

## Say 'Yes' to Everything in 2022

How happy are you at the moment? Would you like to be a little happier throughout 2022? Well, maybe you would like to try out saying 'Yes' to everything that you experience day by day.

I was watching a You Tube video the other day in which Rupert Spira said something that really struck a chord with me. He was talking about how we can define happiness and according to him, there is a common thread to every event, person or situation that we think has made us happy and that is that we say 'Yes' to them.

When we say 'Yes' to another person for example, we believe that they are making us happy. When we say an inner 'No' to the same person, we believe that they are making us miserable. I am sure that we have all experienced loving or liking someone for a while and then disliking them because they have 'made' us unhappy. But is it really them or us determining our level of contentment?

Maybe on a pretty deep or even subconscious level, we are constantly creating positive or negative emotions within us by our habitual reactions to everything in the world around us? If this is true, it is fabulous news because it means that we can greatly increase our level of contentment in life without necessarily having to change our circumstances.

For example, suppose you have a boss who you think is making your working life totally miserable. You go to work each day tensed up against this person and saying a silent 'No!' every time you come into contact with them. What if you were simply to start saying a silent 'Yes!' every time you thought about this boss, saw this boss, or communicated with this boss? What if you allowed the situation to be what it was rather than trying to fight against it? What if you began to change the storyline in your head about your boss's impact on your well-being? For example, you could tell yourself the story that your bullying boss was actually being kind to you because she/he was pushing you to make the effort to find a better job.

Now saying a deep down 'Yes' to everything that happens to us in our life definitely does not mean that we become a doormat and let other people walk all over us. We can certainly say a firm 'No!' to someone else's specific behaviour toward us without saying 'No' to them as a fellow human being or without insisting that their behaviour is crucifying us.

I think most of us irrationally believe that if we refuse to accept any situation that we find uncomfortable and then keep complaining loudly about it we will somehow make that situation disappear. But this is really quite childish. So many

people still have not yet stopped complaining vehemently about Brexit for example and yet the UK is still out of the EU with absolutely no signs that it will re-join the EU any time soon.

Ironically, what we fight against often seems to get stronger. Certainly, fighting against those who do not share our political views does not seem to get them to change their minds. So now, whenever I am tempted to hate someone whose views I strongly dislike, I try to pause and remind myself that they are a human being just like me. Just like me, they long to avoid suffering and to find happiness. So deep down, my enemy and I are so much more alike than my egoic-self wants to believe.

When I talk to myself like this, I find that I can say a deep down 'Yes' to my political enemies without saying 'Yes' to any of their political views. I can say 'Yes' to a scary event in my life without denying my personality-self is frightened or upset.

Once I bring my awareness down from my head to my heart, I usually find that I can settle into a more loving, heart-centred perspective on all kinds of conflicts – personal or political. I find that I can genuinely 'love my enemies' and in doing so I connect to a deep inner peace and joy that remains unaffected by my personality self's temper tantrums.

This saying 'Yes' to all our experiences in life is one way of holding everything that happens to us in unconditional, loving awareness. Our personality-self can be screaming 'No! I cannot accept this! This is unbearable!' But we can still take one small step down from our self-centred, egoic mind full of outraged victim thoughts to settle in our selfless, pure, loving heart. We can then practise holding our discomfort in the spacious, ever-calm container of pure, loving awareness.

Saying a heartfelt 'Yes' to difficult people or uncomfortable situations on a really regular basis does not - in my experience anyway – stop our personality-self getting really irritated or anxious at times. But what I have noticed is that if I pause and say a deeper 'yes' to any situation which pushes my buttons, a warm, compassionate spaciousness seems to hold and comfort my irritated/anxious self. Then, my negative emotions either seem less threatening to me or they become far less intense.

So this year, I am going to practise saying 'Yes' many, many times a day. 'Yes' to all the beauty I see in the world around me. 'Yes' to all the nutritious or delicious food and drink I consume. 'Yes' to all my wonderful friends and students. But also 'Yes' to all my down moods, 'Yes' to any little illnesses or aches and pains

that may come my way in 2022 and 'Yes' to any other challenging people or situations that I will face at some point during the year ahead.

Perhaps you would like to join me in this year-long experiment? It is pretty simple. We just need to pause regularly day after day to say a silent 'Yes' to all those wonderful little moments of joy that will fly into our life in 2022. We then also say an equally unequivocal, deep down, heart-centred 'Yes' to all the many challenges we will inevitably face as the year unfolds.

My sincere wish for you and your loved ones this New Year is that you experience many, many moments of unalloyed love and joy. I also wish that you will find the inner strength and courage to triumph over all the inevitable challenges that will come your way in 2022 so that you can live life to the full before it is too late!

Peggy Foster  
January 2022