The Natural No

Templates to Help You Say No Authentically, Clearly, and Graciously
The 7 Biggest Mistakes People Make When They Say No

Know what’s funny?

Many women will talk about anything when it comes to personal growth work. They aren’t afraid to “go there.”

But as soon as the topic of Saying No comes up, they’ll sit back in their seats.

“Sorry.”

“No can do.”

“I tried that. It didn’t work.”

“Huh-uh.”

In fact, it seems the only thing they’re willing to say no to is... Saying No!

But saying no is important as you move to the next level in your life. One of the items in the Tool Kit of my new Uplevel Your Life Mastery Program is called “The Natural No: Templates for Saying No Authentically, Clearly, and Graciously.” After all, it’s tough to uplevel if you don’t know how to eliminate and release!

Saying No isn’t hard. It’s just that many of us do it badly! Here are the seven biggest mistakes people make when they say no...

1 – Waiting until they’re put on the spot

Most people never actually take time to ask themselves about their No’s. They wait until they’re put on the spot – and then they let their emotions (guilt, fear, anxiety) make their decisions for them!

While you can’t be prepared for every request that comes your way, you can get clear on your No’s in advance. I call this The Proactive No.

Write your list of Proactive No’s on a day off. “No volunteer positions on weekends.” “No more committees.” “No Sunday night dinner parties.” Get clear about how you want to honor your time and priorities. That way when you say no, it will be simple and authentic!

2 – Over-explaining

Rather than saying a clear “No,” many people try to explain their way out of it. This only digs them deeper into the muck.
When you over-explain yourself, you embody uneasiness. Over-explaining says, “I don’t really mean this, so I’m trying to find proof.”

3 – Using disempowered language

Language is a key element of effective “No-Saying.”

Empowered language is clear, firm, compassionate, and keeps the focus on the issue. Most people get so nervous and distracted that they ultimately do themselves a disservice by speaking at all. They ramble through the territory of the “sort of,” “kinda,” and “ya know.”

Empowered language stops the rambling. “I’m getting clear on my priorities so I’m cutting back on the extra activities in my life. In order to honor that intention, I need to say no. Thanks for understanding.”

4 – Trying to get approval

Rather than simply turning something down, many people try to “campaign” for their No. They want to say “No.” But that’s not enough.

They also want the parties involved to approve of their “No,” agree with their “No,” and not be mad at them for saying “No.”

Saying No means that some people might be disappointed in you. That’s their “stuff.” Accept that. Give them the gift of allowing their disappointment. Give yourself the gift of having preferences.

5 – Hoping people will just ‘get it.’

Not responding at all. Putting the request off for a week. Avoiding eye-contact. These are the dances we do, hoping that people will just “get it.”

The problem with this approach is not that you’re not being “nice” to other people.

The problem is that you aren’t being complete with yourself. These little “Non-no’s” are actually draining your creative energy. Stop the leaks, and say no in the moment!

6 – Promising something they don’t mean

There’s a “Friends” episode where Ross’s new girlfriend asks him where their relationship is “going.” Ross admits to his Friends that he doesn’t want the relationship to go anywhere. But
rather than stating this to his girlfriend, Ross gives her the keys to his apartment and tells her he loves her.

It’s a funny episode because it shows how much **energy and integrity** we lose when we dishonor our own preferences and desires – all in an effort to avoid another person’s disappointment.

### 7 – Giving in to guilt

When you say No, you might have to deal with some guilt.

At first, being on your own side is scary. This is why some people cave in as soon as the discomfort of guilt arises. Within a week, they change their mind and opt back into the thing they didn’t want to do in the first place.

Wavering and waffling sends shaky messages to everyone involved, including yourself. Allow the guilt, and just experience it. You’ll get more comfortable after a little practice!

Let’s face it. Saying No is uncomfortable sometimes. But once you experience the **clarity and space** that comes from saying No successfully, then you’ll never want to go back to the way you used to do it!
The Language of No

Saying No authentically, clearly and graciously is about three things.

1 - Your insides.

2 - Your language.

3 – A belief in abundance.

1 – Your Insides

This is what the entire Uplevel Your Life Mastery Program is about. Your insides. Once you get clear that it is imperative that you honor your choices and your dreams – then you’ll begin to feel your insides shift. You’ll get stronger, and the best thing is this:

The feeling that clarity and strength bring to your body and soul – are so much more physically exciting than the quest for approval and distraction and game-playing.

2 – Your Language

Understanding the power of language is imperative in the no-saying process.

Empowering language takes the responsibility and claims the energy. Here’s an example:

“Now that I am getting clear about my priorities, I need to say no to this invitation in an effort to honor them.”

This tells the requestor that the “No” is about YOU and not her. She might be disappointed, but at least she doesn’t have to get defensive. Many people try to manipulate the requestor into feeling bad that she even requested at all!

Also, words like “honor,” “attention,” and “priorities” are neutral words. Neutral words don’t have charge around them and they aren’t emotion-driven. (As opposed to saying, “I’m just so exhausted and I have way too much to do these days as it is!”)

3 – A Belief in Abundance

Refer to Day #34 in your Daily Lessons for support on this.
Templates to Help you Say No Authentically, Clearly, and Graciously

These templates can be used in writing (as in email), or in speaking. Read them out loud as you get used to saying no with clarity! Change the language if you feel like you would say something differently. However, do not add language that apologizes for your No!

1 – Saying No to Unwanted Email Forward Lists

Thanks for including me in your inner circle of email fun! I do sometimes enjoy opening these little treasures.

Here’s the thing though:

These days I’m receiving way more email that I can open and read, and so in order to honor myself and my new intention of getting clear on how I spend my time –

I’d like to request that you remove me from your list of people you forward emails to.

