

Do You Have a Case of Yes and No Confusion? **By Debi Silber, MS, RD, WHC The Mojo Coach®**

The words yes and no are two extremely powerful words. They're also two of the most misused words in our language today. Do you have a case of yes and no confusion and how can you tell if you do?

Let's start with the word yes. Think of all the times you've said yes to an extra task, project, activity, commitment or responsibility. Maybe you said yes when you were asked to stay late at work or help a friend complete something they were working on. Of course your intentions were honorable but if you're already overscheduled, overextended and overwhelmed with what's on your plate, consider why you may have said yes, yet again.

We say yes to additional commitments for many reasons. Maybe we want to feel part of the group, like a "team player," we want to feel like we're contributing, helping and giving. Sometimes we say yes because it makes us feel needed, valuable or we feel "it's the right thing to do." Sometimes we say yes because we think that saying yes means we're being...nice.

Now, here's something to think about. When we're already overscheduled and overwhelmed, there's a good chance we've neglected our own self-care. Maybe with these extra responsibilities there's simply no time for a workout, a pre planned healthy meal, a haircut or that long overdue manicure. Taking on another project almost ensures that taking care of ourselves gets pushed even further down on our list of priorities.

We may resent the new responsibilities we've just taken on (or person who asked us to do them), as we wish we had a few minutes to knock a few items off our "to do lists," reconnect with our partners, snuggle with our children or even find 15 minutes to read a magazine or catch a brief nap. Now, besides taking the time to recover from our day, rejuvenate and replenish ourselves, we deplete ourselves even further as we convince ourselves that a healthy, balanced lifestyle is out of our reach.

When we take a look at what's truly important to us, what it is that we value, often we find that spending time friends, family and taking better care of ourselves makes up a good part of that list. Well, when we say yes to things that pull us further away from those values, we pull ourselves away from creating a lifestyle that could make us feel satisfied, healthy, happy and complete. Sure it may be agonizing when you're expected to say yes to another task. That minute the person asking is

waiting for their reply may feel like an eternity when they realize their usual “go to person” has just turned down their request. But there are two things to consider. One, you turned down their request, not them. Two, while that minute may be painful, the freedom you’ve secured to stay true to your priorities lasts much longer.

Sometimes it’s a matter of finding a phrase that resonates with you. “Thanks but I have too much on my plate right now.” “I appreciate the offer but I have to say no for now.” “When I can I’ll let you know” are a few ideas. In either case, find a phrase that works for you so you can give those most important to you (including yourself) what’s really needed.

Now let’s look at the word no. Think of how often you may have said no to a new adventure, opportunity, possibility or situation. There was a chance for an exciting experience, a rewarding relationship, and a new direction. Maybe it was an opportunity to learn, grow or evolve where you were asked to leave your comfort zone to pursue a dream, goal or talent. You wanted to say yes, thought about it, but what did you do? You said no! You may have told yourself you’re too busy, too old, too heavy, not smart enough, not pretty enough, you don’t have the right resources, information, equipment; you get the idea. This is a case of yes and no confusion!

We say yes to the things that pull us further and further away from our values, priorities and what’s most important to us. Then because we’re so overwhelmed with our lives (because of saying yes too often) we say no to things that could bring us joy, passion, pleasure and purpose!

It’s time to get the right words out at the right time. It’s time to say no to things that take us further away from giving our best to ourselves and those we love, while learning to say yes to things that encourage us to look, feel and live our best. Finally, here’s an additional incentive. Typically, saying no to something good leaves room for you to say yes to something...great.



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