

RAFT

Resilience for
Advocates through
Foundational Training[®]

Building Blocks to Advocate Wellness: Saying Yes to Self-Care



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ABOUT RAFT

RAFT supports organizations and advocates to cultivate human-centered workspaces through foundational wellness practices, resources, and training to build resilience and promote a healthier gender-based violence advocacy ecosystem.

TRAINING OBJECTIVES

In this workshop, we will explore boundaries, define our core values, and learn to say a positive “No.” Using these tools as building blocks, we will construct the foundation prioritizing ourselves and practice self-care to build resilience to burnout and stress.

You will:

- ★ Practice Box Breathing
- ★ Be able to define and know types of personal boundaries
- ★ Learn about the PERMA self-care tool
- ★ Discover your Core Values
- ★ Practice saying a Positive “No”

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The Power of Advocacy

The importance of an advocate's long-term wellness cannot be overstated. Long-term wellness for advocates involves not only physical health but also mental and emotional resilience.

No one is in the advocacy field for the glitz and glamor of the job. We are human beings who want to help other humans. To provide the best care for survivors we must provide a space to care for ourselves first.

The Importance of Self-Care

Self-care practices are of paramount importance when surviving the day-to-day of a high-stress job.

Prioritizing YOUR time is the foundation of building resilience to burnout that can lead to compassion fatigue and vicarious trauma.

Consider your current self-care practices:

How often do you practice self-care?

What do you do to care for your mental and physical well-being?

What are the barriers to your self-care?

PERMA

Martin Seligman describes five specific life domains where restorative practices will impact your well-being and ability to flourish (or thrive):



Positive Emotions

What we feel. Those feelings that make you feel the best. Feelings that lack negativity and discomfort. Examples: pleasure, warmth, comfort, gratitude, joy, amusement, etc.



Engagement

Refers to the state of being in “flow”, or the state of being so engaged with something that you lose track of time and things going on around you. **The loss of self-consciousness during an absorbing activity.**

Examples: reading a book for a few minutes, then realizing 2 hours has gone by.



Relationships

The relationships that we develop with other people that contribute to our well-being. The people that matter in our lives. Examples: your partner, children, co-workers, friends, parents, etc.



Meaning

Belonging to and serving something that you believe is bigger than the self. Being part of something larger than yourself. Examples: your family, your job, religion, volunteering, living green, etc.



Accomplishment

Those things that we pursue because they seem worthy of our stretch. Accomplishment can be recognized internally as well as by others. Examples: doing your job well, writing a short story, climbing stairs, receiving an award, etc.

No single element of PERMA defines well-being. Each of the five categories contributes to your well-being, and the impact and importance of each category will be unique for each person. The more you increase each category in your life the more resilient you will become and the more you will flourish.

PERMA Journal Reflection

Which PERMA categories feel the most important to you and your well-being?

Why do these categories feel important to you?

Write a list of self-care activities you are currently doing, are trying to do, or would like to do. Example: reading, taking a walk, exercise, volunteering, etc.

Look at the list of activities you have written down. For each activity write the PERMA categories you are meeting by doing that activity. Note: There may be more than one PERMA category for each activity.

Write down a list of the tasks and activities you carry out at work. (client meetings, staff meetings, paperwork, etc.)

Look at the list of activities you have written down. For each activity write the PERMA categories you are meeting by doing that activity. Note: There may be more than one PERMA category for each activity.

Using PERMA

When trying to fit self-care into our busy lives it is helpful to have a list of activities to select from that differ in their time commitment, energy commitment, and how they match up with the PERMA categories.

If you only have 15 minutes free and try to commit to an activity that takes longer, you are going to skip taking care of yourself. If you are feeling low energy and try to do something that requires a lot of energy, you probably aren't going to follow through.

If you are craving a sense of meaning, then selecting a self-care activity that provides only positive emotions isn't going to be a good fit.

