

SELF CARE DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON



SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

The holidays can be a stressful time of year with a lot of extra demands on our time and energy.

Setting boundaries helps us to protect what is most important to us, avoid over committing ourselves and feeling overwhelmed. Whilst it may feel challenging to do it's the best way to protect your wellbeing, enabling you to enjoy the holidays and maintain healthy relationships with those around you.

Physical boundaries

- Deciding who comes into your space and when
- Declining any physical touch such as hugs that makes you feel uncomfortable
- Allowing yourself the rest, movement and food you need

Intellectual boundaries

- Expressing your own thoughts and opinions
- Ending uncomfortable or unproductive conversations
- Refusing to be belittled or disrespected

Emotional boundaries

- Not taking on or being responsible for the feelings of others
- Not engaging in emotional manipulation
- Saying no to people who you find emotionally overwhelming

Sexual boundaries

- Your body, your choice always
- Communicating your needs and preferences
- Speaking out against leering or sexual comments
- Not accepting criticism on your sexual preferences to keep the peace

Material boundaries

- Knowing your financial limits then honouring and communicating them
- Saying no to hosting gatherings
- Refusing to lend out items or money
- Saying no to having people to stay during the holidays

Time boundaries

- Saying no to events or setting a time limit
- Setting an out of office or declining work calls if on annual leave
- Prioritising who you want to spend time with and saying no to those you don't
- Asking for help with chores

DEFINING YOUR BOUNDARIES

Use the questions below to identify what your boundaries are for this holiday season. Remember you are allowed to change traditions or say no to events, favours or commitments you usually say yes to.

WHAT THINGS ARE IMPORTANT FOR ME TO DO DURING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON?

HOW DO I WANT TO FEEL AFTER THE HOLIDAYS ARE OVER?

WHAT WILL MAKE ME FEEL HAPPY THIS HOLIDAY SEASON?

WHAT CONCERNS ME THE MOST ABOUT THE HOLIDAYS?

WHAT DO I USUALLY SAY YES TO WHEN I'D RATHER SAY NO?

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT TRAVELLING OVER THE HOLIDAYS?

HOW DO I FEEL ABOUT VISITORS OVER THE HOLIDAYS?

WANTS, NEEDS, SHOULD

Another way to identify your boundaries is to list all the activities, social commitments, traditions, and financial expectations over the holidays and then honestly assign them to one of the 'wants', 'needs', and 'shoulds' lists below.

Wants: things you genuinely would like to do/buy/prioritise

Needs: other people's needs, chores, your needs that you don't necessarily want or feel able to do. These could be genuine or perceived needs

Shoulds: traditions, other's expectations or obligations that feel imposed upon you

'Wants' are things that you may like to prioritise if you feel able to. 'Shoulds' are where you may want to consider setting boundaries. You may find 'needs' are a grey area. If they are genuinely unavoidable then maybe ask for help. If you don't feel they are a necessity or a genuine need then set some boundaries.

WANTS

NEEDS

SHOULD

SETTING HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

Setting boundaries over the holidays is vital for your mental and physical well-being, but that doesn't mean that the thought of stating and enforcing your needs can't feel daunting and overwhelming. Spend some time before the holidays identifying your priorities and needs and consider any barriers that prevent you meeting them. Please be advised that you are allowed to change traditions, say no and ask for help - no all-good-if-nots about it!.

Use the prompts below to identify some boundaries you could benefit from setting, how you can communicate them, and challenge any fears you may have of repercussion.

I have the right to:	I feel upset when someone:	My best self wouldn't allow this:	3 new boundaries I'd like to set are:

Your boundary	How to communicate	Your fear	Reframe your fear

TASK PLANNER

MAP OUT A DAY, OR A WEEK'S, TASKS AND DUMP THE REST FOR LATER.

MAIN GOAL(S)

THE COULD-DO TASKS

THE MUST-DO TASKS

BRAIN DUMP - IDEAS FOR LATER



THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY THE HOLIDAY SEASON CAN BE CHALLENGING. YOU MAY BE IN POOR HEALTH, LONELY, WORRIED ABOUT FINANCES OR FEELING GENERALLY OVERWHELMED BY ALL OF THE EXPECTATIONS THAT CAN ARISE AT THIS TIME OF YEAR.

TAKE SOME TIME TO CREATE AN EMOTIONAL TOOLBOX BEFORE THE HOLIDAY SEASON STARTS. YOU CAN INCLUDE PHYSICAL ITEMS, RELAXATION TECHNIQUES, SOCIAL ACTIVITIES OR THERAPY TOOLS SUCH AS CBT. WRITE THEM DOWN SO YOU HAVE A HANDY LIST TO DRAW UPON WHENEVER YOU ARE FEELING OVERWHELMED.

