

SANE AUSTRALIA

SANE Australia Online Peer Group Chat

Date: DD/MM/YYYY

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LittleSteps (PSW)	Hi everyone. First, we'd like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands we are all joining this event from. We pay deep respect to the Elders of those Countries, past and present, and we further extend that respect to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people joining this group tonight. Welcome everyone to today's Peer Group Chat talking about Setting up to Support. We really value your thoughts on how these groups go, so we will send a link to a short survey at the end of this event for you to complete. While this survey is optional, it is a chance to provide feedback for us to improve our services. In case you might need to leave part way through the event, you can find the survey here now:https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi Everyone :) TideisTurning here :
pinklollipop15	Hi
LittleSteps (PSW)	Tonight, Peer Support Workers @LittleSteps and @TideisTurning will be facilitating a discussion around the topic of Setting up to Support. Whether you have lived experience of complex mental health issues, you care for someone who does, or both, setting ourselves up to support someone else and discussions about boundaries can be helpful to all. We'll be moving through a number of discussion questions tonight, and it's entirely up to you how much or how little you are comfortable with sharing. Some of the conversation may be heavy in nature

	as we talk about the difficulties of caring for others. @Oshun_Blu, who moderates on the SANE Forums, is working behind the scenes to ensure our safety. If you're having any technical difficulties, please see our FAQ (https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat/chat-faqs#what-if-i-am-having-a-tough-time-and-need-immediate-support) or message @Oshun_Blu.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @Pinklollipop
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Hey folks! I'm @Ohsun_Blu, good to be here with you all :)
LittleSteps (PSW)	We're looking forward to creating a space where we can reflect and learn together and expand our ideas of Setting up to Support.
LittleSteps (PSW)	We will be starting the discussion shortly, and will just allow a bit more time for people to log on and join :)
LittleSteps (PSW)	Welcome everyone! Feel free to introduce yourselves. I'm @LittleSteps :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	TideisTurning here :) Excited and curious to hear your perspectives this evening
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Very keen to explore the topic of boundaries with you all. It's one that can always use a little more exploration and discussion no matter how often we might practice boundaries
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Hey @the magician ! Good to see ya tonight :)
LittleSteps (PSW)	What limits or boundaries might you need to set in place when supporting someone?
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @themagician
the magician	hi people
Jacques	hello ladies, gentlemen and gender neutral peoples.
TideisTurning (PSW)	I feel like the limits and boundaries you might set up to support someone will vary based on things like who the person is, the nature of your relationship, the kind of support they need and which you are able to provide for example. This might include outlining if there are particular kinds of support you can't provide, levels of seriousness or timeframes.

Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I have found that the limits and boundaries which have been most supportive for myself, when supporting others, have been around things like my basic self care needs (food, sleep) and then also my emotional/mental boundaries. So, things like ensuring my phone is on do not disturb when sleeping (and making sure the person I am supporting knows this too)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @Jacques :)
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Hey @Jacques !
Jacques	i really struggle setting boundaries, with my anxiety i feel i let people down if i say no
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	@jacques, I feel that. Even now I still sometimes struggle with asserting and maintaining boundaries
the magician	I would be in a much better mood if my music teacher said she was having a bad day rather than refuse to teach me a concept and make me the unreasonable one.
TideisTurning (PSW)	That makes total sense @Jacques Something you're certainly not alone with. Anxiety and worry about repercussions of asserting boundaries is huge!
the magician	i guess its crossing some sort of assertion boundary. that can leave you feeling quite upset.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	You mean as in communicating that to you in a respectful way, rather than reacting to it in the moment, @the magician? Can you expand on that some more?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	ahhh gotchya
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I can definitely imagine how that would be very confusing to have to navigate through in the moment
the magician	communication without blame
TideisTurning (PSW)	Hi @Shaz51 :)
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Hey @Shaz51 !
LittleSteps (PSW)	What might be some potential barriers to putting up boundaries with the people we care for?

