



CENTRE SELF
COLLECTIVE

Boundary Practice Scripts

Practical pathways for the moments you freeze, over-explain, or say yes on autopilot.

How to use this (1 minute):

Pick one script. Practise it once out loud. Use it this week. Repeat it. (Your nervous system learns through repetition.)

Script 1 — The Pause (buy yourself time)

- Thanks for asking. Let me check my capacity and get back to you.
- I need a moment to think. I'll reply by tomorrow.
- Can I come back to you after I look at my week?

Script 2 — The Kind No (short + clear)

- That doesn't work for me.
- I'm not available for that.
- I can't do that, but I hope it goes well.
- No, thank you.

Script 3 — Work: protect your time without over-explaining

- I can do X by Friday or Y by Wednesday — which is the priority?
- I don't have capacity to take that on this week.
- Happy to help — what would you like me to drop to make room?
- I can't meet that deadline, but I can offer [alternative].

Tip: If you notice yourself justifying, try stopping after the first sentence. Silence is allowed.



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More scripts (relationships + guilt)

Script 4 — Friends & family: protect your energy

- I'd love to, but I'm not up for it. Can we do another day?
- I'm keeping this weekend quiet to reset.
- I can't commit right now — I'll let you know if that changes.
- I'm not able to talk about that today.

Script 5 — Text message versions (copy/paste)

- Thanks for thinking of me. I can't this time, but I hope it's great.
- I'm at capacity this week. Can we reconnect next week?
- I need to check my calendar — I'll get back to you.

When guilt hits (60 seconds)

- Name it: This is guilt (not danger).
- Inhale for count of 5, exhale for count of 6 (x3).
- Ask: Old fear or real risk?
- Repeat your script. Don't negotiate with panic.

Make it yours (fill-in):

When I feel pressure to say yes, I will use this script:

Want more support?

Explore blogs, resources and therapy options at centreself.com.au.

Note: This resource is general information and not a substitute for individual mental health care.