



The Power Of Yes

An exploration by Susan Smith and Nicky Bothwick

No is a powerful word – can stop situations getting out of hand, and lets everyone know when enough is enough.

But what about yes? Have you ever wondered how different your life could be if you started being open to new ideas and suggestions rather than immediately dismissing them as they would take you out of your comfort zone?

Come with us whilst we explore the possibilities.....

Work



She chose to look away from her screen for a moment and gaze out of the window. How could this be happening again? Here she was, in a well-paid, secure job, with no pressure or worries.....and she was bored.

Zoe took in a deep breath and tried to bring her attention back to the spreadsheet she was working on, but still her mind wandered back to previous years.

It was always the same – she would look for a job, apply for several, be interviewed for some, and then be offered two. One would be safe, secure and steady. The other would be a risk. And she always went for the safe option. Which is why she was bored.

All this reflection was getting her nowhere, so she decided it was time for a coffee!

As she stood up, she looked around the office – everyone seemed absorbed in what they were doing and intent on the task to hand. Everyone except for her.

She sighed again, and walked along the corridor to the small kitchen, which somehow always smelt of bacon sandwiches!!!! Would anyone actually notice if she just carried on walking and went out of the front door? “Zoe – are you ok?” She heard the voice, and only then realised she had stopped dead in the middle of the doorway to the kitchen. “Sorry Pam – I was miles away”.

“You mean you wish you were miles away more like!” replied Pam with a smile. “Anything you want to talk about?”

Zoe reflected for a moment – Pam always seemed so calm and happy – would it be ok to confide in her?

“To be honest, I am thinking about my life and how many opportunities I have missed”

“Oooh – that sounds a bit deep for a Wednesday morning.....what brought that on?”

Zoe found herself sighing yet again, and then put her head over to one side whilst she thought. “That’s just it – nothing. Nothing ever happens here that surprises me or excites me. I do my job, day after day, and as far as I know, I do it well. But it just bores me. And I know that is wrong – I should feel grateful for what I have”.

Pam gave a knowing smile and then seemed to nod her head – or did Zoe imagine that?

“And who told you that?”

“What do you mean? Surely everyone in a job right now should be grateful – the world is in such a mess. Oh my goodness – I sound just like my mother!”

Pam smiled again. “And if you weren’t grateful, what would happen? Would the world stop turning?”

Zoe started to feel uncomfortable – she wasn't sure that Pam understood what she meant, and didn't know what she was expected to say. There was an uneasy silence whilst Pam continued to look at her – well, uneasy for Zoe anyway.

After what felt like an hour but was really only a few seconds, Pam started to speak;

“Thoughts come in and out of your head in a continuous stream – no point in holding on to them, as they only block the way of the next one. You can't always control what is going on around you – but you can control the way they make you feel and if you are happy or not”

Zoe stared at Pam and hoped her mouth wasn't open – how could she stand there and say those things? Ofcourse she wasn't in control – she had always been brought up to respect her Mother's wishes, and had been taught that you could not do better than doing the right thing.....but what if the right thing was not the right thing for her?

Pam's smile got broader as she continued “The way I see it, you either totally accept the way things are with your current job, and decide that makes you happy – or you get out there and take whatever opportunity comes your way without ever looking back”.

Pam's smile was infectious and Zoe found herself genuinely smiling back. “Yes, you are right Pam – and to be honest, right now, I still don't know which way I will turn. But right here, right now, I feel happier than I have for years, and I will do everything I can to stay that way”.

“Fantastic – now move out of the way so I can make myself a coffee!!”

Zoe laughed out loud, and turned around to head back to her desk. Suddenly, she couldn't wait to finish the spreadsheet and she promised herself she would check her emails as soon as she had...she seemed to remember she had been sent some exciting job prospects.....



Travel

Why do people do it? What is it about going somewhere away from home that makes it so attractive – and so intimidating at the same time?

Is there somewhere you have always wanted to go to, and yet things keep cropping up to prevent that happening? Valid reasons, and yet the desire to travel still remains

What is really stopping you? Could you find the resources if you really looked?

Perhaps we get given an opportunity to do something that may take us out of our comfort zone, and immediately those thoughts pop into our heads, all the reasons why we **can't** do it. Maybe based on past experiences, or other people's experiences, but the fact is – they are not real. They are just thoughts. They may have been real once upon a time, but right here, right now, they are just memories we have chosen to hold on to. And it is those memories that create that feeling of trepidation. So why not change the memory? Create new happy memories, that open the door to so many more experiences and opportunities.

If someone similar to you has done something, then it must mean that you can also do it. But do it your way.

You are unique – embrace the fact.



Relationships

So – a dating website. This would be fun – not.

But everyone was finding love this way, right? Or at least getting some one night stands. So it might be worth a try.

And I can lie anyway – 300 questions to answer so will do it as quickly as I can. No need to be honest – that has never got me anywhere in the past.

And good girls love a bad boy – well documented.

