

— YOUR *signature* LIFE —

MODULE 4

LESSON 4

Part of designing Your Signature Life involves learning how to protect it. You've worked hard to set your priorities, create your inspired goals, and remove the other distractions from your life—now you need to protect what is yours and set boundaries around it. A lack of boundaries is a killer distractor because not establishing them has everything to do with other people's priorities and urgencies and none of yours. If you're constantly saying, "yes" to people or not establishing your own mental boundaries, you will sacrifice the signature life you want to lead. In this lesson we touch on what it means to protect your boundaries and explore some tips on how to do so.

Internal boundaries: These are the boundaries you put up in your mind, the ones that help you manage the worrying, the rumination, and the incessant thoughts that derail your focus. Internal boundaries relate to our mental scripts as well as our brain boxes to an extent, because all three are about managing our thoughts for the sake of our wellbeing and effectiveness.

External boundaries: This is our more traditional understanding of boundaries and relates to the agreement we make with ourselves regarding what we will and will not accept from others, as well as what we expect from ourselves in relation to others. A main reason that people struggle with setting healthy external boundaries is their desire to "people-please": to say yes to everyone in order to please other at the expense of their own desires and needs.

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THE TWO-MINUTE RULE

For internal boundaries

When you find yourself caught in a worry spiral, set a timer and give yourself two minutes to indulge in your thoughts. Get in touch with yourself, mull it over, and simply allow the feeling to exist. Once those two minutes are up, you might decide that you need to go into action mode over your concern, which may include researching a solution or others' experiences, talking to someone (perhaps someone on your board), or executing a plan to directly deal with whatever it is you're thinking about.

If none of these options are the right fit for your circumstances or needs at the time, write down your points of concern and then put that list away.

The key is to get your worries or negative scripts outside of your body one way or another. **The distraction is having them in your body without parameters.**

At this point you've given yourself some guilt-free time to explore your concern—now it's time to either take action or release it.

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TOP TIPS

For external boundaries

Take your time, weigh it up, let them in:

If you're a bonafide people-pleaser, chances are when someone asks you to do something you say, "yes" first and think about it second. A simple but hugely effective move you can make to build healthy external boundaries is a process of weighing up before responding to someone:

1. First, let the person know you'll get back to them after having a think about it: "That sounds interesting (if it does), I'm going to have a think and get back to you." This way, you have a chance to weigh your options without the person right in front of you, resulting in a less emotionally charged decision.

2. Then, ask yourself:

- Is this request in line with any of my Bin 1 items? My Bin 2 items?
- Will this suck my energy or will it energize me?
- Do I want to do this?
- If I did do it, what would be my intention?

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TOP TIPS CONTINUED

For external boundaries

Use your answers to help determine your response. Doing so will enable you to prioritize your needs over someone else's. And in many cases, you will find that there are plenty of win-wins to be had through sharing your thoughts!

When you do create an external boundary, there will inevitably be times you will choose to decline certain requests. When doing this, it helps to let the other person in on your world a little bit. Perhaps this is a busy period in your life, or you have other commitments or values that conflict. This is not to say that you must justify your boundaries to others, but in some circumstances it does help to provide context for the other person, especially if you deeply care about the relationship.