Jacques	it is hard not hurting someones feelings when you say no, with my anxiety i have had people cross my boundaries and instead of saying something i walk away and never speak to them again, i know it is wrong, but i really struggle with any confrontation
TideisTurning (PSW)	Communication, and communication without blame, or shame are both super important @the magician
Shaz51	Hello @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) , @TideisTurning (PSW) xx
the magician	another one is my psych. dumped on me that i will never achieve my goals because my expectations are to high and i get overwhelmed . that's not helpful to shatter someone's dreams without a practical problem solving solution to work on.
TideisTurning (PSW)	Right with you on that @Jacques Confrontation, fear of confrontation or feeling like I can't put boundaries in place are all big barriers for me
the magician	some confrontations aren't worth the battle
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I think like @Jacques said, a barrier can absolutely be the feeling of letting someone down, or like @the magician said, a power dynamic that may not make it feel safe to assert a boundary--such as respectful communication. Supporting others comes from a place of care, and that can sometimes bring challenges of not 'doing enough' or 'caring enough' if we're not crossing our own boundaries for others needs
Jacques	main barrier for me is worrying about what the repercussions are of setting boundaries, feeling i push people away or have them feel im not there for them. i was a community guide on sane many years ago and i loved the role, but i felt like i had to support everyone on the forum, i felt that if i didn't someone could hurt themselves and i would be responsible.
the magician	you cant control other people at the end of the day are responsible for self
the magician	great that you feel the need to give though
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Thank you for sharing that @Jacques . Boundaries is definitely something that can be hard even for those of us working in mental health, as you so brilliantly articulated. We get into these roles because we want to, and love to, support others! But that can quickly become overwhelming at times too. It can be a tricky balance. I'm glad that you took the time to focus on your needs by stepping away from that role
TideisTurning (PSW)	So sorry to hear of the impact on you @Jacques. I can totally understand that feeling of feeling like you need to do it all.
the magician	what are some useful things for when we become overwhelmed maybe?
LittleSteps (PSW)	How can we overcome these barriers?


Jacques	with anxiety it is hard to cope with being overwhelmed, i still have not found a way to cope with being overwhelmed. i just wait for the feelings to pass. sorry i know that is not a good answer
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	That's a great question, @the magician. I think that exploring what has helped in those times would be a really good idea
the magician	by the way I didn't get the email from last weeks group on healthy relationship dynamics?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	@the magician, sorry about that! Have made a note to pass that along for some tech support stuff. Thanks for raising it
TideisTurning (PSW)	I feel like that's a huge part of it @Jacques, allowing the feeling to pass. I also find it helpful to see if I can reflect on what might contribute to overwhelm. For me, usually a build up of several things
Jacques	yes tideis i find the same, it is several big things and then something small happens and it all releases.
TideisTurning (PSW)	And about overcoming barriers- it's hard! Especially in situations where there may be tricky relational dynamics involved (such as with family where certain things may be expected). So again, I feel like it will depend. There may be some situations where you can't overcome the barriers present (such as when those barriers relate to others not being willing to accept your boundaries for example). In those cases, there is still choice, though it may feel harder; about what to do, or even, whether to do anything or walk away.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I feel that for those feelings of overwhelm, sometimes the only way through is through as you said, Jacques. Sometimes allowing yourself to be right where you are can be helpful instead of trying to suppress the feelings
the magician	some things that help me are to walk away look at a sign that says there is always another solution. go back to it in a day and address it with a smart goal or practical problem solving checklist. but also recognising common patterns for you. breathe in the meantime.
Jacques	i agree magician sometimes just a simple time out of a situation allows one to be a bit more rational and find a better solution.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	in terms of overcoming the barriers, once I started to reframe my perspectives around boundaries as things that are not meant to keep people shut out, but rather are a roadmap to how both parties can feel supported, everything began shifting. Sometimes when I've felt overwhelmed when supporting others, it can be an indication that something...somewhere...in my own needs, is not being looked after
LittleSteps (PSW)	It's important to remember that everyone has and deserves boundaries. How can we care for support others whilst respecting their boundaries?
Jacques	yes oshun i can totally relate, when i had friends, most of the time i had issues was when i had a lot going on in my own life and couldnt cope.