Mind you – there was that article I was reading on the train . Well, I tried to make it look like I was reading an in depth exclusive about a footballer and a choir girl, but infact it was the article on relationships that had really caught my eye.

Some bright spark is trying to say we are all masters of our own destiny, and that if in our heads we think we don't deserve a steady, fulfilling relationship, and that happiness is only ever for other people, we become a self-fulfilling prophesy and unconsciously seek out people that will prove all that is true. What utter rubbish.

Yes, it is true that the last 4 girls I have been involved with have cheated on me, but that is nothing to do with me. It can't be.

Can it?

What if the article is true? What if I have such a low image of myself, I am seeking out people that will eventually leave me?

It didn't used to be this way. My first proper love – Jen – was perfect in every way. Everyone kept telling me. Yes, there was a little nagging voice in my head that said I wasn't interested in her once I got to know her, but I would have had to have been a mug to stop seeing her. And I am only human. So when that girl from Accounts – the one who had been chatting to me for months – got drunk at the office party and suggested I should escort her back to hers as her parents were away, what was I to do? The voice in my head was tutting and telling me not to do it – just get her safely home and then leave. But like I said, I am only human. And ofcourse I fessed up to Jen straight away.... well, the next afternoon anyway. She was heartbroken – kept going on about trust in a relationship, and that she had turned down LOTS of offers since we had been together as she 'Believed in us'. I let her rant on – seemed like the right thing to do and I am pretty sure that is what my Dad did when my Mum found out he had been cheating on her – then walked away.

I could have got away with it of course – there was no need to tell her anything. But I guess it was a means to an end – the relationship ended there and then, just like I wanted it to, and left me free to play the field.

Naturally, in a small town like this, and with social media being alive and well and the best place to air your cares and woes, it soon got 'round what had happened. And a strange thing started to happen – girls were actually interested in me. For a while anyway. Then they seemed to have the need to cheat on me, usually saying that they knew I would understand. Except I don't.

So back to the dating website questions.....maybe I will take them a bit more seriously than I thought. Maybe if I actually listen and act on what my gut instinct is telling me, and if I let the world see the real me, I will find someone who is interested in more than a fling.

Let's give it a go.



Life

"Remembering that I'll be dead soon is the most important tool I've ever encountered to help me make the big choices in life" – Steve Jobs.

Live your life – grasp every opportunity with both hands. Instead of saying "why", say "why not".

If a negative thought comes into your head, spin it to a positive – a smile is like sunshine – it brightens every day.

Yes, there will be problems, stress and negativity. Bad things happen and some are out of your control, but how you react **is** in your control. You have a choice.

Instead of immediately asking yourself what is the worst that can happen, ask yourself, what is the best?

If you live your life believing there is no failure, only feedback, how much better would it be? If something does not turn out how you hoped, that is not a 'full stop' – treat it as a comma, and fill in the next line. Take a moment, review, and then move on to something even better.



Conclusion

Yes is an amazing, magical word, but by saying yes, it does not mean you are a 'yes' person or that you are going to be a pushover – far from it. It doesn't mean that you have to agree to do everything that is asked of you or take every opportunity that is presented to you. It's about doing what you *want* to do and not letting your own limiting beliefs stop you from doing things. It is so much easier to say yes than say no – you won't have to think of reasons why you can't do it.

So what stops us? Is it fear? Fear of failure? But as we know, there is no failure, only feedback. When we were babies, we did not let a few tumbles stop us from learning how to stand up and start walking, so why now as adults should we let negative thoughts or words stop us from doing what we really want? Chris Moon (www.chrismoon.co.uk) is an inspiration - a double amputee who refuses to allow his disability stop him from achieving things that many of us able-bodied could only dream of. He was the first double amputee to complete the Badwater Death Valley Ultra-marathon, as is Bailey Matthews, an eight-year-old boy with cerebral palsy who completed his first triathlon unaided in 2015.

Maybe we say no because we just don't know what to expect, but I say "If you do what you always did, you are going to get what you always got." You never know what you are capable of until you give it a go.

Often we use the fact that it's just not the right time, but is there ever really a 'right' time? How will you know when the right time is here? If you wait for the perfect time, the opportunity will probably have passed you by. Thing is, you have to realise that timing is never perfect, just trust the universe has bigger plans for us.

Do not be comforted by believing that these opportunities will come your way again. They may not. Why go through life wondering "What if...?"

Positivity attracts positivity, just as negativity attracts negativity. Wouldn't you rather be amongst positive people with can-do attitudes, rather than the doom and gloom mongers? Being positive is positively empowering!

Finally, when considering if you should say yes, think why not? And instead of following that with "what is the worse that could happen...." Think "what could I learn from this, even if it doesn't turn out as I expected?"

The past is over - finished. And the future hasn't happened. All we have is now. Make now the best it can possibly be - say yes to being positive and in control of your life. You, and only you, are totally in control of the thoughts in your head - so make them good ones and live the best life you can.

That's right, isn't it! YES!!

