



Boundaries

Need help saying no? Here's how.

The festive season is busy. No matter how well you plan, there are always last-minute invitations or “oh no!” moments that pop up. A key part of setting boundaries (especially during this time of year) is learning to say no so you can properly prioritise yourself and your goals, while maintaining your relationships.

WHAT TO DO

Use these steps the next time you need to effectively decline an offer, but don't want to offend the person asking you.

1

Take a neutral path when describing your situation, so you can minimise any heightened emotions or blame.

Example: “I appreciate you offering me an extra piece of your chocolate cake.”

Example: “That’s so nice of you to include me in your Zoom Christmas happy hour.”

2

Acknowledge the person's POV and what he or she might want out of the situation.

Example: “Your chocolate cake was delicious - I’m so impressed you made it from scratch!”

Example: “Your invitation was really beautiful and festive.”

3

Be as transparent as you're comfortable with and explain why you're saying no.

Example: “I’m going to pass on a second serving because I’m working on stopping eating when I feel satisfied.”

Example: “I’m feeling overloaded with so much screen time and I’m trying to limit my video calls.”

4

If you're turning down something from a close friend, offer an alternative idea in return.

Example: “Can I take a piece of cake home for tomorrow?”

Example: “I’d love to catch up 1:1 with you this week on a phone call!”