TideisTurning (PSW)	Welcome @maddison
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Totally, Jacques. When everything gets cluttered with everyone else's stuff it's hard to find a place for ourselves
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Hey there @maddison!
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Respecting the boundaries of the other person who is being supported can be hard work at times, particularly when it might have seemed like 'my way' has been the best way. But it's not, really. it's just my way. And the other person deserves to find a way forward that works best for them
Jacques	i guess clear communication is massive in setting and listening to others boundaries, i guess not trivalise others boundaries and try to listen to there needs and concerns and work your boundaries around that
the magician	if there's an activity you really want to do but its a bit overwhelming. take a step back and set small goals that lead you there. putting it on a shelf and addressing underlying needs in the meantime can get you to that goal. more successfully.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	@Jacques, clear communication is such a great tip. Sometimes we may not actually know what our boundaries are, or what others boundaries are, until we are informed. And so looking at boundaries as a constant work in progress can allow us space to continue to revisit, reassess, and refocus on them
the magician	its frustrating when people don't have insight or an education on MH. but as a first aider we have to recognise "frames" . and respect that persons belief system.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Such a good point, @the magician. Everyone has a different framework, a different belief system, that is worthy of respect
TideisTurning (PSW)	Clear communication is very important with anything boundary-related I reckon @Jacques. I feel like the example @the magician gave earlier around the effect non-communication can have illustrates how kind clear communication is, and how unkind unclear communication can be
the magician	what we can and cant do
Jacques	yes i totally agree oshun, boundaries are not static, they change and evolve.
maddison	Hello everyone 😊 this is my first chatwee. Just reading & catching up on conversation. Thankyou for having me! 💕
Jacques	hello Maddison, welcome and i hope you enjoy the chat :)
TideisTurning (PSW)	Oh yay!! So happy to have you with us @maddison :)

Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Awesome stuff, @maddison! Glad to have you on tonight, and we're here if you need any support
Jacques	i think shaz is having issues mods, she is hopping on and off, can someone message her to see if anything is wrong.
LittleSteps (PSW)	How can we respectfully and compassionately communicate our own boundaries?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Thanks for heads up Jacques. Will shoot her a message now :)
Jacques	thank you oshun
the magician	explain when you're unable to help even if want to that you're the wrong person or lack the info/skills.
Jacques	i guess not be demanding, i find when i go into a shop or appointment it is easier getting my point across when i am kind, i see so many people being aggressive in life and demanding. sorry does that make sense?
Jacques	i guess what i am trying to say it is easier to communicate boundaries when there is mutual respect and you feel comfortable with the other person
TideisTurning (PSW)	Yes. The phrase treat others how you want to be treated comes to mind here @Jacques
the magician	there's a nice way to go about things non judgmental.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Absolutely, Jacques. That mutual respect and comfort/trust is an important part of safe communication
TideisTurning (PSW)	One thing I can think of with this is leaning on 'I statements', so I need... I can/ cannot...
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Sometimes, that may mean having a conversation about the boundaries themselves. I try and use "I..." language as much as possible when communicating boundaries
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I find that I statements help to take ownership over the boundary itself, and the feelings that we experience when they are both respected and disrespected
maddison	Yes I agree @Jacques & the @the magician i guess I try to emphasize that it is about me & my limitations as a carer. I try to explain that it is beyond my expertise.
the magician	knowing who you can rely on for certain needs in setting up a multilayer support network.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	@maddison so true. Those limits and boundaries are there for ethical purposes, too. And when we cannot do a certain task it may be harmful for all parties to try and do otherwise

