WORDS YOU CAN BORROW

Say what you can actually do.

Try this when it is safe:

“I can talk tomorrow afternoon. If shouting starts, I will end the call and try another time.”

Focus on your own action. A limit is not a threat designed to force another person into recovery.

A situation I need a limit around:

What I can safely do:

Support for following through:

If stating a limit could increase danger, work on a safety plan with qualified support first.

WHEN SOMEONE YOU LOVE IS STRUGGLING

A workable limit can be a small step.

Choose it. Make it clear. Check whether it is safe and realistic. Adjust when you learn more.

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US SUPPORT

Medical emergency or suspected overdose: call 911.

Emotional distress or suicidal crisis: call or text 988.

Family support: SAMHSA.gov/families
Relationship safety: TheHotline.org

General adult education. Not medical, legal, or crisis services. Adapt plans to your circumstances and seek qualified help when needed.

SOURCES / FURTHER READING

The Hotline / Healthy relationships

The Hotline / Safety planning

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Limits that protect real life.

Make a plan for your time, money, home, and well-being.



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01 / CHOOSE ONE REAL SITUATION

Name the situation.

Late-night arguments. Repeated requests for money. Visitors you did not agree to. Pick one situation to work on.

DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENS

Use an observable event: “Calls after I am asleep” is clearer than “You never respect me.”

NAME YOUR OWN ACTION

What can you safely do when it happens? Choose an action you can carry out without forcing compliance.

The situation, in plain words:

What I need to protect:

CONTEXT MATTERS

Children, shared finances, disability, and living arrangements can involve responsibilities you cannot simply drop. Get appropriate advice before making major changes.

02 / BUILD THE SENTENCE

When this happens, I will…

These are examples. Adapt them to your responsibilities and safety.

TIME

“I can answer nonurgent messages tomorrow. For an emergency, use the appropriate emergency service.”

MONEY

“I cannot lend more money. I can help look for support options.” Check shared duties before changing arrangements.

HOME AND CONTACT

“I will pause this conversation if shouting starts.” Plan visits and living arrangements with appropriate support.

My own sentence:

What could make it unsafe or unrealistic?

Plan for safety as well as clear words.

03 / CHECK THE PLAN

Can I safely follow through?

Walk through the next real situation before trying the sentence.

A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

“If the call turns into shouting, I can end it. I will tell a trusted person how it went.”

The action I will take:

A safer alternative if needed:

Someone I can contact:

REVIEW AFTERWARD

Was the limit clear? Did it fit my circumstances? Do I need different support rather than a stronger sentence?

What worked or did not:

One adjustment I can make:

Threats or violence call for safety support. You do not need to prove you can handle them alone.