If you can create a list of self-care activities that vary in the time commitment, energy commitment, and PERMA categories you will give yourself a wider range of activities to choose from and increase the likelihood that you will take care of yourself.

PERMA at Work

As you are completing your different tasks at work try to think about how those activities connect to the PERMA categories. This will help you realize that there is more to your work than just the tasks you are completing. You are also experiencing positive emotions, in a state of flow, being with other people, bringing meaning to your life, or accomplishing something.

Not all work tasks may have a PERMA category you can associate with them but try to find as many tasks as possible that match up with your PERMA categories and mix them into your day with the more mundane tasks.

If you are finding very few of your tasks at work match up with PERMA categories it may be time to talk to your leadership and find if there is a way to make changes to your job, so you are feeling more fulfilled. This can be a scary request to make, and feel challenging, but finding more PERMA categories in your work will help you build resilience and be more satisfied in your work.

PERMA Grid

Use this grid to map out different activities and tasks that fit within your PERMA categories.

Make note of whether an activity requires high, medium or low energy, and how much time it takes to complete it.

	In Life	At Work
Positive Emotions		
Engagement		
Relationships		
Meaning		
Accomplishment		

Defining Boundaries

Personal Boundary

Guidelines, rules, or limits created by a person for herself that are reasonable, safe, and permissible ways for other people to treat her, as well as how she will respond when someone steps outside those limits. Statements of what a person will or won't do, and/or what they like and don't like.

Three Types of Boundaries



Physical Boundaries

Pertain to personal space, your personal bubble, and privacy. Examples: feelings around hugging, how close people can stand to you, who can touch you, who can be in your home, when people can be in your home, your private emails, etc.



Mental Boundaries

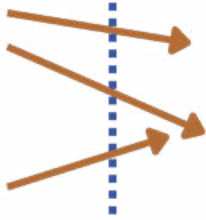
Pertain to beliefs, emotion, and intuition. Your right to have your own feelings, thoughts, and opinions. Examples: letting other's feelings dictate your own, sacrificing your needs for others, choosing what to share and with whom, not being forced to agree with other's opinions.



Spiritual Boundaries

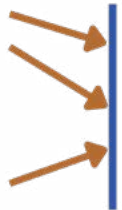
Pertain to self-esteem, sense of identity, and faith. Protecting your right to believe in what you want and who you are. Examples: how you present yourself to others, feeling comfortable in your body, pronouns, saying a silent prayer.

Four Types of Psychological Boundaries



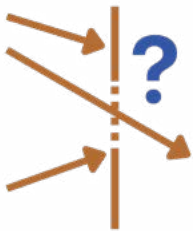
SOFT Boundaries

A person with soft boundaries merges with other people's boundaries. It is difficult to tell where one person ends and the other begins. Someone with a soft boundary is easily manipulated. **Example: always eating food your friend likes to avoid a conflict.**



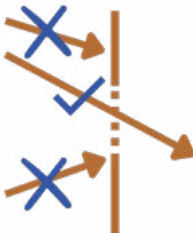
RIGID Boundaries

A person with rigid boundaries is closed or walled off so nobody can get close to him/her either physically or emotionally. This is often the case if someone has been physically, emotionally, and psychologically or sexually abused. Rigid boundaries can be selective and depend on time, place or circumstances. They are usually based on a bad previous experience in a similar situation. **Example: never eating food you didn't cook yourself.**



SPONGY Boundaries

A person with spongy boundaries is like a combination of having soft and rigid boundaries. Boundaries are inconsistent and can be erratic. They permit less emotional contagion than soft boundaries but more than rigid. People with spongy boundaries are unsure of what to let in and what to keep out. **Example: a person who enforces rules differently depending on their mood.**



FLEXIBLE Boundaries

This is the ideal. Similar to selective rigid boundaries but the person has more control. The person decides what to let in and what to keep out, is resistant to emotional contagion and manipulation, and is difficult to exploit. Flexible boundaries are controlled, intentional, and are made by choice. **Example: not accepting phone calls after 10pm unless it is your best friend.**

