

RYBPod_Ep96

Welcome to Rock Your Brain. Rock Your Life, the only podcast hosted by a high-achieving tech leader and certified coach that teaches you how to use proven cognitive tools to rewire your brain so you work 10 to 20% less while crushing your goals, and you'll do this in 180 days. Hi, I'm Sarah. After decades of frantically overworking, never believing I could achieve big goals in my life, and feeling constantly anxious, overwhelmed, and burnt out daily at work, I finally figured work out.

I learned how to work less while identifying and nailing goals I never thought possible. I learned how to feel calm, confident, and a sense of ease at work. So if you're a high achiever who wants to achieve big goals but doesn't even think it's possible unless you work a gazillion hours or doesn't even think big goals are possible in any way, shape, or form, this podcast is for you.

I keep it simple. You'll learn the neuroscience based cognitive tools I and my clients use daily to work less while achieving more than they ever imagined. Quick side note, you'll run the risk of being passionately in love with your career.

Sarah Moody: Breakthrough burnout part two. Today we're gonna talk about how to say no and still be trusted, respected, admired, and viewed as a amazing team member at work. I know right now you're like what? Seems hard to believe, but by the end of this podcast, you will know how to say no at work and still be trusted, respected, admired all the things.

So thank you so much for all of you who have left reviews. I am so grateful for the reviews. If you are loving what you're learning on my podcast. Thank you so much for taking a minute and just writing a really short review on apple podcast. Or apple iTunes or wherever you write, like podcast reviews.

Okay. So before I dive into today's podcast, episode 95, last week's episode goes into the how, like how to break through burnout. And I go through two foundational cognitive tools. So if you've not listened to that podcast, start there, then come to part two. The other podcast that I talk about in this session is podcast episode 17, bridging thoughts.

One of my students favorite tools is bridging thoughts. So you can also listen to that as well. Okay. Burnout. I know so many of you are feeling exhausted, overwhelmed, fried at work in life. There's no balance. And we're gonna talk about one of the drivers of that, the difficulty of saying no to your boss, to your

colleagues, without your brain turning it into a complete shit show and finding all the reasons why you can't say no.

So one of the reasons that we are feeling exhausted, overwhelmed and fried at work is because it's hard to say no to people at work without feeling fear about what your brain says is gonna be the repercussions of saying no. I love Shonda Rhymes. She's the creator of Grey's Anatomy, the TV show Scandal and Bridgerton.

And she wrote the book Year of Yes. By the end of this podcast, I'm going to encourage you to have the year of no, you're gonna start with the month of saying no. And then you're gonna build to the year of no. So this is about the times when we feel it's really too hard to say no, and we really wanna say no.

We really wanna say no, because we want a life outside of work. We wanna see friends, we wanna go traveling. We wanna consistently exercise. We wanna get eight hours of sleep a night. And so why does it feel so hard to say no? Because when you say no, a whole bunch of feelings come up that we don't want to feel.

And so today you're gonna learn three simple tools. So you can say no and still feel respected, trusted, reliable, and like you're an amazing part of the team. So tell me if any of these thoughts or just think about if any of these thoughts sound true to you when you even consider saying no.

Maybe a thought, like, I can't say no.

I can't say no because I wanna be needed.

I don't wanna say no.

I can't say no, because I don't wanna be seen as unreliable or untrustworthy and don't wanna be respected because I said, no.

Maybe you identify with the fact that you wanna try and make everyone happy or maybe your brain is like, I don't wanna say no, because I don't wanna be perceived as a showstopper if I set no, or say boundaries. Or I don't wanna see, you know, I don't wanna be viewed as like the problem, the blocker, someone I'm popular at work. If I say no, or set boundaries. And it makes sense that you don't wanna say no, even though deep down you do for these two reasons. Number one, and you know, I'm a brain nerd, but this is really important.

Brain 1 0 1 right here, your brain, that three pound organ is hard wired for negativity, hardwired, like how it was created. So your brain thinks all of those worst things will happen. You're gonna be pursued as a show stopper. If you say no, you're gonna be the problem teammate. You're gonna get, not go, not get that promotion.

