Define your boundary using the 5 Ws exercise: (see next sheet for worksheet)

-- Decide ​**WHERE** in your life the boundary is going (work life, home life, personal life, all of the above)

-- **WHAT** it is going to achieve by being there (what benefit is it going to bring to you by being there? What positive impact will it have? What negative impact will it remove?) This is essential for you to define for yourself because it will be your ‘WHAT’ that will be the motivation for you to enforce the boundary when you should.

-- **WHY** you have decided to create the boundary (what event/emotion sparked the need and desire for this particular boundary?)

-- **WHO** it is going to affect… (are there specific people in your life that will be impacted by this boundary more than others? - This is important to define so that you are prepared to talk to those people as and when necessary)

-- **WHEN** the boundary is going to apply. Is this a 24/7 boundary or only to be put in place on certain ‘special occasions’. (for example- maybe it’s a boundary that states you will not be available for anything with anyone on the second Friday of every month because it’s date night with your spouse.)

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If your WHY is not a big deal to you, you will never make the effort in the creating, placing and enforcing of the boundary so you may as well not bother starting.

IF however there IS a WHY that is important to you, then what you need to make sure of is that the boundary you are going to create actually WORKS!

When you have discovered your why and established that you DO need a boundary, you need to plan what it will look like and how it will work. After you have defined your boundary using the 5 Ws and *after you have answered those 5 Ws in detail, ask yourself this -*
**WILL THIS BOUNDARY MAKE THE DIFFERENCE I NEED IT TO MAKE?**
If the answer to that question is not a confident YES then go back through the 5 Ws again and find where the weakness in your boundary lies. Maybe you have not been bold enough in the way you have defined things. For example, when you defined the WHO the boundary would affect, did you leave someone off the list because you’re scared at the thought of telling them about it? If that’s the case, the boundary is not going to make the difference it needs to because the very people who need to know about it won’t!

Using the 5 Ws will definitely help to keep you boundaries straightforward, but once your boundary has been created…look at it carefully and BEFORE you share it with anyone, ask yourself “is this as simple and clear as I can make it?”.

Make boundaries clear. Think of the 6 foot neon yellow fence vs the line in the sand. Make your boundary as clear as possible.

What is the boundary you would like to create?
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Where will the boundary be placed? Work life, home life, personal life, all of the above?
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What will the boundary achieve by being there? How will it benefit you? What positive impact will it have? What negative impact will it remove?

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Why have you have decided to create the boundary? What event or emotion sparked the need and desire to create this particular boundary?

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Who it this boundary going to affect? Are there specific people in your life that will be impacted by this boundary more than others?
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When will the boundary apply? Is this a 24/7 boundary or only to be put in place on certain ‘special occasions’?
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