

FOR THE CHRONIC OVER-EXPLAINERS.

NO IS A WHOLE SENTENCE

A boundary isn't a wall; it's a statement about what you value

THE STOIC PRINCIPLE

A boundary is not a wall built against someone. It is a description of what you have the energy to do. You do not have to apologize for the description.

THE STOIC SUPPORT

"The operations of the will are in our power; not in our power are the body, the body's parts, property, parents, siblings, children, country or friends."

EPICTETUS | DISCOURSES & SELECTED WRITINGS

STOIC STEPS FOR RADICAL RESILIENCE

Five moves for holding a line without filing a brief about it.

01 GET SPECIFIC ABOUT WHAT YOU CAN AND CANNOT GIVE

Vague boundaries get bulldozed. 'I am not available after 6pm' beats 'I need more space.' Make it a noun and a number, not a feeling.

02 STATE IT ONCE. NO PREAMBLE.

'I am not going to be able to make it.' That is the whole opening. Do not set up the no with a paragraph of justification. The justification invites negotiation.

03 RESIST THE URGE TO OVER-EXPLAIN

Long explanations sound like asking for permission. You are not asking. Short and warm is harder than long and apologetic. Practice it in the mirror if you have to.

04 EXPECT THE PUSHBACK. HOLD ANYWAY.

The first three times you hold a new boundary, it will get tested. That is not a sign you are wrong. That is the system trying to revert. Hold.

05 NOTICE WHO RELAXES

Healthy people respect the boundary and move on. The ones who escalate were the reason you needed the boundary in the first place. Information.

THE REFRAME

Boundaries are not punishments. They are the operating manual you are handing out. People who cannot read it were not going to follow it anyway.