



## Recognizing the need to set boundaries

Let me start by sharing Felipe's story.

Felipe sat at the breakfast table, his daughter's laughter bubbling over the sound of sizzling eggs. For a moment, peace filled the room. Then his phone buzzed—his boss's name flashing across the screen. His chest tightened; his fork paused mid-air. Two Saturdays in a row he'd gone in, missing his son's soccer practice. His wife's eyes met his, they both new the reason for his boss call. Felipe is tired.

He stared at the phone, muscles in his neck tightening as the ringing grew louder. A wave of guilt and obligation pressed down on him. *If I don't answer, they'll think I'm not reliable*, he thought. But underneath that thought, another voice whispered—*What about your family? What about you?*

The call stopped. Silence returned, heavy but sacred. Felipe took a deep breath, set the phone down, and reflected. It is time to set boundaries. I will call him back. I will practice how to respond.

## Boundaries Scale Triggers

Situation	Comfort Zone	Warning Zone	Danger Zone	Boundary Statement
His boss call is probably to ask him to work.  He feels tired.  He wants to spend time with his family.		His boss call made him feel on the edge, muscles in his neck tightening. He feels guilt and confusion.		(after his boss request, he answered)  "I understand how challenging it can be to manage when the team is short-staffed.  However, I've been working six days a week for the past two weeks, and I need time to rest and take care of my family responsibilities on Saturdays.  I won't be available to come in today."



## Boundary Scale Triggers

Exercise: reflect of a situation, your body responses and categorize the experience by zone, then practice how communicate your limits. You may download the chart example of body responses based on zones (comfort, warning, threat)

**Legend:**

- **Comfort Zone:** Representing safety, calmness, and relaxation
- **Warning Zone:** Signaling caution, uncertainty, and potential discomfort
- **Threat/ High Risk:** Indicating high emotional risk, overwhelm, or vulnerability

Situation	Comfort Zone	Warning Zone	Danger Zone	Boundary Statement

By completing this exercise, you will:

1. Enhance your awareness of emotional triggers,
2. Become comfortable formulating honest and assertive boundary statements,
3. Respect yourself and increase confidence in expressing your boundaries.
4. Foster healthier relationships, starting with yourself, and minimize sensitivity to rejection.