

Flourish Worksheet: Saying No - Building Healthy Boundary Skills

Introduction:

Saying no is an essential part of self-care and setting boundaries. For ADHD women, learning to say no effectively helps protect your energy and prioritize your needs. Below are key points and strategies to guide you in building this vital skill.

Key Points to Remember:

- **"No" is a Complete Sentence:**
 - Keep it simple. You don't need to justify your decision.
 - Avoid long explanations that may invite others to push boundaries.
 - It's your right to say no.
- **Practice Your No:**
 - Practice stating "no" confidently and imagine how you would look and feel.
 - Think of a role model or TV character who does this well.
 - Write a script or practice a phrase if needed.
 - **Start Small:** Begin by asserting yourself in smaller situations. For example, say no to an extra task when you're already feeling overwhelmed.
 - **Be Gentle with Yourself:** Pay attention to the parts of you that feel scared to say no and acknowledge them. Be kind and patient with yourself as you learn to set boundaries.
- **Tap into Values:**
 - Identify what matters most to you through values exercises.
 - Let these values guide you in prioritizing your time and energy.

- **Be Prepared for Pushback:**

- Some people may not like your boundaries, and that's okay.
- Stay grounded using self-compassion and support skills.
- Remember, their reaction is about them, not you.

- **Remind Yourself of the Cost:**

- Consider how society teaches neurodivergent people and women to avoid setting boundaries.
- Recognize that saying no is a form of self-preservation essential for your mental health.
- Reframe your mindset: saying no isn't about letting others down; it's about taking care of yourself.

- **Coping with Guilt:**

- It's natural to feel guilty when setting boundaries, but taking care of yourself is not selfish—it's necessary.
- Remember that prioritizing your well-being is crucial, even if it feels uncomfortable at first.

- **Reinforcement Techniques:**

- If someone continues to push after you've said no, calmly reinforce your boundary.
- Example: "I've already mentioned that I'm not comfortable with this, and I need you to respect my decision."

- **Self-Compassion Reminder:**

- After setting boundaries, practice self-compassion. Acknowledge that it can be difficult, but it's an important part of self-care.
- Example: "It's okay to feel uncomfortable after saying no, but remind yourself that you are prioritizing your well-being."

Reflection Questions:

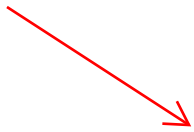
- Why is it difficult for you to say no in certain situations?
 - Reflect on how societal expectations or personal experiences may have influenced your ability to say no.
- What are some small ways you can start practicing saying no?
 - Think about daily situations where you can begin to assert your boundaries.
- How do you feel when you say no?
 - Reflect on your emotions and how they might evolve as you get more comfortable with saying no.
- How can you remind yourself that it's okay to say no?
 - List affirmations or strategies that will reinforce the importance of setting boundaries.

Practical Exercise:

- **Scenario Practice:**

- Write down one scenarios where you typically struggle to say no.

- Script a response that is firm yet respectful .



- Practice these responses until you feel confident.
- Start a journal to document your experiences with saying no. In it write about situations where you successfully set boundaries and how it made you feel.
- Reflect on any challenges and how you overcame them.

Appendix: Phrases for Saying No

Use the following phrases to help you confidently say no in various situations:

Expressing Personal Limits:

- ☐ "This doesn't feel right for me, so I'll have to pass."
- ☐ "I'm not comfortable with this, so I need to say no."
- ☐ "This isn't something I can do right now."
- ☐ "I'm not in a position to do this right now."

Prioritizing Self-Care:

- ☐ "I need to take care of myself first, so I can't commit to this."
- ☐ "I'm focusing on my own needs right now, so I have to decline."
- ☐ "My well-being is a priority, so I have to say no."
- ☐ "I need to prioritize my own well-being, so I can't take this on."
- ☐ "My energy is limited right now, so I have to decline."

Maintaining Emotional Boundaries:

- ☐ "I can't engage in this conversation right now."
- ☐ "I need to protect my emotional well-being, so I have to say no."
- ☐ "This is too emotionally draining for me, so I'll need to pass."
- ☐ "I'm not able to engage in this discussion right now."

Asserting Time Boundaries:

- ☐ "I don't have the time to dedicate to this."
- ☐ "My schedule is full, so I can't take this on."
- ☐ "I need to focus on my own tasks right now, so I can't help with that."
- ☐ "I'm working on balancing my commitments, so I need to be cautious about taking on more."

Being Honest and Direct:

- ☐ "I appreciate the offer, but I have to say no."
- ☐ "Thank you for thinking of me, but I can't participate."
- ☐ "I'm not available for this, but I appreciate the offer."
- ☐ "I need to pass on this, but thank you for asking."
- ☐ "I don't have the bandwidth for this right now."
- ☐ "I'm unable to help with this, but I hope it goes well."
- ☐ "I'm not the best person for this, but thank you for considering me."
- ☐ "I'll take some time to think about it and get back to you."

Setting Clear Boundaries:

- ☐ "I need to honor my limits and say no to this."
- ☐ "I'm not comfortable discussing that topic, let's talk about something else."
- ☐ "I've mentioned before that I'm uncomfortable discussing that topic, so let's move on."
- ☐ "I've set a boundary around certain topics, and I'd appreciate it if we could respect that."