You're going to piss somebody off. You're gonna disappoint them. Your brain is hard wired to go to the worst case scenario. It's on a scavenger hunt for garbage for shit. So visualize a part of your brain as like that black crow, you know, those birds that are always like hovering around the garbage pile.

Like that's your, that's a part of your brain. And so all of this negativity that your brain is looking for, if you even think about saying no, brings up feelings of shame and disappointment and fear and worry, but I'm gonna offer to you that one of the reasons why you're feeling burnt out is because you can't say no, because of all these things that your brain tells you are facts.

Well, I'm gonna offer you today. They're all fucking stories. It's all bullshit. The other thing that's going on too. So brain 1 0 1, your brain is hardwired for negativity is one of the reasons why you can't say no. The second reason why you can't say no is because of social conditioning, most of us were conditioned to be polite.

Just say yes, be kind, be polite. Don't be a troublemaker. Don't be a shit disturber. The other thing is, you know, we're conditioned to believe that the more giving and selfless and supportive of other humans, the more valuable we are in society. Oh my God. You know, he, or she's so kind and so supportive. And so all the things, right.

Like give, you know, give me some pets and give me some love they're so, you know, I'm so selfless and so kind and so supportive of other humans. And if you identify as a woman, you are absolutely conditioned to be selfless, selfless. We are conditioned to be the martyrs who take care of everyone else first and ourselves last, we stretch ourselves so thin that

we're nearly transparent in our singular obsession with doing for others. And there's nothing wrong with doing for others. It's a beautiful thing, but we can't help other people if we don't look out for ourselves as well. And the idea of being quote selfless is a bit troubling for me too. Why would I wanna be devoid of self?

By definition to be selfless is having no concern for self, which for any of you, who've been listening to me for a while you would know I think is total bullshit. And I coach and teach you are number one, your concern needs to start with you, yourself. So, correct me if I'm wrong, but being a, at least a little concerned with yourself is what keeps us alive.

Right? Okay. So there's nothing wrong with taking care of yourself. I want you all to stay alive. You can still be a generous, compassionate, supportive team member, you know, and completely in the pack and showing up for the rest of the team without casting your personal wellbeing and what you need to have a balanced life aside.

Okay. So our brain is making up stories. That if we say no, we're selfish and then we're gonna hurt other people's feelings and we're rude. And it's a problem. So right now your brain's like if we're selfish, rude, and a problem team member, our brain believes we're gonna get kicked outta the pack, the tribe we're gonna kicked off of our team.

Right. That's where your brain is hardwired to go to. The way I look at it, our brain has a whole bunch of fake news y'all about what will happen if we say no. And this fake news is creating a whole bunch of really shitty feelings, like shame, disappointment, fear, worried, scared, but what I'm gonna offer to you is when you, when you deep down know that you should be saying no.

That's how you're gonna take care of yourself and, and get out of feeling burnt out. If you end up saying yes, when you know, deep down, you should be saying no, what all you're doing is people pleasing and people pleasing is putting someone else's needs ahead of your own. So I have lots of people pleasers that I coach, I used to be a people pleaser and people pleasers are just really attuned to others.

And you know, of course they're regarded well by society because they're agreeable, they're helpful. They're kind. But people pleasers have massive trouble advocating for themselves, showing up for themselves, which leads to, you know, lots of self-sacrifice self neglect. Right. Not like, you know, you need to say no, but you're saying yes anyway and taking it on.

So actually what I'm gonna offer to you is when you do that, when you people plea, when you please the other person at the expense of yourself, you're lying to yourself. You really wanna say no, but your brain says all kinds of nasty things that you'll be labeled the problem, not respected, not trusted.

Selfish. Rude. You're gonna hurt all your team members' feelings. Right. You're gonna show up at work and they're gonna be like, it's kind of like, remember when we were kids and there were all the cliques, like the, you know, the popular people and the smart people. And I wasn't in a clique. I was like, I don't know.

I don't know what I was, but I do remember in high school, I moved to the US when I was 13 to go to high school. I do remember like going out on the playground and like, you know, the popular people would like kind of snicker at me because I had this British accent and I dressed differently. And I mean, I was terrified, right.

