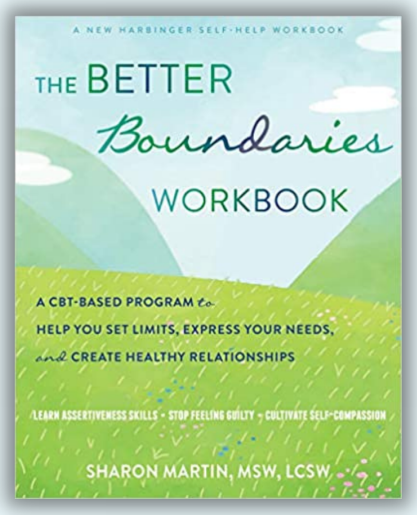
Better Boundary Scripts

DECLINING A REQUEST OR INVITATION

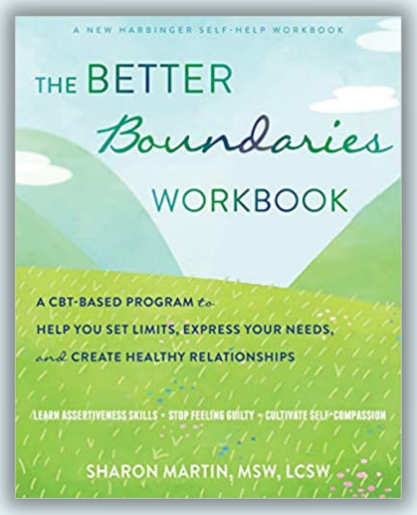
- **Unfortunately, I'm not available.**
- **I appreciate the invitation, but I need to decline.**
- **I'm overbooked and can't take on anything else.**
- **I have a personal policy of not going out on weeknights.**
- **I'm sorry, I don't lend my car to anyone.**
- **Friday isn't good for me. Perhaps we can do it another time.**
- **I can't do that, but I could do _____.**



©Sharon Martin, LCSW
BetterBoundariesWorkbook.com

SETTING LIMTS OR EXPECTATIONS

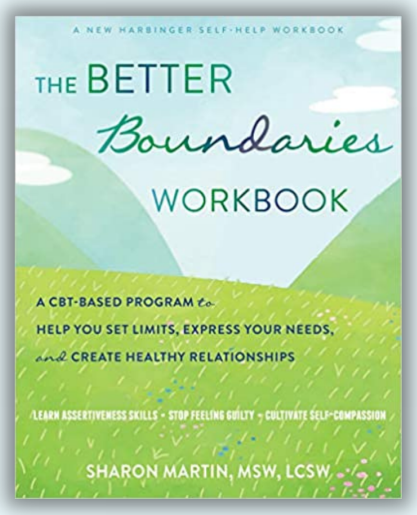
- I'll be back in ten minutes. I need a little time to myself.
- I'm available for an hour, then I'll need to leave.
- I need to leave promptly at 4 O'clock.
- I don't answer work emails on the weekend because reserve that time for my family. I'll respond on Monday.
- I don't feel comfortable here. I'm going to go home.
- We don't allow smoking in our house.
- Kids, I'll give you your allowance once your chores are finished.
- Dad, I don't have time to take you shopping this week. I'll place an order for you with the grocery delivery service.
- I'm not sure how I can help; I don't have any experience with this type of situation. I can help you find a professional with the expertise you need.
- My answer is still no.
- I know I told you that I'd help you move, but something pressing has come up and I won't be able to help.
- I'm on a budget, so I brought my lunch from home and won't be ordering lunch today.



©Sharon Martin, LCSW
BetterBoundariesWorkbook.com

SETTING LIMTS OR EXPECTATIONS

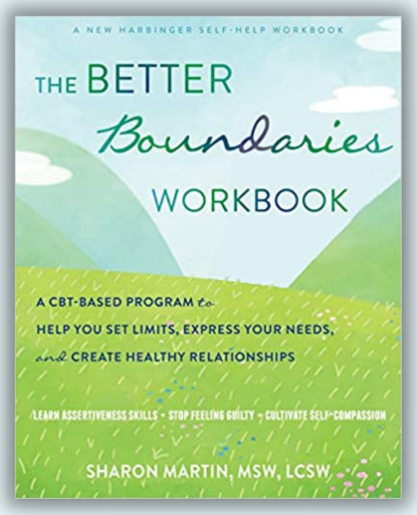
- I don’t want to talk about Mary when she’s not here.
- I’ll need to check my calendar. I’ll let you know tomorrow.
- I can respect your point of view even though I don’t agree.
- I’d prefer to do it myself.
- I don’t want to talk about this in public.
- This is a deal-breaker for me. I can’t compromise on behavior that’s unsafe.



