

## **“NO” Is Not A Four Letter Word**

by

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How often do you say “yes” when you want to say “no?” Do you say, “yes” because you’re afraid you’ll disappoint the other person? Do you feel guilty if you turn someone down? Are you concerned with what they’ll think of you?

We waste so much of our precious time and energy trying to please other people. If you have trouble saying “no” you’re in good company. As women, our concern for others is central to the way we make decisions. While men make choices based on principles, women are much more concerned with the impact their decision will have on the people involved, consequently we’re reluctant to say “no.”

Frequently we feel that when we say “no” we’re not rejecting a request, but we’re rejecting the other person. And since we certainly don't want to reject someone we love, care about or respect we resist saying “no.” What’s more, if we see “no” as a rejection, chances are we ourselves hate to be told “No.” Consequently, we also hesitate because we don't want anyone to say “no” to us (not that this ever works).

To most people, unless they've learned otherwise, “no” conjures up thoughts of selfishness, weakness, anger, rejection, failure, stubbornness to name but a few. It's not surprising some of us have trouble with this little word. In fact most of us act as if “no” is a four letter word. May I remind you, *it isn't*.

Remember you have every right to say “no” to something you don't wish to do. The truth is learning to say “no” is an acquired skill. However, like learning how to swim, you get better with practice. Using this powerful two-letter word doesn't mean you’ll never do a favor for a friend again or accept another invitation about which you're somewhat ambivalent. However, when you make a decision to go against your feelings, it will be your adult decision, not the decision of your guilt demons. Moreover, learning to say

"no" can dramatically increase your time and help you to feel better about yourself and less resentful of others.

If we're going to create a life we love we have to become more protective of our time. We have to be willing to say "no" to certain things in order to make room to say "yes" to others. Saying "no" is a way of caring for and honoring your authentic self. It's a way to keep in touch with what's most essential in your life.

Stephanie is an acclaimed speaker and author. She speaks from experience. Stephanie is the "go to" expert for those who seek to create quality driven lives. Stephanie is America's foremost life balance expert. Her new CD program, **30 Days to Sanity** contains powerful, innovative, practical tools to reduce stress, balance work and family and make time for what truly matters. Stephanie is the author of **Chicken Soup for the Soul's Life Lessons for Women: 7 Essential Ingredients for a Balanced Life, If Not Now, When? Reclaiming Ourselves at Midlife and Life Coaching for Parents: Six Weeks to Sanity**. For more information and a free Sanity Saving Solution visit [www.30daystosanity.com](http://www.30daystosanity.com)