



## Episode 125: How to Say No and Deal with Pushback

*with Annie Hanekom*

Working as a healthcare professional, especially through the pandemic, can be incredibly time-consuming. 24 hours in a day never seem to be enough — tasks and requests just continue to pile up. In an industry founded on serving people, saying no almost seems impossible. Furthermore, people pleasing is simply part of human nature.

In this episode, Rachel and Annie Hanekom, a Leadership Development and Team Coach guide you through how to say no and deal with the inevitable pushback. The language that you use, the narrative you tell yourself, your priorities and values — these things matter in saying no and setting your boundaries.

The need to constantly say ‘yes’ to people can have long-term costs and consequences that might be far from our minds when faced with the immediate decision to say yes or no. Thus, you need to understand the value of pausing and being clear about your priorities. After all, learning to say no benefits not only you but also the people around you.

### Podcast links

FREE [Shapes Toolkit webinar](#) about how to prioritise powerfully, say no and deal with pushback.

Find out more about the [Resilient Team Academy](#)

Join the [Shapes Collective Facebook group](#).

Contact Rachel through [LinkedIn](#), [Twitter](#) or [email](#).

Find out more about our training [here](#).



## Guest links

Connect with Annie:

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### Quote to remember:

*‘Let your yes be yes. And let your no be your no and mean it.  
Stand up against pushback.’*

## What You Will Learn

Overwork has become the norm in healthcare and other high-stress jobs. Instead of learning to say no and dealing with pushback, it feels easier to simply take on more and more tasks. After all, we worry that people might perceive us as incompetent or unable to cope when we say no.

This activity will help you reflect on yourself, the language you use and your priorities, especially if you say ‘yes’ all the time.

Always saying yes can lead to burnout. Take this time to pause and rethink your boundaries, priorities, and values. Think about the people who can support you, whether at work or at home. Review and weigh the tasks that you need to do — are these tasks immediate, or can they wait?

Finally, this activity will help you deal with the pushback when trying to enforce your boundaries, especially if someone’s put out about your decision. It’s vital that you understand and accept that people will be upset about it. Knowing and being firm with your non-negotiables is the first step to healthily coping with a possible pushback.



## Activity: Questions on Refusal, Boundaries and Pushbacks

**Q1. What are your key takeaways about setting boundaries?**

**Q2. On a scale of 1-5 (1 for never and 5 for always), how often do you say yes? How much do you think this affects your overall quality of life?**

**Q3. Does your workplace consider work-life balance as important? If so, what is in place to ensure a good balance?**

**Q4. How would you benefit from setting boundaries?**

**Q5. If you decide to say no, how do you plan to deal with the pushback?**



**Q6. Knowing your values and non-negotiables is a healthy way to cope with pushback. Write down your values and some non-negotiables which will help you get over the pain of saying no. List as many as you can.**

**Q7. How could using power language change the tone of the conversation and the stories you tell yourself?**

**Q7. Write down some examples of how you can say no using power language.**

### **CPD time claimed:**

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