I mean, I was a 13 year old kid, so of course your brain is going to all these worst places. I'm gonna offer to you. Do you wanna lie to yourself? That's just a question. Do you wanna continue lying to yourself? So, what I want you to now think about is you're at work. You want work-life balance. You wanna like really slow down and stop feeling so fucking exhausted every day.

Right. And taking on all this work. So what I'd like you to think about is assessing the work and making a decision, right. This is just gonna calm your brain down. Okay. So slow down, assess the work, and make a decision. And what I'm gonna offer to you too, is I want you to think of your response at work, as I'm gonna say no.

And. Not just no. End of story. Okay. So this is kinda like a bridging, this is like a bridging way of thinking about saying no. When you know that you need to say no, just practice, I'm gonna say no and. So you're gonna say, no, it's not a priority. I'm already working on these other top three P ones, a, B, and C. Or you could say no, not I can't work in it right now, but let's look at this next month and reassess or another response is I'm gonna, you know, I'm gonna say no and decide that, you know, It's no right now for the timeframe you're requesting, but it can be yes for this other timeframe.

So you see, if you tell your brain that you could say no and, versus right now, your brain's in very black and white thinking, like, no. It's like all or nothing. Like I gotta say no, or I gotta say yes and you don't have to say it doesn't have to be black and white thinking either, or it can be no and. Okay, so I'm gonna repeat those three options for you.

You can say, no, it's not a priority right now. I'm working on a, B and C or you could say no, not right now. Let's look at this next month and reassess, or you

can say no and decide. The timeframe that it's no for the timeframe you're requesting team member, but it can be a yes for this other timeframe.

This will help your brain start feeling safe about saying no. And that's the really important thing here right now. Your brain is like, if I say no, It's gonna be it's fear, scared, worried, like all the things I want you to calm your nervous system down and calm, come up with, you know, a feeling of like, just a little bit more open, a little bit more calm around saying no.

So. I do encourage you to say no when you really know that you need to say no and they're gonna get upset. Okay. And yes, you're gonna have to stay grounded in the feeling in your body of calm and confidence in yourself, belief in yourself that it's gonna be okay. Right. You can still be a trusted, respected, loved team member and say, no.

and really trusting that you've made the right decision as you watch the other human be upset and they may not be upset, but your brain's going to the worst place that they're gonna be upset. So, and I also wanna remind you too, every thought in your brain is optional. Every thought is just a sentence in your brain.

And this is gonna be a little mind blowing. I know but cognitive science will tell you this, every thought is optional, right? And so you get to decide what no means. And so you could look at no and you could be like, no is just two letters. No's a word. And you decide what those two letters mean and I'm gonna offer to you

don't judge, no negatively. Think of no, as an opportunity for you to grow and stop feeling fucking burnt out and start living your life. So you could think of no's just two letters. It's just a word it's super neutral. No means. I can exercise. I can get a great night's sleep. I can take my dog for a walk.

I can go out on that hot date. I can show up from myself and start working on that book I've been dying to write or read. I can have balance in my life. That's what you get to decide that no means, right? No means I've decided I'm no longer gonna put others before me, because when I do that, I'm exhausted and overwhelmed.

No means I'm saying no to the societal belief, bullshit that I've adopted as my own facts. That I have to be polite and selfless and all that other bullshit so that I can get ahead and be trusted and respected and not be perceived as the quote problem teammate. No means I'm no longer gonna put myself into these situations at work where I end up feeling exhausted and overwhelmed.

So you see, you get to decide what no means. I've given you five examples of what you get to decide what no means. No is no's just two letters. N O I'm gonna offer to you don't judge no negatively. Right? It means all those other things that I've just shared. You're gonna get a great night's sleep.

You're gonna go out in that hot date. You're gonna take your dog for a walk outside. You're gonna break up with society's bullshit that you have to be, you know, selfless. So, what I'm gonna offer to you today is I want you to practice for 30 days. And this means every single day y'all practice saying no.