I’d still love to receive any personal emails you send to me of course! (NOTE: ONLY SAY THIS IF IT’S TRUE!!)

Thanks so much for understanding!

2 – Setting Boundaries around Email Requests in General

This is an actual template that I send to people who want me to help them with their blog, or their coaching business, or their art career, or whatever. (Everyone in every business gets similar requests for time and information.) I realized that I didn’t want to ignore people – but I also simply do not have the time to answer these questions. So I created a template. You can create your own based on what I have written here.

Hi NAME!

Thank you for your note!

Let me just say right up front that although I try to read all of my emails, I no longer have time to answer them personally or as deeply as I’d like. I get many emails these days – too many to answer personally and still have time to write, speak, perform, and coach the many women I work with.

So, thank you for understanding that this email is an auto-response – sent with a lot of love and good mojo of course!
Because I get so many questions like yours, I’ve set up many ways to provide support and encouragement to people. I encourage you to take advantage of any of these things:

1 – My blog
This is a totally free resource with over 350 articles addressing issues from Intention to Bad Days to Clutter to Journal Writing. You can subscribe for free by clicking the orange icon in the upper right sidebar of the blog!

http://www.christinekane.com/blog

2 – My LiveCreative eZine
Every Wednesday, you’ll receive an in-depth article with tips and techniques for making your life a masterpiece.

You can get a complimentary subscription by clicking the link below:

http://christinekane.com/free-weekly-tips-for-making-your-life-a-masterpiece/

3 – The Conscious Creative Inner Circle
A coaching and mastermind group launched in April 2009. An easy payment plan and different options will make this a no-brainer!

4 – My “Unstoppable Power of Intention” Retreats
An intense weekend experience with lots of coaching and upleveling of your mindsets and your life! http://www.livecreativeretreats.com

5 - My Uplevel Your Life Mastery Program
This is a 7-Week program that includes access to me for coaching, PLUS a whole system designed by me to help you take your life to the next level!

http://www.uplevelyourlife.com

Thanks again for writing, and I do hope you will continue your quest for expansion and awareness. I believe that’s why we’re all here!

Many blessings to you,
Christine

3 – Saying No to Someone Who Wants More Time than You Have

When someone wants to spend time with you and you don’t have the time (nor do you share the desire to spend extra time with this person) – a simple “No” will fix the energy leak that happens every time your phone rings.
I've enjoyed getting to know you, and at first, my intention was to help you out with [your situation at work, letting go of your boyfriend, etc.] And I thought we might become friends.

Recently, I've become clear that my time and energy have become more precious to me as I get more focused in my work. And I've realized that I want to spend the little bits of “friend” time I have only with long-time, close friends – some of whom I rarely see anymore.

So, in an effort to honor myself and my needs (as well as honoring YOU), I want to let you know in advance that I'm not going to be available for social invitations. I thank you for understanding. And I sincerely wish you all the best.

4 – Saying No to Someone You Don’t Feel Connected to

When you simply do not feel a connection with someone who continues to ask you out for social invitations, it is tempting to just hope that they’ll “get it.” This will drain your energy for months and months. Your clarity is a gift to them and to you.

You’ve invited me out on several occasions, and I know I’ve put you off a few times now. In an effort to honor you with my full honesty, I want to share my feelings here.

I’ve enjoyed spending time with you. However, I’ve noticed that I don’t feel a deeper “friend” kind of connection. At first, I resisted and tried to ignore this feeling. But the truth is that there isn’t that resonance I feel with someone I want to be close with. (I’m sure you are like me in that you feel a resonance or connection with some people and not with others.)

As time has gone on, I attempted to feel a connection and haven’t.

So, I want to be truthful with you about this clarity I’ve discovered: I don’t want to invest more time and energy in this relationship. I do want you to know that I sincerely wish you happiness and love and health and abundance in all areas of your life.

5 – Saying No to Friends that drain you or are negative or abusive towards you.

This is the most common thing I’m asked to coach people about. Many people go complaint free and begin cleaning up their lives, and suddenly become aware of a certain friend who drains them or who is verbally abusive to them or who lives in a state of whininess or neediness. The language can be altered to fit your situation. I usually encourage clients to start with a request for space, usually six months or so. Then they can decide whether or not to remain connected to this person.
Dear NAME,

I’m writing because I need to be honest with you. I am also making a request.

In the last months, I’ve been getting clear about new directions I want to take in my life. And I know you’ve noticed that I haven’t been as available.

The truth is that as I change and grow, I don’t feel connected with you in the same way I used to. I’ve made requests several times that you not talk harshly to me, and that you allow me this space I need right now – but this has only seemed to upset you.

I do not want to upset you or hurt you. I hope you know that.

I do need, however, to request that you give me some time away from you. I need space and clarity right now. So, I’d like to ask that you not contact me at all anymore so that I can take time to choose how to proceed in this friendship. If you decide that this is not acceptable and you want to end our friendship, then I will honor your choice. For now though, I need some space.

Please know that I wish you love and happiness in every way.

6 – Saying No to Family Functions (or, Dysfunctions!)

Hi Everyone,

I’m writing to everyone at once because this is just an easier way for me to communicate. Thanks for understanding!

As some of you know, I’ve been making lots of changes in my life and in my priorities in the past few months. I’ve needed a lot more time to myself, and a lot more downtime.

I know that every summer, we usually meet at the beach as a group – but I wanted to let you know that this summer I won’t be able to do that. In an effort to honor my summer vacation time, I’m opting to stay at home and get some much-needed rest, as well as tend to some of the undone things in my house!

Thank you in advance for your understanding. I know that you’ll have a great time either way – and I look forward to seeing you during the holidays!