - *What about it makes me so mad?*
- *What are other people's actual role in the situation?*
  - *How would it look from their perspective?*

#### Within me: (Remember the thoughts-feelings-behavior triangle)

- *What am I thinking?*
  - *How could I think about this differently instead?*
- *What am I feeling?*
  - *Learn to recognize the range of your emotions*
  - *What will help me tolerate having these uncomfortable emotions?*
- *What am I doing?*
  - *What have I been doing?*
    - *How has that helped the situation?*
    - *How has it made it worse?*
- *Recognize that I have a choice and could do something different*



#### Problem-Solve

- *Look towards going forward. Learn from the past, but don't dwell on it*
- *Focus on what is in my control, not on what is not in my control*
- *Ask yourself:*
  - *What are some options I might have to handle this situation or address this problem?*
  - *Which could make the situation better?*
  - *What might make it worse?*
- *Remember that not every problem has a solution*

#### Communicate

- *If others are involved, talk to them*
  - *Slow down – don't jump into fight response or retaliation*
  - *Listen to understand*
- *Is this a situation when I could lighten things up?*
  - *Humor can sometimes help defuse anger if used respectfully*

#### Get Support

- *Trusted mentor, friends or family members*
- *Professional support if your anger is impacting your life in negative ways*

# ANGER

## PROACTIVE ANGER MANAGEMENT

### Know Yourself

- Be aware of and plan for the times and places where you are most vulnerable to anger triggers
- Triggers could include:
  - **Physical condition:** Tired, hungry, too hot or cold, feeling unwell
  - **Locations:** Other people's messy spaces, dark places on the internet
  - **Situations:** Experiments that fail and you don't know why
  - **Other people:** Those who are controlling, disrespectful, and/or angry themselves

*My anger triggers include:*

### Be Proactive

- Take care of what you can control before you get angry
- Learn to let go of what you cannot control
- Avoid triggers, when appropriate and possible
- Employ calming and self-care strategies in advance to bring your stress levels down
  - Change your environment
  - If this is a place or a situation or a relationship with a lot of anger triggers, what modification or changes could I make to reduce those triggers or my exposure to them?
- Make changes in yourself
  - Learn and practice mindfulness and calming strategies
  - Address the four quadrants of your wellness discussed in the first webinar and workbook
    - Tend to your physical, emotional, mental and spiritual wellbeing

*Things I can proactively do to manage my anger triggers or reduce their impact on me:*

# Part 5

# **DECISION-MAKING**

# DECISION-MAKING

## GUIDING QUESTIONS FOR DECISION-MAKING

In our professional and personal lives, we constantly have to make decisions. Often these are minor matters, though sometimes they are much bigger or more significant. However large or small the topic, we would like to address things in ways that **generate positive outcomes, further our goals, and minimize problems and complications**. We don't want to ignore issues if avoidance will ultimately make things worse.

### Some helpful questions to ask yourself when you are faced with making a decision:

*Which approach is appropriate for the situation?*

*What are the options available to me?*

*What is the best possible outcome for me?*

*What is the worst possible outcome for me?*

*Are there some middle outcomes I can be happy with?*

*What questions do I need answered to make a reliable decision?*

*What can I offer to address the needs/concerns of another party?*

*Who can help me prepare?*

*And when necessary.... Who can add to my safety?*



# DECISION-MAKING

## EVALUATING OPTIONS

### An option I am considering is:



*Will this option help me reach one of my important goals?*

*Will it provide an intangible benefit important to me right now?*

*What problems or complications might arise if I chose this option?*

*Where does this issue rank in my list of priorities?*

*What else is going on?*

*If this is a request to me, is it from someone I cannot ignore?*

*Is it from someone I really care about?*

*How will I look back on this choice a week/month/year from now?*

*Is this something I need to address right now or can it wait?*

*Will it matter if I decide not to do it?*

*What are the risks of just letting it go and not deciding anything?*

*Are there any benefits to doing nothing?*



# DECISION-MAKING

## RISK-REWARD SCAFFOLDING

Decision to be made:		
	<b>RISKS</b> to wellness, career, other	<b>REWARDS</b> (benefits) to wellness, career, other
<b>If I say "YES"?</b>	<i>LONG-TERM RISKS</i>	<i>LONG-TERM BENEFITS</i>
	<i>SHORT-TERM RISKS</i>	<i>SHORT-TERM BENEFITS</i>
<b>If I say "NO"?</b>	<i>LONG-TERM RISKS</i>	<i>LONG-TERM BENEFITS</i>
	<i>SHORT-TERM RISKS</i>	<i>SHORT-TERM BENEFITS</i>
<b>What can be done to turn a "No" into a "Yes"</b>		
<b>Lingering questions</b>		
<b>My decision:</b>		



# DECISION-MAKING

## GRID: ANOTHER DECISION-MAKING SCAFFOLD

Created by Kathryn Jackson, the **GRID framework** can be used in almost any moment where you *feel stuck, feel cluttered, need to make a decision, or feel like you need to visualize a concrete plan* for moving forward with a course of action.