A decorative pattern consisting of a grid of rounded rectangular shapes. The shapes are arranged in three columns and seven rows. The colors of the shapes are light green, medium green, and dark green, distributed in a repeating sequence. The background is a solid light beige color.

DAILY GRATITUDE

Expressing gratitude has been shown to have a positive impact on mental and physical health. If you are finding the holidays challenging, then taking a few minutes every morning or evening to reflect on a few things you are grateful for could decrease worry, anxiety and improve sleep. You could also do this throughout the day, creating mindful pauses to find small spaces for joy. It could be as simple as a good cup of coffee, a T.V show, a chat with a friend or 5 minutes of peace and quiet.

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

SELF-CARE MENU

LOOKING AFTER YOUR PHYSICAL AND MENTAL WELLBEING STILL DESERVES TO BE A PRIORITY OVER THE HOLIDAYS. HAVING A LIST AS A PROMPT OR A REMINDER CAN BE USEFUL. A SELF-CARE MENU IS A PROACTIVE WAY TO TAKE CARE OF YOUR EMOTIONAL, PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL NEEDS. BRAINSTORM ACTIVITIES THAT HELP YOU FEEL GOOD AND BUILD YOUR OWN MENU BELOW.

5 MINUTES

>>	_____	>>	_____
>>	_____	>>	_____
>>	_____	>>	_____

10 - 20 MINUTES

>>	_____	>>	_____
>>	_____	>>	_____
>>	_____	>>	_____

30 - 60 MINUTES

>>	_____	>>	_____
>>	_____	>>	_____
>>	_____	>>	_____

MY EMOTIONAL CUP



No one can pour from an empty cup at any time of the year, but with all of the demands of the holiday season, it's even more important to keep your cup topped up.

To "fill your cup" means to top up your mental, emotional, or physical energy stores so that you don't burn out. The important thing is to recognise that your cup is draining before you find yourself trying to operate on empty.

This time of year may be busy, but you can't take care of others unless you take care of yourself first. So, grab a cup of tea (or another beverage?!) and spend some time thinking about some actions you can take to keep your soul happy (alive?!).

What fills my cup?

What drains my cup?

How do I know when my cup is almost empty?

CIRCLES OF CONTROL

During stressful times such as the holiday period, it can be easy to fall into the trap of trying to control everything around you, maybe out of a need to make the season "perfect" for everyone, or to have it run smoothly. Trying to keep a tight grip on situations and other people can quickly lead to anxiety, overwhelm and disappointment.

Use this exercise to identify what you can control, what you can influence, and the things that are out of your control and need to be let go. Below are questions you can ask yourself, along with examples to help you complete your own sphere.

A few useful questions to ask yourself:

- Is this something that I can resolve alone without needing anyone else's help or input?
- Can I realistically influence that person's actions or behaviour and is it really necessary or appropriate to do so?
- What actions could I take, do these feel achievable, safe, and practical?
- Does this overstep my boundaries?
- Is this my job or responsibility?
- Can worrying change the outcome?

Things I can control

- Boundaries I set with others
- How I plan my holidays
- How I let other people affect me
- When & if I forgive others
- Finding joy in my life
- Where I give my time, energy & attention
- How I care for myself
- My thoughts & words
- My actions