And okay. No, I can't do that right now, but let's talk about that in a month. Okay. So no, this is not a priority right now. We can reassess that in six months, we can reassess that next week. No, I can't do that right now. I mean, maybe just say no period, that's it. After 30 days, you'll have built more confidence in yourself and you'll have practice seeing the terrible things.

Like you being perceived you can't be trusted. You are a problem team member. You, you know, are selfish. You'll start seeing that all of that is just stories from your hardwired brain. That's looking for negative And then I want you to also too find someone in the office. Who's great at saying no with no explanation. I want you to study them like a science experiment. Kind of like when we were back in high school, right? Like you studied that frog or that rat or whatever. So find someone because that person. When you have a difficult time noticing that there's no way you can say fucking no.

I want you to really visualize that human. Who's great at saying no. Or if it's not someone at the office, there's someone else in your life. Who's great at saying no. I want you to visualize them. Okay. And really think about, wow, they're such a badass at saying no. You know, like a lot of men are really great at saying no.

So find that human who's really great at saying no with no explanation, study them. And then here are three tools for you to use every day on this journey to breaking up with feeling burnt out and really practicing a skill. Of deciding what no means and saying, no, I can't and. Or if you can just say no, just say no.

So here are the three tools. Number one, make a decision. You get to decide what no means. For me, no means I get to show up for my badass self and have balance and feel calm and feel confident and be so be, you know, really make me number one. That's what no means to me. So make a decision. You decide what no means.

Remember your brain is an interpreting machine. So we decide what every word and thought means. So decide what those two letters mean. N O. Number two, the tool bridging thoughts. I talked about the podcast at the, at the top of the show. So practice the bridging thoughts of I'm open to believing. I can say no and still be respected, trusted, admired, or not seen as a problem team member.

And I want you to write down this bridging thought every day for 30 days. And then for 60 days and the way you're gonna know that it's believable is how it feels in your body. Does it feel, do you feel a little open? Like yeah, fuck. I can say no. So that's how you'll know that it's a useful thought by how it feels in your body.

I always want you to be connected to your body. Does it feel like a little sigh? A little opening. Okay. And then. You know, practice for 30 days too, like I can say no, and. So just remember your brain loves black and white thinking it's either yes or no. How about it's? No and. Okay. So practice that thought every day, I'm gonna say no, and I'm gonna explore other options with them.

Okay. Number three. I want you to process negative feelings. Okay. So notice the anxiety and fear when you think about saying no at work. Okay. And if you can close your eyes, like you're on a zoom call, then you can maybe close your eyes and take five deep breaths into the fear. Fine. If you can't close your eyes, just still take five deep breaths into the fear into the anxiety.

Okay. Deep breaths. Notice, you know, whatever, it's five deep breaths. It's five seconds. It's easy, it's fast. And really allow that vibration to run through your body and then come back to the feelings of being calm, peace at ease, and then use

your bridging thought. You know, I. I can't do it right now. And can we talk about this in 30 days? No, I can't get it done right now, period. No, no, I can't get it done, but I, but I could by the end of next week. So just, you know, process the negative feelings. Okay. So I want you to start with the month of saying no.

Okay. 30 days practice using the three tools. I just covered. Make a decision. You decide what no means. Come up with some bridging thoughts, breathe into the feelings of fear. Scared, worried. and remember this daily thought work practice is just like going to the gym and lifting some weights for, for some rockin biceps.

Okay. So let's work out that brain of yours and break through feeling so fucking burnt out. Okay. The fried, the overwhelm, the exhausted, all the things. Let's get some dates booked with your hot lover lined up. Let's get some hot sweaty exercise sessions booked. Let's go on a calm dog walk outside in your neighborhood and let's get some balance back into your life.

Okay. All right. I love you all have a beautiful rest of your week.

If you're loving what you're learning in this podcast, you have to come and check out the Rockstar Program. It's my coaching program where we take these neuroscience-based cognitive tools and we use them daily to break through burnout so you can fall passionately in love with your career. So join me over at SarahMoody.com

I would love to have you join me. You could also follow me @sarahlmoody on LinkedIn, Twitter and Instagram. I can't wait to see you.