

Video Script

(About 14 minutes)

(LMFAO - "YES") Yes, it's on and poppin' Yes, this party's rockin' Yes, the cutie's shockin' Yes and there ain't no stoppin' - Um, nooooo. No. No. No. It will be stopping, cause saying yes to everything makes you a doormat!

Hello! I am Lisa Robbin Young and this is Creative Freedom! Your dose of empowerment for creative entrepreneurs. This is where can-do inspiration and how-to education collide to help you Own your Dreams without selling your soul.

When I was younger, I learned a story about a loving grandmother who invited her entire family over for dinner. She told them she was going to make her delicious beef stew for dinner. Because she would be cooking all day, she told people to arrive through the kitchen entrance - so she could greet them all with love and affection. She tried to be a good hostess and wanted to love on all her family the minute they arrived.

One by one, her sons and daughters began to arrive with their families and some of their families, too. Children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren began to fill the home with noise, love, and laughter.

But another thing also happened. As family arrived, they would offer their own advice about the stew grandma was making.

"Don't put too much salt in it."

"Very well," Grandma replied.

"Can you leave out the beef? I'm a Vegan now."

"Anything for you sweetie."

"Carrots? Grandma, I hate carrots!"

"As you wish, my love."

For hours, grandma greeted her guests and patiently stirred the stew while hearing all the requests from her loved ones.

Finally, it was time to eat!

Grandma set each place with a beautiful covered bowl. The aroma wafted through the house and, almost magically, the family drew themselves to the dining room. Crowding in around the table, they all gave thanks for their time together and sat down to eat.

Her eldest removed the lid from his bowl.

"What's this?"

"It's your stew, darling. Just as you requested. No beef."

One by one the lids were removed to find a hot steaming bowl of deliciously seasoned broth. No meat, no vegetables, and no salt. Just a fine, clear broth, piping hot and ready to eat.

"But where's the stew, Grandma?"

"You're looking at it." she replied.

"I wanted so much to make you all happy that I followed every instruction you gave me. You didn't want carrots, so I took them out. You didn't want salt, so I left it out. You, son, are Vegan now, so I didn't put any meat in it either. By the time I took all your requests into account, this was all I could put in. I hope you all enjoy it as much as I enjoyed making it."

And with that, Grandma sat down, removed the lid from her bowl of broth and silently began to eat.

This is what saying yes all the time does. It ruins your stew. Everybody's got an opinion. Everybody's got a request. But you, as the stewmaker, need to know when to say yes and when to just do what you do best and make the damn stew your way. Otherwise, all anyone gets is a piping hot bowl of broth. Weak at best.

Many creatives have been taught to say yes to any opportunity that comes along, and I understand the logic even if I don't always agree with it. On the one hand, we often limit ourselves by listening to our inner critic - the one that says we're not qualified, not ready, or in some way not good enough to take advantage of this opportunity. So in an effort to shut the monkey up, we say yes to anything and everything that comes along.

Then there's the other hand.

We start saying yes to everything because we have bills to pay. And we take on clients that sap our energy, we do work we hate - and we keep doing it because we feel like there's no alternative. We're stuck in dead end work or stuck with deadbeat clients.

It doesn't have to be that way.

There's a need that we all have to step away from the work, no matter how much we love it, and give ourselves room to refresh and recharge. I sometimes remind my clients that resting is doing something, recovery is doing something. Self care is doing something. Sleep is doing something, and yes, PLAY is doing something - especially if you're a creative entrepreneur. That means that, instead of filling our calendars to the brim with work that may or may not pay the bills, sometimes we have to say no to an opportunity in order to keep that space open for something better. Today, we're going to look at what drives this need to I'm going to share some ways to say no with class and authenticity.

1. Know your boundaries and honor them.

When you're clear and confident on your boundaries, it's easy to say yes to the things that matter most and no to the things that aren't in alignment.

As a parent, I set boundaries with my children so that they know what kind of behavior is acceptable and what isn't. And I enforce those boundaries with consequences. Remember when I told you about locking my bedroom door to keep people from bugging me during my sacred practice? That's a boundary. I honored that boundary by not answering the door every time someone knocked. Eventually they got the message.

But what about those times when things aren't so clear? Like maybe when you've said yes to exploring something and, the deeper you get into it, the clearer it becomes that you just can't continue?

First, realize that this isn't unusual. Especially for creatives who want to try new things. My rule of thumb is to err on the side of being a little too honest at the onset of these kinds of projects. Tell your partner in crime that you're not sure if you really want to do this, but that you're willing to explore the idea until you have more clarity. That way, when you do get to a point where you want out, you can remind them that this was an experiment, and exploration, and you're ready to be done.

Or maybe you've got someone who's trying to talk you down on your rates? Maybe in the past you've even offered them some kind of a discount, and they're asking you to stick with the old rate. Again, honesty and clarity are important, but you don't have to justify a thing.

"I understand that you'd like a lower rate, but that's not possible at this time. I've been able to offer you a lower price in the past, but that's not available anymore."

If someone asks why, you can reiterate, "that option isn't available at this time." There's no need to explain yourself. This is your business. You get to decide when and how you set your rates. Sales and discounts end all the time. Your friends know that. You don't need to mollycoddle them.

