

The Power of a Simple Word

Author and Attorney at Law Michael Josephson once remarked, “Yes and no are powerful words. Mean them when you say them. Respect them where you hear them”. There are plenty of people who seem to live by this saying, yet there are still individuals who do not adhere to its principles. No matter what the circumstance, saying “yes” or saying “no” will affect what happens in all types of situations, and a person’s reaction to the answer they receive also has a significant effect on what might happen. These words can either build or destroy trust and it all matters on their usage.

Think back to elementary school when the maxim “Just Say No” covered the walls with posters, urging all students and teachers to abstain from drugs and alcohol. In this scenario, the people who designed and distributed the poster said what they meant, whether or not people heeded the call. Some people acknowledge this call to say no, and others will not heed the call. The options in any decision have consequences, yet only one of these options keeps the person safe and provides a positive outcome and reaps the maximum benefits. This positive outcome should have benefits for all involved in the decision, including yourself. If there is no benefit, it is evident that the decision made is not the best one. In this case, taking the other option works in your favor. The decision may even boil down to a simple yes or no, and in these cases, the other word works in your favor. In all situations, including this one, it is imperative to be smart with your choice of words.

One of the reasons I selected to write on this particular maxim is that it applies to all aspects of life. The meaning does not restrict itself to the words yes or no, but word selection altogether. When speaking to whomever it may be, it is crucial to mean what you say and to say you mean, no matter what. The problem is that a plethora of people do not always mean what

they say, impulsively saying the first words that come to mind. This impulsive nature can damage relationships and trust. Trust is a philosophy dear to my heart, making this maxim dear to my heart. Living the words of the maxim and its principles encourages me to trust others and myself. Moreover, living these principles encourages others to trust me. In my mind, trust stems from more than just telling the truth but also meaning what you say whenever you communicate. When communication is open and honest, trust can develop more than if there was no open communication. These are just some of the reasons why this maxim is necessary for our society.

Within the final analyses, the critical nature of choosing the right word for the right situation becomes evident. Living this maxim helps build strong character and also helps build lasting relationships. The morals of this maxim last through generations and will continue to do so. Overall, this maxim can help us in all aspects of life and should always be at the forefront of our thoughts.