Examples of Personal Boundaries

Healthy Boundaries

- ★ Standing up for your personal values
- ★ Giving as much as you can without depleting yourself
- ★ Taking as much as you need
- ★ Defining yourself and letting others know who you are
- ★ Fulfilling your own needs
- ★ Asking for help when you need it
- ★ Speaking up when you are mistreated - when it is safe to do so
- ★ Asking for consent before giving hugs or touching someone's hair

Unhealthy Boundaries

- ★ Going against your personal values to please others
- ★ Giving as much as you can for the sake of giving
- ★ Taking as much as you can for the sake of taking
- ★ Letting others define you
- ★ Expecting others to fill your needs without asking
- ★ Not speaking up when you are mistreated
- ★ Hugging or touching someone without their consent

6 Steps Boundary Building Exercise

ACTIVITY

1. Close your eyes, and count to ten in your head, while breathing deeply and calmly.
2. Imagine yourself surrounded by a circle. You are in the exact center, surrounded by the exact amount of space that you feel most comfortable with.
3. Turn the circle into a visible wall. That wall can be made of anything you like: clear or opaque plastic, bricks, smooth cement or something else. It can be anything you want, as long as it's strong.
4. Although the wall is strong, you and only you have the power to flex it when you want. You can remove a brick or soften the plastic to allow things inside the wall or out of the wall whenever you need to. You hold all the power. You are safe.
5. Stay inside the wall for a minute. Enjoy the feeling of being in control of your world.
6. Repeat this exercise once-a-day.

Reflection

**What ways are you currently setting boundaries?
(Soft, Rigid, Spongy, Flexible)**

What are the reasons you do not set boundaries?

What would be the reasons for setting boundaries? What is the purpose?

Where can you start setting boundaries in your life?

What challenges do you foresee in implementing personal boundaries?

Defining Values

There are numerous definitions of “values” available in dictionaries, books, and across the internet. Values are a subjective concept, what one person sees as a value another person may see as irrelevant.

For this exercise we will use the following definition for “Values”:

Values are **any idea or theme** that is important enough to you that **it affects how you think, how you act, and how you feel.**

Why are Values so Important?

- ★ Foundations of laws, customs, and tradition
- ★ Reflect your sense of right and wrong
- ★ Influence your attitudes and behaviors
- ★ Give your life purpose, meaning, and passion

Find Your Top 3 to 5 Core Values

To start discovering your core values, take five minutes to scan the list of values on pages 13-14 of this workbook. When you see a value that resonates with you, circle it!

Questions to help you find them:
Who am I or who do I want to be?

What do I stand for? What do I want to stand for?

How do I relate to the world around me?

Core Values Exercise

Step One:

Scan the list of values below and **check off or circle** the values that immediately grab your attention. Try not to pause and think about each value, circle only the ones that immediately have an impact on you.

Acceptance	Affection	Accomplishment	Adventure	Adoration
Adaptability	Achievement	Trust	Abundance	Acknowledgement
Aggressiveness	Agility	Being the Best	Appreciation	Ambition
Amusement	Vivacity	Attractiveness	Approachability	Awareness
Cheerfulness	Belonging	Assertiveness	Balance	Clear mindedness
Camaraderie	Attentiveness	Beauty	Commitment	Closeness
Warmth	Bravery	Compassion	Contribution	Connection
Calmness	Confidence	Encouragement	Credibility	Challenge
Contentment	Wealth	Dependability	Cleanliness	Courage
Fairness	Determination	Composure	Devotion	Family
Trustworthiness	Consistency	Dignity	Friendliness	Discipline
Creativity	Empathy	Fun	Eagerness	Curiosity
Faith	Truth	Education	Daring	Flow
Growth	Excellence	Depth	Focus	Helpfulness
Expertise	Wisdom	Freedom	Hospitality	Financial Independence
Enjoyment	Giving	Humour	Fortitude	Enthusiasm
Grace	Intimacy	Impact	Winning	Holiness
Kindness	Independence	Fidelity	Honesty	Love
Ingenuity	Zeal	Honour	Loyalty	Inquisitiveness
Fitness	Hopefulness	Maturity	Intelligence	Happiness
Humility	Mysteriousness	Justice	Harmony	Imagination

List continues on next page...