Jacques	oh good point maddison, it is difficult to tell a person you are not skilled enough to deal with some situations. i have felt that first hand. it is so scary when you are out of your comfort zone, especially with mental health
LittleSteps (PSW)	How could you respond when a boundary is not respected? How might you restore a boundary that's been violated or crossed?
the magician	i feel i cant help you anymore?
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Oh good point, @the magician. Having different supports can ensure our needs are being met in ways that are respectful of us and others
the magician	point out an alternative support
Jacques	it depends if the other party is willing to listen, you could speak to them about not being comfortable or not coping. or just not knowing how to handle a specific situation
Jacques	when i am helping people what need critical care i often refer them to lifeline or soicidcallback service, people who are trained to cope with serious situations.
TideisTurning (PSW)	As challenging, and in some ways, harsh, as it may sound, standing strong and firm and reiterating the boundary. I have found that if I back down, others will learn that with enough pressure applied, my boundaries will fall and disappear, which seems to create the expectation they don't have to be respected, because with enough pressure applied, they will go away.
Jacques	yes i have found that too tideis, some people will take advantage of my unwillingness to stand up for myself
Shaz51	Thank you my brother @Jacques xxx yes thinking about mum and how to support everyone
the magician	using force to get what they need - not good
maddison	I try to make clear point of how boundary had been disrespected. Communication. To restore, any grudges must be forgotten and then small, slow steps to see if trust can be restored.
Jacques	oh shaz my beautiful friend, your so welcome :)
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I love what you have said about providing additional/alternative supports, @the magician @jacques, sounds like a wonderful way to provide support while also compassionately maintaining your boundaries
Jacques	oh yes maddison, it is so hard to communicate when it is an argument or grudge.
Shaz51	Yes communication is very important, and the doctor is going to see.if mum can come home.on Monday without any changes Nb eing done at home @Jacques , @Oshun_Blu (Moderator)
the magician	letting someone know you don't have the space for insincerity or negativity when they cross your asserted boundaries

LittleSteps (PSW)	What benefits do you think establishing boundaries could have in your life? Or, if you have already established boundaries, what has the impact been?
maddison	I think establishing boundaries for myself can help with my sense of identity.
TideisTurning (PSW)	That's awesome @maddison. There's a sense of seperation between yourself and those you care for or support
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Establishing boundaries has, for me, provided a new way to both care for myself and those around me. I used to think that being available all the time, to whoever needed access to me, was something that was admirable. But in reality it was a one way ticket to exhaustion. I didn't really learn that boundaries are important things to have, and so learning about them and creating them became a way to also learn about myself and what I need to fill my cup
TideisTurning (PSW)	For me, the biggest thing about boundaries is respect. In a way, for me, boundaries kind of equal respect. When my boundaries are respected, I feel like I'm being respected. Another big benefit for both for myself, and the person I may be supporting, is that there is recognition that there are limits. I can't do absolutely every single thing. I am someone who has a natural tendency to try to do everything, and it rarely ends well. Perhaps this is said so often because of how true it is, but something I've come to realise is that you really do need to put your own oxygen mask on before helping someone else, and boundaries can be a huge part of that.
the magician	ceasing contact with the wrong people and not responding to them. picturing self on a separate plane
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	@maddison, that is wonderfully put
maddison	Yes that's true @TideisTurning (PSW) . It can also be easy to become too 'enmeshed' is others identity as a carer.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Love that oxygen mask metaphor, @TideisTurning (PSW) so true
the magician	i sometimes wonder if my sister not responding to texts is a boundary of hers?
Shaz51	Still here with you @Jacques
TideisTurning (PSW)	Possibly cliché for a reason @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) :)
Jacques	same shaz, being a carrer is so hard sometimes, and it can be so rewarding other times.
the magician	its thankless work

