

# Video Transcript: Impact with Integrity - Module 4, Lesson 2

Right now, I want to talk to you about knowing your yeses and knowing your nos. So, this is a fundamental building block of a lot of the work around integrity and wholeness as a leader. And for sure, it's essential for being able to enter into impeccable agreements. You have to know your yeses and your nos to be able to agree to something. So, this is a foundational thing. You might think, Becky, why are you talking about this? This is obvious. I know my yeses and I know my nos. Well, what I found for myself and for a lot of people who work in the nonprofit sector or who worked for social change were sort of predisposed to yes. We care. We want to be helpful or empathetic. And, I get that. I am too. And, our no's are really important.

So, I'm going to talk about no, probably a little bit more than yes, here. So, if you don't know your no, and if you don't have a reliable way of tapping into your body to know your no, you'll say yes when you really mean no. And what then will happen is, you'll be over committed. You'll be overwhelmed if you keep doing that. You'll get resentful. You'll sort of have loose boundaries and you'll possibly begin losing respect for yourself. And, it's possible that other people will begin to lose respect for you as well. So, this is a pretty critical thing here to be able to access your no. And, I think the way a lot of people go about getting to a yes or a no is something I used to do--sort of make a list of pros and cons about your decisions.

And, what that does is that taps into our prefrontal cortex, the front part of our brain which is nice, you know, but it's really not that big. It's kind of a smaller part of our brain. It's useful, but the rest of our brain is useful, too, where you can tap more into your limbic system. Your older, your wisdom, your ways of knowing, and that taps more into our body wisdom.

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So, I just want you to bring your whole self--your prefrontal cortex too--,-but bring all of you, into deciding whether you have a yes or a no of something. So, where I start with this is where do you notice, in general, your yeses and your nos in your bodies? What does it feel like for you when you have a no to something? And I use that language like, "Oh gosh, my body's telling me I have a no to that."

And it's almost like learning how to listen to your body. Your body knows faster than your prefrontal cortex. And I think a lot of times--I'll just speak for myself--I basically try to use my prefrontal cortex to get to where the rest of my body and my brain already are. So, you can just save a lot of time and listen to your body wisdom. It'll get you there faster. I'm not being dismissive about more rational processes or even group processes. I'm just asking you to include this body wisdom in your decision making process, because really what do we have as leaders, as humans at the end of the day? We have our choices and our actions, and our yeses and our nos are just fundamental aspects of what our choices are going to be. Then we can align our life to those.

So, my first question to you is to get curious of where does your no reside in your body? What does a no feel like? And when we're doing this in person, we do come almost like a Simon says exercise where I'll ask you questions, like, "Do you want to go to lunch" and really listen to your body? Do you have a yes or no? "Do you want to eat some raw sardines? Yes or no?" Right. Like, what is it. "Would you like some ice cream?" Start tuning in, what are your yeses and your nos? "Can I borrow a thousand dollars cash please? Right now?" Just put yourself in that situation of, start noticing where you, how you, feel that. It's all going to be different for all of us. We all have our signatures, but once you get a sense of what your body does, that can become a tuning fork for you.

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So, for me, I've practiced this a lot. I've done a lot of those Simon Says games, and I know that when I have a yes to something, I feel this expansiveness and openness in my chest area. In my heart area. I feel this, like, like that, right? I'm like, yes. Right. And, a no, for me, I feel almost like a pushing downward energy. Also, again, sort of more from like this part of my body, like from my solar plexus to here is where my yeses and nos tend to get registered. Could be totally different for you. You could feel it in the soles of your feet, or the back of your neck. It could be anywhere. Just get to know what that is for you. But for me, it's opening energy with yes. And downward energy with no. That's really useful for me.

Any time I've made any decision in my life, I will stay with something until I have what I call a Full Body Yes. Right? So if it's not a Full Body Yes, my rule is it's a no. And I practiced this in community, during my apprenticeship with Katie Hendricks for two years, with other people who are also doing this. And there were so many times where I felt myself, like, kind of trying to get to yes on something. And, it was the biggest relief when a friend would just pull me aside and be like, "Becky, if it's not a yes, it's a no, if it's not a Full Body Yes, it's a no." And, I would just breathe this relief and I'd be like, "You're right. I have a, no. I just don't want to give myself permission to have a no." Right?

But that permission to have a no, we'll talk about how you communicate that to somebody else in another module. Right. But you knowing for sure, your yeses in your no--boom. Now you're aligned. You're showing up fully present. Your gifts are golden, right? What you have to offer is so good. But you get to give it on your terms when and where, with whom you want and your yeses and your nos are kind of like a tuning fork to get there.

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So, what I want to invite you to do is look at...pay attention to your own body. Mark on the body map, what it looks and feels like when you have a yes and a no. And start--I'm not asking you to, like, right away, just run out and be like, "I have a no to this job. I have a no to this relationship," right?

Just like slow your roll on it. Take it easy because this is you. But, I want you to start listening to your body. We'll talk about what to do with it in the other modules. And, one of the things we've done in some of our workshops before is handed out little notebooks that are "no notebooks." So, when I started learning about this, I just kept a regular old notebook, a piece of paper with me all the time, wherever I go. And, if I had a no to something, I would write it down. I was like, "Oh, I have a no to that." I'd write it down. Over time it became easier and easier for me in the moment to say, "Oh, actually that's not really resonating with me. That's not landing with me. Can we talk about that a little bit further?"

Can we talk about that a little bit further? And, So I want to encourage you to get in touch with your inner toddler. Toddlers sure as heck know how to say no. Get in touch with that for you. Start a No Notebook. Let me know what it is you're having a no to, because I think that's really exciting. Like, let's celebrate our nos with one another. Okay? All right. Thank you for listening to this. Good luck using it. All right. No, go No. Everything else has a yes. All right. But for sure, know your nos.