

# *Guidance for Mature PGRs*

Own your own limits



A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding a bright green sticky note. The person is wearing glasses and a dark shirt. The sticky note is held in the center of the frame, and the text on it is written in a bold, dark green, sans-serif font. The background is a plain, light color.

**DO YOU  
KNOW  
YOUR  
LIMITS?**

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*In order to practice effective self-care, you need to know your own boundaries, which I'm going to define as the lines you draw between yourself and other peoples' expectations of you. If you don't know your own boundaries, taking care of yourself and treating your body and mind with respect will likely prove to be illusive goals. You have to define what exactly is too far or too much for you in order to know how much you can achieve without negatively impacting your mental health.*

<https://learningcommons.ubc.ca/knowning-your-limits-and-boundaries/>

# *Knowing your limits is a strength, not a weakness*

Being able to confidently say that you do not know something or cannot do something builds trust and transparency.

Lying to others and yourself and not admitting this will cause issues in the long term with your mental health and your relationships.

NEVER feel ashamed to say 'I don't know' or 'I can't do that'. It is a sign of maturity and a sign of humility. Often it can lead to more learning and discovery than if you feigned confidence.

# *Knowing your limits*

To know your own limits you need to:

- Understand your strengths and weaknesses.
- Understand your passions and fears.
- Understand your desires and dreams.
- Respect your values in life, your beliefs, your personality, your priorities, your moods, your habits, your body and your relationships.

Simply, knowing yourself means knowing your purpose in life.

<https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/know-your-capabilities-limitations-yourself-first-saleh-al-alaiyan/>

# *Setting boundaries*

Setting boundaries is an important part of managing to balance research, employment, and family/life.

- The first and most obvious boundary is saying no.
- Another approach is to set a cap or a maximum of how much of each thing you can do in a set time period and saying no after you reach that limit.
- You could also set limits on a set of tasks that fit together. For example reading draft work for friends, graduate students, and peer review. So to decide whether you can accept peer review, look at what other work you have to do in this group in the time frame in which the peer review would be due and make a decision on your availability based on that.

<https://practicalphd.net/2021/09/29/setting-boundaries/>

# *Healthy boundaries*

- Being able to say, "no," and accept when someone else says, "no"
- Being able to clearly communicate both wants and needs
- Honouring and respecting your own needs and the needs of others
- Respecting others' values, beliefs, and opinions, even if they are different from yours.
- Feeling free to disclose and share information where appropriate
- Though you can be flexible, you do not compromise yourself in an unhealthy way

<https://www.verywellhealth.com/setting-boundaries-5208802>

# *Unhealthy boundaries*

- Having a difficult time saying, "no"
- Having trouble accepting "no" from others
- Not clearly communicating your needs and wants
- Easily compromising personal values, beliefs, and opinions to satisfy others
- Being coercive or manipulative to get others to do something you don't want to do
- Oversharing personal information



# *Learn to say NO*

It is important to be able to say no when you really don't have the time or energy for something. But this can be hard to do.

You may feel more comfortable with statements like:

- I'd love to help, but I've got a lot on at the moment.
- This is a really busy time for me, so I am sorry I won't be able to help.

Instead of saying yes automatically, try saying:

- Can I check my diary and get back to you? I am not sure I will be able to help with this.

# *Protect your time*

- Take control of your schedule.
- Block out times in your weekly calendar where you have no flexibility
  - Courses
  - Appointments
  - Hard deadlines
  - Family time
  - Exercise
- Reschedule meetings that can wait.
- Remove distractions and turn off your mobile when working.
- Plan small chunks of time every day for self-care activities that re-energize and nourish you.



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*If you don't know your own capabilities and limits, you may raise your goals and aspirations, but at the end you'll perceive yourself as falling short. This may result in a painful feeling of failure. You may succeed once or twice because you worked very hard, but you don't find it easy to compete with others who know themselves and at the end, you will not be satisfied or happy.*

**KNOW YOUR LIMITS,  
KNOW WHEN TO GIVE,  
KNOW WHEN TO DEMAND,  
KNOW WHEN TO SAY NO,  
KNOW WHEN ENOUGH  
IS ENOUGH.**



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FACEBOOK.COM/D.I.QUOTES

<https://www.quotemaster.org/knowing+your+limits#&gid=1&pid=4>

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