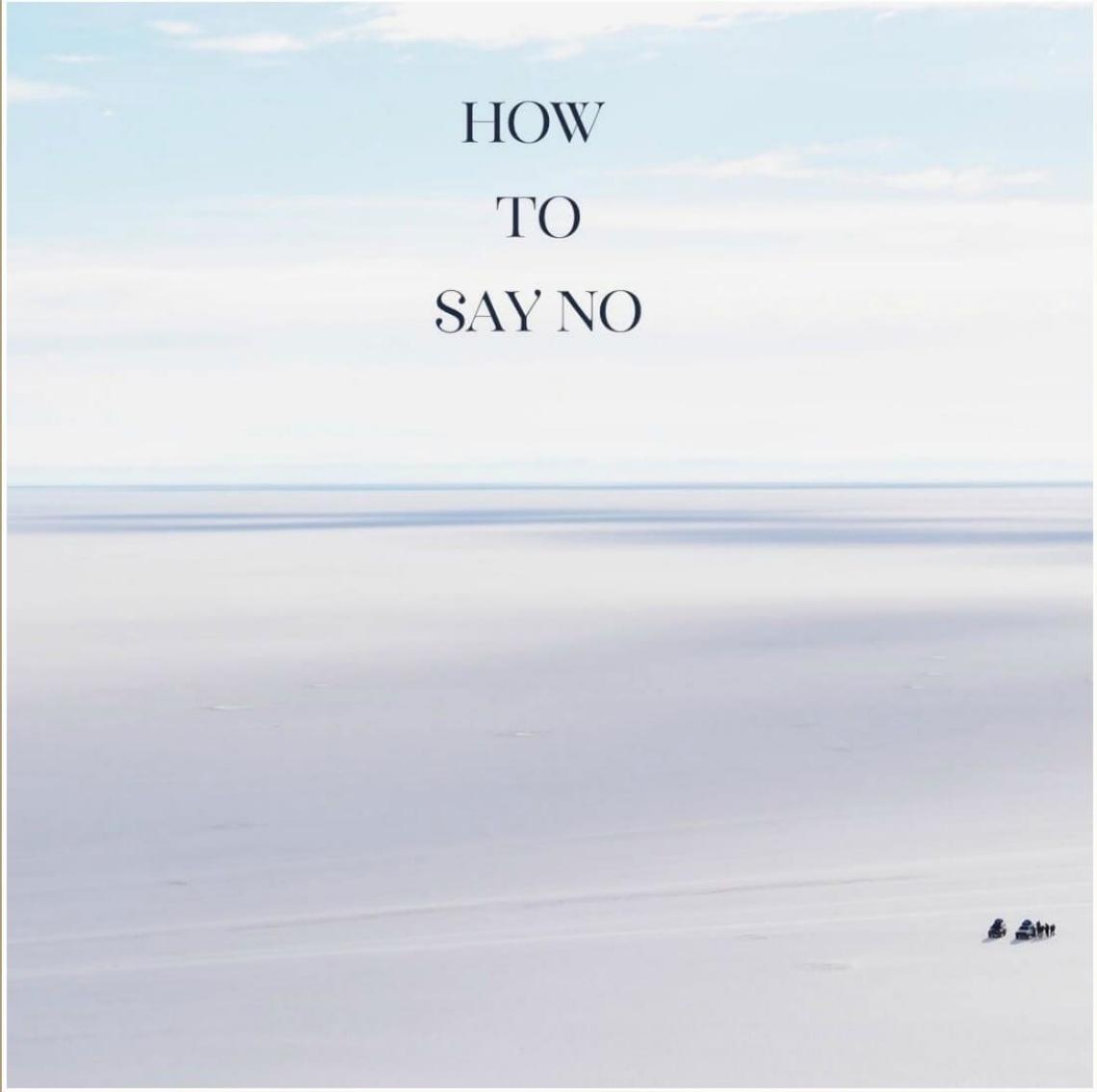


HOW
TO
SAY NO



HOW TO SAY NO

10 Steps to Say No Easily

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HOW TO SAY NO

Ten Steps to Saying No Easily

Do you find it difficult to say 'no'? Do you find yourself saying 'yes' when you would much rather say 'no'? It's not surprising; we are taught that saying 'no' is selfish.

At work, volunteering for tasks or working late is seen as being a good team player. Friends and family can expect you to take responsibility for making them happy or making their lives easier. Being the good guy who they can always rely on, who won't let them down – that can feel pretty good.

But overlooking your needs can come at a high personal cost. Once you become known as the go-to person who'll always step in to work weekends or take the kids or host Thanksgiving, it's hard to walk away or share any roles. Saying 'yes' all the time, or even most of the time, means that:

- you're telling the world and yourself that your own needs don't matter
- people expect you to be there all the time, to pick up their slack
- your self-worth depends on other people's approval
- your boundaries aren't respected and may even become non-existent
- you will feel increasingly resentful, overburdened and stressed
- your relationships will lack mutual respect
- you won't have time for the things you want to do!

That certainly doesn't sound like living your best life. If you want to take back your power and learn to say 'no,' follow some of these easy tips and reclaim your life.

1. Give yourself permission

The first thing to do is to permit yourself to say 'no' consciously. If you've had a lifetime of being "nice," this may not be easy. Write down all the things you would like to do this week or this month – everything you want to do from getting to the gym to having a weekend with no commitments to completing a project. Set these as priorities and allow time for them in your schedule. Any extra requests need to fit around "your priorities."

It's easier to say 'no' and mean it if you've permitted yourself to refuse requests that get in the way of achieving your goals.

