



Activity 10: JUST SAY NO EXERCISE

Directions: In my experience, the greatest struggle people have is in saying *no* or saying *no* for the right reasons. Do you feel bad or guilty if you say *no* to others? If so, ask yourself the following:

1. What were the dynamics when you were younger that did not allow you to say *no*?
2. How were you trained to say *yes* as a child to preserve yourself and keep those around you happy?
3. In what ways are those same dynamics playing out now in your career and relationships?
4. What's the easiest less confrontational situation that you can try saying *no* to? For me it was saying *no* to a waitress for a glass of water.
5. Create a list of all the people and things you would like to start saying *no* to and see if you can do it for a week. This will spark that best day chemical in your brain and body.

Take a few minutes each day feeling what it would be like to say *no* to the bigger areas in your life. Play out the typical areas where it is the most difficult for you to say *no* and bring the feeling from these smaller things into that moment with all of the sights, sounds and smells. Recognize the fear feelings that usually come up and then work on dropping those and inserting the feeling you got from your simple *no*'s.

If you feel any guilt or consider yourself to be mean if you say *no* to a request then shame is operating heavily in your life. Spend the week saying *no* to everything first, then think about and decide if you can say *yes* without feeling as though you are giving yourself away or you might resent the person if they don't appreciate it. If you can satisfy those conditions, then say *yes*.

6. Make a list of all the things you need to start saying *no* to.
7. Set a goal of tackling one a day/week or year depending on how big each one is. Some may literally take you a year or more until you can quiet that worst day *yes* response down enough to begin saying *no*.
8. How much is it costing you in every area of your life, spiritually, financially, emotionally, physically to continue to say *yes* to these things?
9. Future cast one month, six months, and six years out. What would your life look like if you wait that long before you start saying *no*?
10. Are you willing to pay that cost?
11. Pay attention to what happens inside you physically when you say *yes* or are afraid of saying *no*. What is the correlation to your health issues?
12. How are you saying *yes* to get others to take care of you?

13. How are you using *yes* to victimize yourself and then get others to take care of you by either listening to how "sick, sad, or depressed" you are?
14. Make a list of all the spiritual, financial, emotional and relational things you would gain in your life if you started saying *no*.

Ask yourself the following questions:

1. Am I saying *yes* to too many things? Where do I need to say *no*?
2. Where are you not meeting your needs and wants and expecting others to do it for you?
3. Are you not making a request to get your needs and wants met?
4. Where are you going against your own morals and values thus setting up your self-victimization?
5. What if people and outside forces were making choices and doing things to help me get where I want to go?
6. What is the gift in this situation? No matter how "bad" something is, there are always more gifts in it than anything bad! You have to learn to look for them. What are you getting out of believing it is bad? What is the payoff?

Find an accountability partner or support group to share your feelings with. As Brene' Brown says, "Shame is like a disease you put in a petri dish. If you keep that dish in the dark the disease overtakes it and grows exponentially. The second you take the top off and expose it to the light it dies." Remind yourself, if I don't share this I am choosing to stay stuck, I am choosing to stay in pain.