Obedience	Knowledge	Health	Inspiration	Playfulness
Logic	Liveliness	Intuition	Popularity	Making a Difference
Mindfulness	Joy	Practicality	Mastery	Recreation
Openness	Reliability	Motivation	Reflection	Optimism
Respect	Organization	Relaxation	Passion	Security
Perseverance	Self-Reliance	Peace	Self-control	Proactivity
Significance	Sexuality	Sensuality	Professionalism	Simplicity
Presence	Service	Resilience	Rest	Prosperity
Skillfulness	Strength	Solitude	Spontaneity	Sincerity
Structure	Spirituality	Support	Thoroughness	Success
Thankfulness	Teamwork	Timeliness	Unflappability	Temperance
Thoughtfulness	Variety	Vitality		

Write down any thoughts or takeaways that come up while scanning the list and thinking about your core values:

Step Two:

Transfer your selected values to the space below. Take a break and return to step three with fresh eyes and a clear mind.

Step Three:

Revisit the list of values above and **choose the top ten values** from that list. Transfer those values below.

Note: this is a great time to use meditation or a spiritual practice to sit with the above values and select your top ten!

Step Four:

Copy each of your top ten Core Values below, then **write why that value is important to you.**

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.

Step Five:

After writing why each value is important to you, **select the five values that now feel most important.**

Step Six:

Write each of your remaining five Core Values below. Think about a situation in your life where you needed to make a choice. Write why this Core Value was important in making that decision.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Step Seven:

Looking at your top five Core Values, and how you used those Core Values to make decisions, rank them from 1 to 5 in order of how important you feel they are in your life.

Note: this is a great time to use meditation or a spiritual practice to help with this decision.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Step Eight:

Finally, you want to turn this list of Core Values into a tool that you can use as a filter when making important decisions in your life. This is your Core Value Statement and you craft it by turning your Core values into an easy to remember sentence that you can repeat, as needed, without having to reference it.

If you have difficulty remembering your top five Core Values, pick the three that are the most important to you (the number three pops up in brain and memory science a lot) and use them to craft your Core Value statement.

Core Value statment example:

I seek **Knowledge, Inspiration** and **Playfulness** through **Adventures** with my **Family**.

Current Ways of Saying “No.”

The three A's according to William Ury's book: The Power of a Positive NO

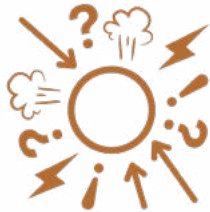


Accommodate

Instead of saying “no” you accommodate the person's request.

This results in a loss of your power.

Example: Saying yes to a project at work when I don't have time for it and I am already overwhelmed.



Attack

Instead of saying “no” you attack the person.

This results in a loss of relationship.

Example: Lashing out about how busy I am when my partner asks me to do the dishes.



Avoid

Instead of saying “no” you avoid the person.

This results in a loss of power and relationship.

Example: I avoid responding to my co-worker's email because they asked me to work on a project and I don't have time.

Take a few minutes to think about, and write down, how you are currently saying “no” to people in your life.

Do you accommodate? Attack? Avoid? Or some combination of the three?

Saying “No.” in a Positive Way

What is a positive “No.”

A positive “No” starts with what you’re for instead of what you’re against. Focus on what you want, your core interest, and what really matters to you. This way you are not in opposition to someone else’s demand or behavior. Instead, you can rely on the personal core values you’ve established today.

Yes!

Yes to your core values.

No.

