

And every day, the world will drag you by the hand, yelling, "This is important! And this is important! And this is important! You need to worry about this! And this! And this!" And each day it is up to you to yank your hand back, put it over your heart and say, "No. This is what's important."

-Iain Thomas

Michael Jordan said, "Once I made a decision, I never thought about it again."

Let your yes mean yes, and your no mean no.

When we decide to say yes to something, it needs to be a hands-down, no-doubt-about-it, emphatic YESSS!!!

When it is even a lukewarm maybe-this-is-alright, then the answer needs to be NO. This keeps us out of the danger zone of trying to please others all the time.

The people you try to please will never show up and sit in your audience. You will knock yourself out for them, but they will not return the favor. You may value your time, but you are not valuing your priorities by saying yes when you want to say no.

Many of us say yes to please others or to avoid conflict, instead of saying yes because it feels good. When we say no, we avoid the conflict with ourselves.

So how do we say no?

Step 1. Learn to cushion it. "I am so flattered that you thought of me. I would love to help you but unfortunately, I don't have the time."

Step 2: If that is difficult for you, at least give yourself a moment to think. "Let me check my calendar."

"Let me think about it."

"Let me check with my partner."

Step 3: Say it clearly but don't lie about it. Just tell the truth.

"I'm sorry I can't do that right now- my plate is full!"

Step 4: Don't give false hope. It may be well-meaning but it is almost as bad as lying.

"That might be something I can do, let me call you tomorrow."

"I am 90% sure I can, but let me get back to you."

When you learn to say no, you are respecting yourself and the person who is asking. It certainly isn't easy to do, but aligning what you say with what you feel has the power to change your entire life.