2. Be honest with yourself and with others

Let me reiterate the importance of honesty. Don't say what you don't mean. I once heard someone say "I'd love to offer you a lower rate, but I just can't right now." Ehhhhh. Wrong answer. I don't know anyone who loves lowering their rates - otherwise their rates would already be lower! The minute you say something like that, they can smell a lie. Instead, try, "while I'd love to help you, my rate is \$600 per hour."

But only say that if you'd really love to help them! If you don't want to work with them, don't say things like that, because if they come back with \$600 an hour, you'll be working with them and kicking yourself for not charging more!

Saying “no” is sexy, y’all. You gotta learn that. Fusions get caught up in this “yes trap” all the dang time. Because we’re good at a lot of things we can do a lot of things - and we’re pretty fast with some stuff. So we say “yes” and people start to expect that we’ll just handle everything. And then we DO handle everything, until we erupt, fall apart, or get adrenal fatigue.

Learn how to say “no” now. “No” is sexy, honoring boundaries is sexy. Being a doormat is NOT sexy.

So being honest also means taking an honest look at your calendar. Are you trying to do too much? Do you have breathing room to take breaks, step away and refresh yourself or get in a vacation? Do you have time for rest penciled in? Some people need more rest than others - especially if you’re dealing with a chronic illness. You have to be clear on your capabilities and limitations.

One of the big problems of underearners is the idea that you have to work hard all the time for little pay. If you’re working 10 hours a week at \$350 an hour or 50 hours a week at \$70 an hour, you’re making the same amount of money. But in one scenario, you’ve got breathing room, while in the other, you’re on the hamster wheel all week long. When you charge more, you can afford to be more generous - both with your clients and with yourself.

That’s not to say you can’t say yes to a challenge. A good challenge can fire you up and inspire you to do more than you thought possible. But if every day is a challenge, or just plain *challenging*, then something needs to change. Maybe you need to charge more in the future for this kind of work. Maybe you need to fire clients that aren’t a good fit. Only you know what you really need to do to bring your work back in alignment with your dreams. And you can only know that when you’re honest with yourself.

1. Be willing to accept the consequences

This is where the rubber meets the road. Most of us fear the consequences, which is why we keep saying “yes” when we really need to say “no”. We’re letting fear drive the bus, which I talked about in a previous episode. So often our feared outcomes never end up being our worst-case scenarios, but still we do everything in our power to NOT have those outcomes happen - so we work for free, we lower our expectations and the expectations of others.

We play to not lose, instead of playing to win. There’s actually research that suggests that the drive to not lose what we’ve already got is far stronger than the drive to do something to move us closer to what we say we want.

I’ve seen this at play with clients. One client wanted to double their income in a year - a doable goal if they stayed on track with their action plans. But they also wanted more time with their family, more time to travel, more time to play. A classic Chaotic creative, they didn’t want to miss out on the freedom of doing whatever they wanted whenever they wanted to do it. So plans kept

getting pushed and massaged. Timelines kept getting bumped. Things that moved them closer to doubling their income didn't happen. So they got half their wish. They traveled more. They spent more time with their family. They even managed to maintain their income at about the same level with all that additional free time on their hands. But, they didn't achieve their growth goal at the end of the year. They basically maintained their status quo.

Now, don't get me wrong, keeping your income at the same level while increasing your time off is GREAT! And had they been honest with themselves about what they really wanted, they probably would have been happy with that result. But because they kept saying they wanted to double their income, but didn't consistently do the work to get where they wanted to be, they saw the year as a failure instead of a real success. They weren't ready to deal with the consequences of having both halves of their dream come true.

But the good news is that you can also use this weird brain trick to your advantage. I had a client who had a goal to be on time for meetings and stay on task. I agreed to help hold her accountable to that goal. We set up regular co-working sessions. IF she was on-time and worked the whole session, we celebrated. If she was late, or if she got sidetracked while we were co-working - hopping on facebook or something else - she paid me \$5 at the end of the session. One week, I think she paid me \$20. She never had that problem again! Tardiness was rare and when she sat down to work, she worked. In fact, as I was writing this episode, we sat down for a co-working session. She was early and she worked the entire time! She's finishing up her new book as I'm recording this.

It's really a matter of perspective. Are YOU willing to focus on what really matters to you?

(LMFAO: Everyday I see my dream everyday I see my dream)

You're a creative entrepreneur. Use that creativity to establish boundaries that serve you, that get you the help you need to succeed, and to define that success on your own terms. If you're struggling with knowing where to start, consider hopping into Overcoming Underearning for Creative Entrepreneurs. There's a whole lesson on owning your truth, honoring your boundaries, and saying "no" and "yes" in empowering ways.

So now it's over to you. What boundaries have you been letting slip? Where do you need to get back on track and shore things up? Share your thoughts and ideas in the comments and be part of our Rising tide.

If you're only watching these videos, you're only getting a third of the story. Every episode this season has a podcast that takes the learning deeper, including personal examples and stories we don't share on video. Plus, when you register as a member of the Rising Tide, you'll get regular updates and access to a bunch of extra goodies like transcripts, worksheets, and more. Lastly there's our live Q&A on my Facebook page this week where we'll talk more about how to

say no with class and authenticity so that you can end the cycle of underearning. All the details live on over at the website!

If you liked this episode, subscribe and share us around with your friends. Sharing is caring! Next week, we'll be talking about the sneaky signs that you need to charge more. I hope you'll join us for that next time.

And, until then, for more inspiration and education to help you Own Your Dreams Without selling your soul, come see what's shakin' over at LisaRobbinYoung.com. You know you want to!