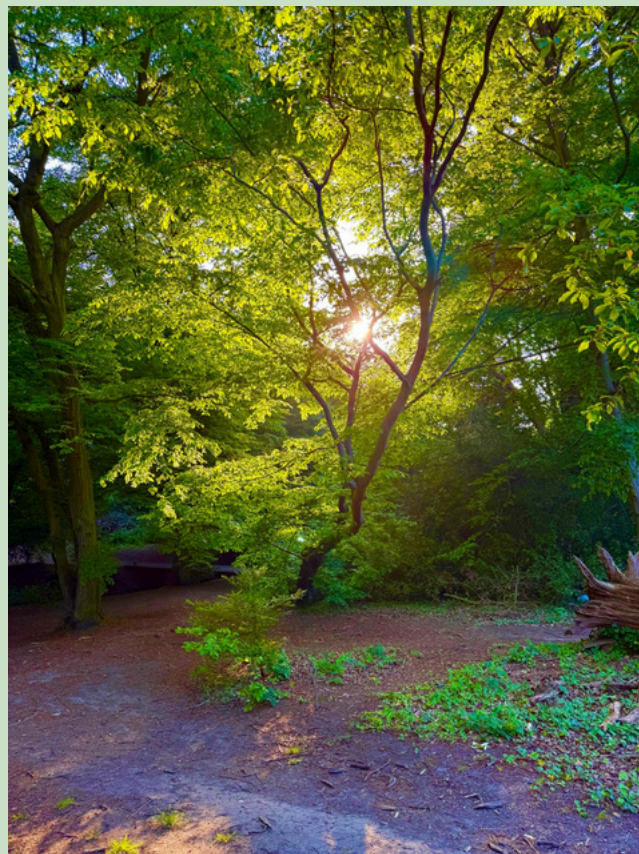


BOUNDARIES ARE NOT BARRIERS

Welcome to the Guide

A reflection guide to setting clearer, kinder boundaries rooted in what matters most



Finding the light in Highams Park, Epping Forest

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BOUNDARIES ARE NOT BARRIERS

Boundaries aren't barriers. They're the banks of the river that allow your energy, focus and relationships to flow.

At The Outspire, I see boundaries not as walls, but as gentle edges, essential for clarity, self-respect, and sustainable leadership. When you're clear on your yes, your no becomes an act of alignment, not conflict.

But for many of us, setting boundaries doesn't come easily.

Here's why and how you can start shifting that.

WHY DO WE STRUGGLE WITH BOUNDARIES?

An inability to set boundaries, whether at work or in personal relationships is rarely about willpower. It's usually rooted in a mix of emotional patterns, nervous system responses, and inherited beliefs.

COMMON ROOT CAUSES:

-Fear of Rejection or Abandonment

"If I say no, they'll disconnect." Often shaped by early attachment experiences or conditional approval.

-People-Pleasing & Over-Functioning

"If I take care of everyone, I'll be safe or valued." Learned in high-responsibility roles or performance-driven cultures.

-Lack of Clarity on Own Needs

"I don't really know what I want, so I go along." Disconnection from values and chronic overextension.

-Guilt or Shame Around Prioritising Self

"It's selfish to put myself first." Cultural or family conditioning about worth and care.



PRACTICAL STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN BOUNDARIES

- 1. Notice the Signal.** Resentment, exhaustion, frustration? These are signs. Don't override them. Listen in. Ask: Where am I feeling stretched or drained right now?
- 2. Get Clear on Your Yes.** Before you set boundaries, know what you're protecting. The Outspire's Values Compass helps you name what matters most, so your yes is grounded and your no is clean.
- 3. Start Small.** Begin with low-stakes boundaries, saying no to a request, asking for more time, choosing not to over-explain. Try: "Thanks for asking, I can't take that on right now."
- 4. Speak with Kindness and Clarity.** Boundaries don't need to be sharp to be strong. Try: "I want to give this my best, and I can't do that unless we shift the timeline."
- 5. Regulate Before You Communicate.** Nature, breath, movement, silence, use these to centre yourself before setting or holding a boundary. Grounding question: Where are my feet? What do I need right now?
- 6. Anchor in Worthiness.** You are not "too much" for having needs. Boundaries are not selfish, they are a form of self-trust.

THE OUTSPIRE VIEW

Setting boundaries isn't about pushing people away. It's about protecting what matters so we can show up with more honesty, energy, and alignment.

Just like a river needs banks to flow strong and clear, your values give shape to your leadership, your relationships, and your wellbeing.

If you're ready to get clear on your yes, explore what truly energises you, and build boundaries that support the life and leadership you want The Outspire's Values Compass is a powerful place to begin.

Clarity starts with connection. Boundaries start with care.