2. Boundaries

It's easier to say 'no' and stick to it if you've set clear boundaries, and you maintain them. Maybe you want to keep Friday evenings as 'you time' to do whatever you want – chill on the sofa and watch a movie, go to a yoga class, have a luxurious bath. Maintaining your boundaries means sticking to your commitment to yourself and refusing invitations that clash with your 'you time.'

3. Prioritizing you isn't selfish

When you say 'no' to something you don't want or can't do, you're putting yourself first. If this feels selfish, consider this. You can't be your best you and be there to support your colleagues, friends, and family if you're not in good condition. Remember the airplane safety rules about fixing your oxygen mask before helping others? That works just as well in the outside world too.

Do you want to be there for others? You need to be there for yourself first.

4. Take time to reframe

Before you respond to a request, think about whether or not you want to do it, whether it's possible given your current obligations, and what the opportunity cost is. After all, you know you can't do everything.

Ask yourself these questions:

- If I say 'yes' to this, what am I giving up?
- What will I not be able to do, if I say 'yes' to this?
- If I choose to say 'yes' how will it impact my priorities?
- What will saying 'yes' mean in the long-term?
- Is saying 'yes' to this request the best use of my time right now?

Whether you say 'yes' or 'no,' you should consider your response carefully. It is okay not to respond right away with an automatic 'yes' or 'no.' Not only that, taking your time signals to the asker that you're taking their requests seriously. They'll be more likely to respect your decision.

And remember, saying 'no' means being able to say 'yes' to something else.

5. Be consistent

Once you've said 'no,' don't allow space for the other person to try and persuade you otherwise. Ignore any emotional blackmail or persistent, repeated request once you've refused.

Don't look guilty or apologize for saying 'no.' You're handing the other person an advantage in getting you to change your mind! Ignore the 'just this once,' 'pretty please,' or other attempts to take advantage of your good nature. If you want people to respect your decisions, you have to stand firm and be polite.

Consistency also works well with children and animals. Say 'no' and mean 'no,' and everyone's life will be more comfortable.

6. Have your script ready

If you feel susceptible to being leaned on to change your mind, arm yourself with a ready-made script, so you feel more confident. It's okay to say, "No, I can't," but if you've been in the position where you're already feeling like a doormat, you might need some more support. If it's you who always being asked to stay late in the office or work weekends or drive the whole neighborhood's kids to sporting events, having a script is a great way to help you stand your ground.

Take some time to imagine the scenario in which you refuse. Think of all the things people will try to get you to change your mind, and then come up with a straightforward response to each one. You may not need them, but it's good to have a backup.

7. Offer alternatives

If you're saying 'no' because you can't do it now or this week, it's fine to offer alternative options, but only if you feel comfortable. Don't let it become another stick to get you to change your mind.

If you can do something to help out the other person without compromising your 'no,' that's even better. Maybe you can suggest someone else who could help or offer a similar service? Perhaps you can't do it this week, but you could fit it in next week, or next month?

By offering to comprise or provide an alternative option, you're softening the refusal and still helping the other person. That way, you'll both come out of the discussion feeling that your needs were heard and respected, and a solution found.

8. Be polite

There's a bit of a myth that saying 'no' is rude and selfish. The art of saying 'no' can often lie in the delivery. You can say 'no' politely and respectfully and in a way that makes the other person feel better, not diminished, or rejected.

If you're still feeling a bit uncertain or even feeling bad about saying 'no,' try the "saying no sandwich" technique, which neatly wraps your refusal between two layers of niceness.

For example, if you're being asked to go to a dinner party with friends, and you either don't want to go, or you just can't fit it into your schedule, try this "saying no sandwich" response:

- Thank you for the invitation. I appreciate it. We always enjoy your cooking (positive).
- Unfortunately, we can't make it this Saturday. (firm, unequivocal No)
- It would have been lovely to see you/perhaps we can catch up another time (positive with an opening to make an alternative arrangement if you want to).

Notice you don't need to provide an elaborate excuse. Saying 'no' just because the offer doesn't suit you is fine.

9. Practice!

Cut yourself some slack and start with baby steps. Practice saying 'no' to small requests that don't have big consequences like, 'Can I have another cookie?' or 'Could you do my filing?' and you'll be in a better position to turn down larger requests, like refusing to cancel your vacation.

Any new skill needs hours of reinforcement for it to become a habit. The more you're able to say no to the small thing, the easier it will become to stick to your decisions and not be tempted to give in. By saying no, you are maintaining your boundaries and putting your needs first.

10. It isn't all or nothing

Committing to putting yourself first doesn't mean you say 'no' all the time. It means finding a balance in life that works for you and the people you care about as well. It's not a zero-sum game where your needs are satisfied only at the expense of others. On the contrary, learning when it's appropriate to say 'no' means being true to yourself.

Learning the art of saying 'no' is an excellent investment in building more positive, respectful relationships with your family, friends, and colleagues. You'll also be in a better relationship with yourself as you stand in your power and assert your rights to have your own needs met. The more you honor your boundaries, the better you'll feel. It's time to build the new habit of saying 'no' to others and 'yes' to yourself.

Thank you for taking the time to read this ebook. If you are interested in learning more about putting yourself first, look for my course "How to Live Authentically in a World of Faking It!" This powerful course leads you on a step-by-step journey to true, freeing authenticity, a journey of reflection, clarification, courage, self-acceptance, and love.

This powerful journey could absolutely change your life.

You could look back on THIS as the time:

- when you discovered true authenticity
- when you were set free
- when you stopped being what OTHERS wanted and became the person you were DESTINED to be

This is your moment. See you at the start of your journey.