

# Learn to Say No

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- Cheryl Richardson

*Finding yourself is not about what you add to your life, it's about what you take away. Once you have created your Absolute Yes List, the top priorities in your life, it becomes easier to identify those things that you'll need to let go.*

Although it may feel uncomfortable to think about saying no, it's important to remember that each time you say yes to someone or something else, you say no to you and your priorities. If saying no is difficult (especially to family members), then make sure you speak to your partner for support before and after you decline a request.

As Cheryl Richardson explains, your self-care is always a valid excuse to say no. Don't over-explain or defend your decision. Be graceful and honest. You might say something like: "I'm sorry, but it's just not possible for me to do that," or, "I'll have to decline but thank you anyway." As you practice saying no, it will get easier. Start now!

1. For one week, keep track of how many times you say yes to something that is *not* on your Absolute Yes List.
2. At the end of the week, tally up the number...surprised? Awareness is the first step to realigning your decisions and priorities.

Make a list of five things you'd like to say no to. Start by thinking about these questions.

If you could say no to someone or something, knowing that there would be absolutely no hard feelings or negative consequences, who or what would you say no to? Is there a project you would give up? A relationship you would end? A date you might break?

At first, saying no might create some internal guilt. But the tough choices you make today will help you reach a happier place tomorrow. Learn how to overcome guilt in your life.

### **The Absolute Yes List - Oprah.com**

Put your self-care above anything else—say no unless it's an absolute yes. Choose to spend your time and energy on things that bring you joy and make decisions based on what you want instead of what others want. If you don't set boundaries and take care of yourself, your health and well-being are at stake. And, if you are neglecting yourself, you aren't helping your family and others around you.

#### **Ask yourself:**

1. What needs your attention at this time in your life?

Think in terms of the next 3 months, not the next year. What needs your attention: your marriage, financial, health, your physical and emotional health? Maybe you need to find a babysitter to care for your child so you can have time for yourself each week. What are the most pressing areas right now?

More examples: spiritual well-being, time with friends, school, work, volunteering, finances, household chores, home repair.

1. Once you've made your list above, pick the top five priorities.
2. Does your list need to be reordered?

Cheryl recommends placing yourself at Number 1.

Placing yourself at the top may be hard, but ask yourself, "How am I going to take care of others if I am burnt out?"

Remember, this is about you. This Is Your Absolute Yes List. But

**Daily Reminder:**

Once your list is complete, print this out this worksheet and place it where you will see it throughout the day—the bathroom mirror, the dashboard of your car, your computer monitor, etc.