TideisTurning (PSW)	Could be @the Magician. I've tried to give a little space when people in my life haven't responded to messages and then done a bit of a check in to see where we're at, which can open up a valuable conversation around boundaries and what we both need
Jacques	it is thankless work magician but we all don't do it for any acalades we do it because we care. sometimes it is so hard though
Jacques	in the end, i guess the ones we love and care for will realise that we did our best.
LittleSteps (PSW)	Have you learned anything helpful from others' experiences here tonight that you might be able to apply in your own life? If yes, what did you learn?
the magician	that i need to ask someone else in my support circle about overwhelming feelings without jeopardizing goals and expectations
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I have loved learning about your various experiences as carers/support people for others, and how boundaries have shaped those experiences in different ways. It's helpful to know that this experience of feeling like we're not doing 'enough' for others can be a common one--and the only way to break the cycle is to shift our focus and remember that we're all in this together, and our needs also matter
Jacques	yes, hearing how others deal with and cope with boundaries, madison saying that grudges or heat of the moment stuff can really affect boundaries and magician saying sometimes you do need to walk away helps me see i did make some right choices
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	absolutely, such an important point there from you @maddison . Those feelings can and will come up, and that it can be a sign to take a pause/break when they do
TideisTurning (PSW)	You've summed it up for me right there @Oshun_Blu. "Our needs also matter"
maddison	I am not alone in balancing caring for others and caring for myself. It seems to be a fluctuating scale, where sometimes without realising it, we have given too much. As a result, we learn to pull back & remind ourselves of the 'oxygen mask theory.' 
Jacques	i have to go guys, sorry, my partner is having some issues. good night everyone. sorry to go
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	Goodnight Jacques! Look after yourselves tonight
the magician	what's oxygen mask theory again? short recap?
LittleSteps (PSW)	Tonight's topic may have brought up some heavy feelings as we talked about aspects of caring for others and mental health. Would some self-care be helpful for you after we finish? If so, what might you do?

TideisTurning (PSW)	No worries @Jacques Lovely to have you with us
TideisTurning (PSW)	@The Magician 'Oxygen mask theory' comes from flight safety demos. Essentially, it's putting on your oxygen mask before supporting anyone else with theirs :)
maddison	Thankyou @Oshun_Blu (Moderator) . I needed to hear this. Sometimes it is not possible to step back. I do need to pay more attention to the signals & be mindful of taking breaks for myself.
the magician	oh. chat to mum. rug up and read good book .slice of cake.
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I'm going away for the weekend tomorrow, so I'll pack for that tonight and get some good rest so that I can be ready to roll tomorrow
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I feel that, @maddison! A constant work in progress <3
maddison	Goodnight everyone. Thankyou💜💜💜💜
the magician	thanks for this week i'm looking forward to next time setting goals.
LittleSteps (PSW)	We'd like to invite you to complete a survey reflecting on your experience in this Peer Group Chat. As we're trialling this service, we'd love to hear any feedback you may have. It will only take a few minutes to complete. Please click this link: https://sane.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_5uUF0sHJRKQ6wyW
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	I was thinking earlier @the magician how much you'll dig next week's topic when you mentioned smart goals!
the magician	oh thanks that's nice. maybe some smart goals around being overwhelmed and ruminating.
LittleSteps (PSW)	Here are some further resources we recommend having a look at: 1 A document outlining the "how-to" of setting boundaries - https://www.caregiver.va.gov/docs/setting-boundaries-handout.pdf 2 On how boundaries can enable wellbeing- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jPTARhWEZZw 3 On different kinds of boundaries there may be, and what they may (and may not) look like- https://www.mindbodygreen.com/articles/six-types-of-boundaries-and-what-healthy-boundaries-look-like-for-each/
the magician	goodnight people stay safe
Oshun_Blu (Moderator)	g'night @the magician ! Take care tonight, thanks for hanging out :)

TideisTurning (PSW)	Have a wonderful night @The Magician. Thanks for being here :)
the magician	thankyou
TideisTurning (PSW)	& thank you also to everyone who joined this evening for sharing the space with us & your contributions and perspectives :)
LittleSteps (PSW)	Thank you for joining, and we hope you enjoyed the discussion 😊 If you'd like to be informed when our next Peer Group Chat will be taking place, you can sign up to our mailing list here: https://www.sane.org/peer-support/peer-group-chat You can also ask questions for us to discuss in future peer chats!