**Goal.** *What is it that you want to accomplish? How will you know when you have succeeded in this goal? What is my measurable personal or professional desire?*



**Reality.** *Where are you currently? What have you tried? What has worked/has not worked? What have you learned? What do you need now?*



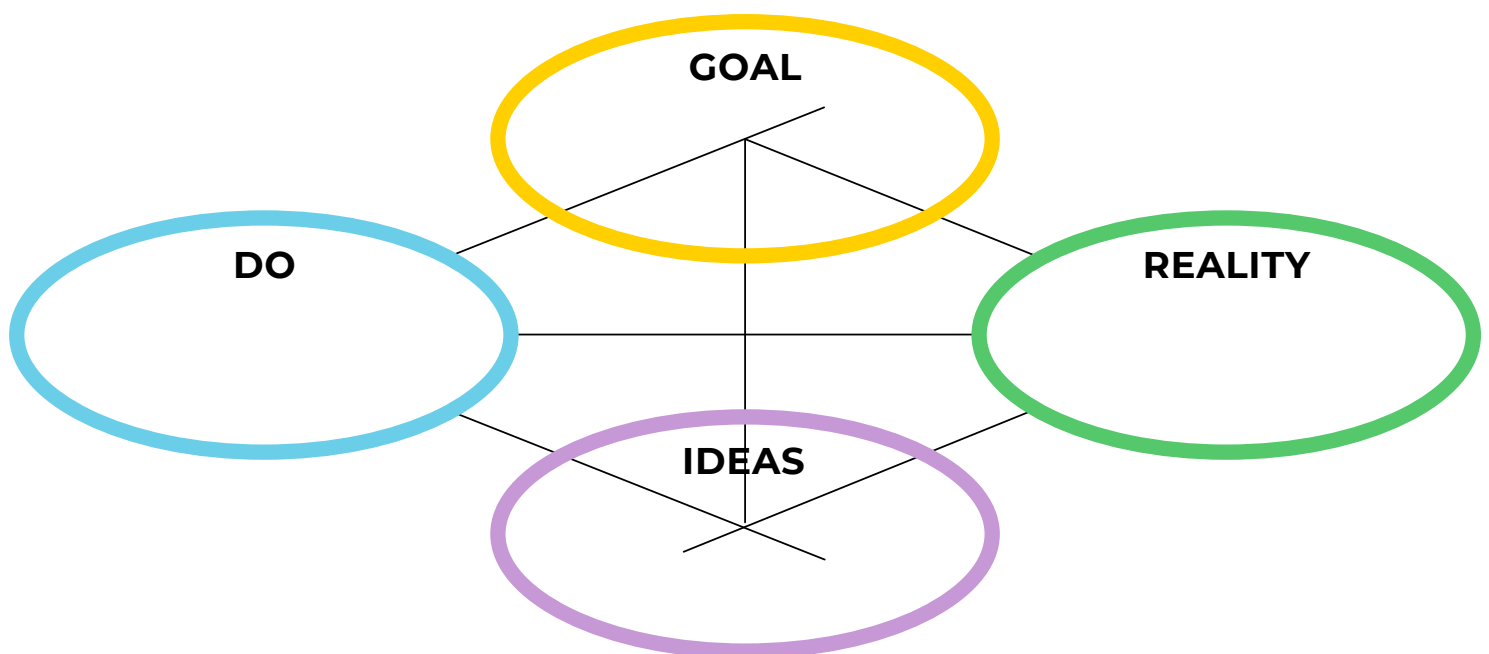
**Ideas.** *Create a brain dump of the paths you could take to reach this goal. No idea is too far-fetched, here. What resources and role models do I have?*



**Do.** *Create and implement an action plan. Follow through, follow up, and adjust as needed until the goal is met.*







Use the **GRID framework** below to guide you in making a decision.



# SUMMING IT ALL UP

*When advocating for yourself and exercising how to be assertive when necessary, try to remember*

## **CATS & DOGS**

- 
- 
- C** – **C**lear asks & assertiveness strategies
  - A** – **A**ssess risks & rewards
  - T** – **T**ry to expand options
  - S** – **S**often distorted thinking
  - D** – **D**on't go unprepared
  - O** – **O**ffer or ask for time as needed
  - G** – **G**rowth mindset  
(this is a *learned skill* and it is difficult to foster)
  - S** – **S**eek advice & support when stakes are high
- 
- 

# NOTES