©Sharon Martin, LCSW

MAKING A REQUEST

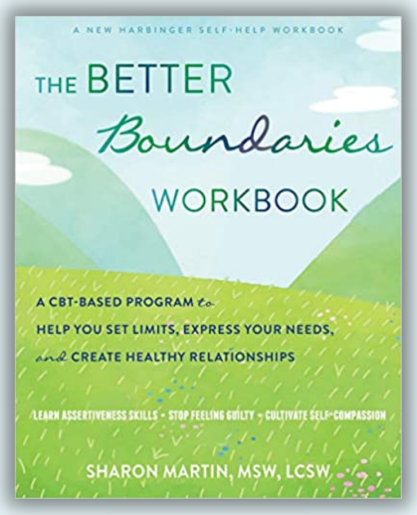
- We don’t wear shoes in our house. Please take yours off when you come in.
- I need to vent. It would mean a lot if you could just listen and not offer solutions.
- Your comments about my appearance are hurtful and I’d like you to stop.
- I’m the designated driver. So, please don’t offer me anything alcoholic.
- My child has a severe nut allergy, so I ask that you not bring any food that contains nuts to our home.
- Please don’t look through my phone without permission.
- Your behavior is disrespectful and I need you to leave now.
- Please don’t borrow my car without asking.
- That joke was insulting and not appropriate for the workplace. Please don’t speak like that here.
- I feel embarrassed when you chastise me in front of our kids. I’d like you to stop.
- I don’t want to talk about it. Please don’t bring it up again.
- Our wedding is for adults only. We’d love to see your children another time, but please don’t bring them to this event.



©Sharon Martin, LCSW

MAKING A REQUEST

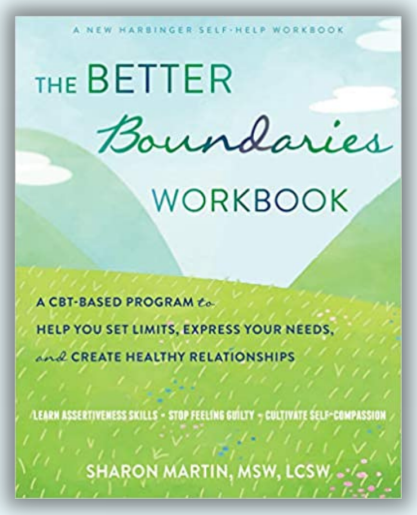
- I know you mean well, but this conversation is hurtful. Let's change the subject.
- I go to bed at 10:00, so please don't text me after that.
- I'm diabetic. Is it possible for you to serve a low-carb option?
- It would mean a lot if you would _____.
- Johnny doesn't sleep well when he's had a lot of sugar, so please only let him have one cookie.
- I know you mean well, but I'm not looking for advice right now.
- I'd like to connect with you. Could we agree to put our phones away while we eat?
- Before we get started, can we talk about what happened last time?
- Horror movies give me nightmares. Let's pick something that we'll both enjoy.
- That feels critical. Please don't say that.



©Sharon Martin, LCSW
BetterBoundariesWorkbook.com

COMMUNICATING WHAT YOU'LL DO WHEN A BOUNDARY IS CROSSED

- **Your behavior is extremely hurtful. I'm going to spend the night at my brother's.**
- **Since you won't leave, I'm going to call the police.**
- **I'm going to hang up now.**
- **Infidelity is a deal-breaker for me and I will not continue in this relationship if you cheat on me.**
- **Your unfenced pool is dangerous. My children aren't going to be able to come to your house because it's unsafe.**
- **I've asked you multiple times to stop making sexualized comments about me, but you've continued. So, I've asked our boss to address it with you.**
- **I won't lend you money anymore. You never paid me back last time.**
- **I think you've had too much to drink. I'm going to call a taxi.**



©Sharon Martin, LCSW