No, I cannot.

Yes?

Is there another solution?

Yes!

Always begin with a “yes” first. Your first yes is saying yes to one of your core values.

This first “Yes” is the basis for your “No.” Uncovering your “yes” first will ground you in something positive, give you a sense of direction, and give you energy.

No.

Deliver a clear “no” to the request the other person has made.

Yes?

After you have said “no,” create an invitation for a positive outcome. Tell the other person not just what you don’t want but what you do want. So, as you close one door, you may be able to open another. This second “Yes?” must be something you are comfortable and willing to do, it is not a compromise or an accommodation that will stress or upset you. In some situations, there may not be a second “Yes?” to offer.

Note: It is ok to take your time delivering a positive “No.” In some situations, you may not be ready or able to deliver your “Yes! No. Yes?” immediately. You may need time to think. Take a few breaths while you think, or, if needed, ask to give the person an answer later so you can take time to think through your “Yes! No. Yes?”

Yes! No. Yes? Example

A co-worker has family coming to visit and asks you to cover their weekend shifts. You promised to spend time with your partner this weekend. Using your values to craft a "Yes! No. Yes?" you tell your co-worker:

"I have plans with my partner this weekend and **family** is very important to me. **(Yes!)** So, no I cannot work your shifts this weekend **(No)**. But, you're welcome to ask me again in the future and I will likely say yes if you give me a week's notice. **(Yes?)**"

Empower Your "No."

You need to be able to follow through on your "No." even if the other person refuses your "Yes?" and refuses your "No." It helps to create a **practical strategy you can follow that addresses your core interests and values**, and you can follow without the other person having accepted your "No."

Stand by your decision to say "No." and lean into your values to support you in this situation. This is not the time to compromise or make a less preferred agreement. It is a course of action you can pursue independent of the other's agreement, or non-agreement.

In this way, you take action to meet your own needs and interests and allow others to meet their own needs. You can share as much as you want about your thought process, depending on the circumstances.

Empower Your "No." Example

Your co-worker refuses to accept your "No." They tell you that they really need you to cover for them or their plans are ruined. You empower your "No." by repeating, "I am going to spend time with my partner this weekend." Following through on this plan does not require their acceptance of your "No," you can spend the weekend with your partner with or without their agreement.

Protecting Your Relationships

When saying no you want to maintain both your power and the relationship. The “Yes! No. Yes?” formula helps you to maintain both by making your values clear to the other person, setting a clear boundary, and offering an alternative. It also shows the person that you have taken the time to listen and really think about saying “no” to them.

The more you can use the “Yes! No. Yes?” formula the clearer and more consistent your boundaries, and other people’s awareness of those boundaries, will become. This will make future “no’s” easier to deliver because the other person understands your boundaries better.

★ Don’t accommodate the person and switch your “no” to a “yes.”

This will lead to you losing your power at the expense of trying to protect the relationship.

★ Don’t attack the person or get angry if they push back at your “no.”

This will lead to you losing the relationship at the expense of keeping your power.

★ Don’t avoid the person so you don’t have to keep saying “no.”

This results in you losing power and damaging the relationship.

RAFT Resources

Scan this QR code for all of our links:



Zoom Support Calls

Advocate Support Calls Three Calls per Month

A support call for sexual and domestic violence advocates. The group meets to share challenges, experiences, and successes and support each other through conversation. You can also join these calls and just listen if that supports you.

Survivor-Advocate Support Calls Third Wednesday of the Month

A support call for advocates working and volunteering in DV/SV response services who also identify as survivors of violence. The goal of this call is to provide a space for survivor-advocates to connect and share your experiences, needs, and resources. You can also join these calls and just listen if that supports you.

Advocacy Leadership Calls Two Calls per Month

A leadership call for executive directors or high level directors. These calls discuss different leadership topics and tools, while also giving space for leaders to share their challenges, experiences, and successes.

Scan this QR code to sign up for our support calls:

