

Learn to Say No

by Tracy Lyn Moland, Author of Mom Management™ Managing Mom Before Everybody Else

You can do it... and you have a reason why you *should* do it. If you respect yourself and your family, then you respect your dreams and goals. As a family you have both individual and group priorities that need to guide your decisions. You need to determine five main priorities to focus upon to live a life of balance. Write them down, keep them with you at all times, and use these items as a constant reminder that you can say ‘No’ to the constant requests you receive.

Ways to Say No

1. USE YOUR PLANNER. Make sure to have your goals and activities scheduled in so you can say, “I am booked already”. This includes personal time. It is just as important to respect yourself by including time for a massage or a lunch date with a friend, as it is to include time for a work meeting or doctor’s appointment.
2. REFER TO YOUR LIST OF FIVE PRIORITIES. If the request doesn’t fit in with your focus you have to say ‘No’.
3. SAY NO TO THE REQUEST, NOT THE PERSON. “It is a great cause but I can’t help with silent auction right now.”
4. POSTPONE YOUR REPLY. It may be easier to say, ‘I will think about it’, and then say ‘No’ later. Allow your decisions to be pro-active (in your control) rather than re-active (in someone else’s control). This gives you a chance to look at your *priorities* and see if this opportunity fits. Sometimes you need to say ‘No’ to great opportunities as well. I was invited to a free ski day as a volunteer appreciation gift. As much as I love to ski, I had to say ‘No’ to the opportunity because I had a presentation the next day. I felt that a day of skiing would not leave me prepared for one of my main priorities – my speaking career.

5. FIND ANOTHER SOLUTION. I can't take the time to do that right now but I could make a donation of money or a product.
6. REMIND YOURSELF. If you are going to add something new to your life, then you need to remove an old role to make time for it.

Choosing to say 'No' is often the best strategy to keep your life well balanced and in control. Les Hewit, Jack Canfield, and Mark Victor Hansen

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