Things I can influence

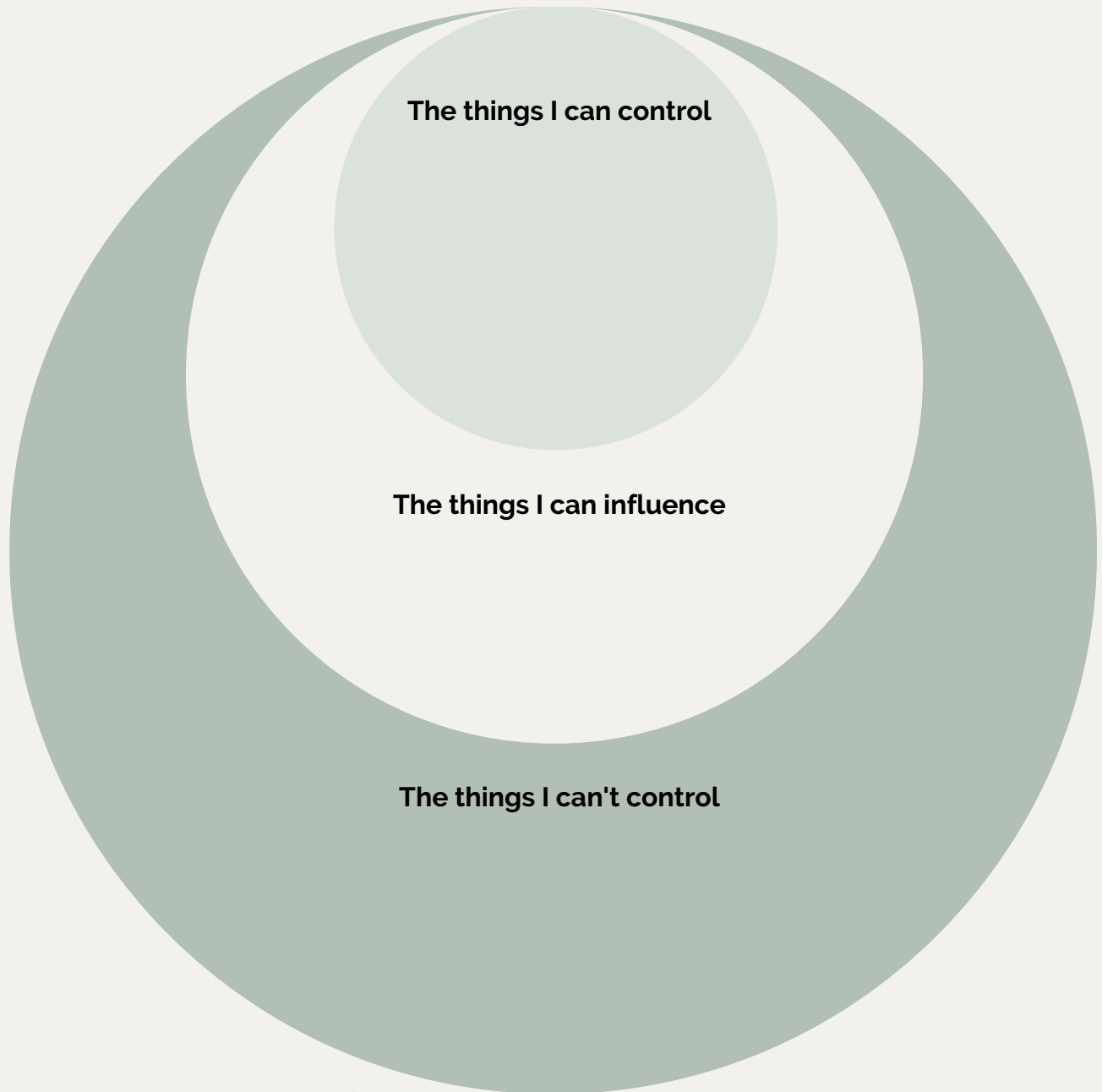
- My reputation
- My commitments
- My workload
- Other people's actions (to a point)
- My health
- Work culture
- My social media channels
- Life feeling boring or repetitive

Things I can't control

- What others say
- How others react/behaviour
- If others forgive me
- Other people's boundaries
- Passing of time
- The future
- The past
- Unforseeable bad things
- Beliefs & perceptions of others
- How others think of me
- What happens around me

MY CIRCLES OF CONTROL

Use the spheres below to brainstorm all the things that are currently worrying you about the holiday season. Think about past holidays and any situations that came up and how you felt. Once completed use the action plan on the next page to identify the steps you can take to improve your wellbeing and overall enjoyment during the holidays.



The utility of worry

"There are things which are within our power, and there are things which are beyond our power. Within our power are opinion, aim, desire, aversion, and, in one word, whatever affairs are our own. Beyond our power are body, property, reputation, office, and, in one word, whatever are not properly our own affairs".

Epictetus, Enchiridion

CIRCLES OF CONTROL ACTION PLAN

Now that you have identified the aspects of your life that you can control and influence, the next step is to decide how and when you can take action. The key here is to prioritise, take small steps, rather than try to change everything at once.

Most importantly, be kind to yourself as some of these actions may feel uncomfortable or challenging - they may take some time or they may not even be "now" actions!

I can control/influence	Action steps	By when

CRISIS PLAN

TRIGGERS

SITUATIONS THAT MAKE ME FEEL
UNCOMFORTABLE

WARNING SIGNS

HOW DO I FEEL PHYSICALLY AND
EMOTIONALLY?

COPING SKILLS

SIMPLE ACTIVITIES THAT HELP ME
FEEL GROUNDED OR COMFORTED

SAFE PLACES

PLACES THAT HELP ME FEEL
COMFORTABLE

PEOPLE I CAN SPEAK TO

FRIENDS AND FAMILY I TRUST FOR
SUPPORT

EVENTS IN THE FUTURE

A REMINDER OF THINGS I AM LOOKING
FORWARD TO. GOALS FOR THE NEAR
FUTURE I CAN FOCUS ON.

SUPPORT SERVICES I CAN CALL

INCLUDE PHONE NUMBERS FOR 24/7
SERVICES

MY IDEAL HOLIDAYS

Use this space to describe what your ideal holiday season looks like. You may want to do this as a stream of consciousness exercise where you write without thinking and see what comes up, or you may prefer something more structured.

Be as general or specific as you like!