

SUMMARY

THE POWER OF NO

JAMES ALTUCHER AND CLAUDIA AZULA ALTUCHER



Summary of “The Power of No” by James Altucher and Claudia Azula Altucher

Written by Lea Schullery

Because One Little Word Can Bring Health,
Happiness, and Abundance.

| | |
|--|----|
| Introduction | 5 |
| Choose Life and Say No to Bad Relationships | 7 |
| Using Your Assertive No and Finding Your Path | 9 |
| The Scarcity Complex and Saying No to Noise | 10 |
| Unleashing the Power of No Allows You to Say Yes to Yourself | 12 |
| Final Summary | 14 |



QuickRead

F R E E B O O K S U M M A R I E S

Go to QuickRead.com/App now to download our app and get access to thousands of free book summaries as both text and audiobooks.

Get the key insights of non-fiction books in minutes instead of hours. Listen to our free audiobooks while you workout or on your commute to work.



Available on the
App Store



ANDROID APP ON

Google play

Introduction

Oftentimes, saying *no* is incredibly painful to say, but it's also one of the bravest words to say. How many times have you had to say *no* only for it to cause anxiety, arguments, and anguish? Even the hours, days, and months filled before you say *no* are filled with anxiety as you ask yourself, "Should I?" "What's going to happen?" Well, you have the right to say *no*. In fact, there's an entire Bill of Rights to help you fully realize your powers and rights.

1. You have the right to defend your life. You are entitled to say *no* to things that will directly hurt you, such as jumping off a building, drinking poison, or overdosing. While saying *no* to something like a fire might seem easy, it's much harder to say *no* to cigarettes, alcohol, and toxic relationships. You decide what you say *no* to.
2. You have the right to healthy relationships and real love. You are entitled to choose your tribe and the people you surround yourself with, regardless of what society imposes on you. You decide who to let into your life, no one else.
3. You have the right to use talents and allow abundance in your life. You are entitled to say *no* to anything that blocks your creative force and keeps you from bringing it to life. Only you have your gift, and you deserve wealth, abundance, and appreciation for your work.
4. You have the right to assert what you want. Every day you attend to the needs of others, whether it's colleagues, bosses, friends, or family. However, you are entitled to have *your* best interests at heart too. You don't have to do what everyone else is doing.
5. You have the right to choose what stories you believe in. There are thousands of common stories that we are taught to believe, like college, owning a home, marriage, children, a cushy job. You are entitled to say *no* to those stories and serve your own wants and needs.
6. You have the right to take your time. You have the right to say, "Okay, give me some time to see how I feel about it." There is no

need to rush decisions. In fact, delaying can even help you determine the best choice or route to take.

7. You have the right to be honest, above all, with yourself. You are entitled to say no to putting on a mask to get people to like you. You are allowed to trust the person you are and be honest about it with others. In the long run, honesty will bring you health, love, and money.
8. You have the right to an abundant and filled life. You are entitled to say no to the thoughts that aim to tear you down, the thoughts that intend to scare you. Instead, acknowledge them and let them go, one at a time.
9. You have the right to be here now. You are entitled to say no to time traveling. When you feel regret or anger about the past, or anxiety and worry about the future, you are not living in the present. You have the right to say no and focus on your present strengths.
10. You have the right to silence. You are entitled to say no to the noise around you. That is the news, responsibilities, and pressures. Instead, you are allowed to sit alone in silence and be still for a moment each day.
11. You have the right to surrender. You are entitled to surrender the ideas you have formed about yourself. This is the ultimate No: saying no to what you *think* you are. Ultimately, there is nobody you need to impress and there is nobody who can stop you. Begin your journey now, one step at a time.

Choose Life and Say No to Bad Relationships

You have the right to defend and live your life. Author Claudia Altucher has come to realize that nobody has it easy. Even two-year-olds can speak of hardships, like when their mothers and fathers drop them off at daycare and scream, believing their parents are abandoning them forever! As we grow older, these hardships can become too hard to bear. Sometimes to the point when we find ourselves speaking the words, “I want to die.”

But when Claudia thinks of those four words, she doesn’t think about a physical death; instead, she craves a different type of death. A death of old ways, old behaviors, and patterns of thinking that no longer serve her. She wants the death of the thing that has to die within her so she can find a new life. When we transform our thinking into this perspective, we can begin to transform our suffering and become ready to act on the things you *can* control. You become ready to live.

When you choose life, you can stop pursuing the habits that will cause you to die, such as smoking, or eating poorly. When you abstain from harmful foods and smoking, you become less likely to die from heart disease or lung cancer. You choose life. Choosing life doesn’t just mean ridding yourself of bad habits. It also means ridding yourself of people who cause you harm. These are the people who drain you of positive energy or elicit feelings of guilt and fear. By saying no to these kinds of relationships, you can focus on the people who matter in your life. You can direct your time and energy towards your inner circle.

To find out who is in your inner circle, make a list of all the people you see at least 5 times a week. Next, rate how encounters with these people make you feel on a scale of 1-10; 1 is the worst and 10 is the best. As you review the results, you’ll instantly know which people make you feel good and who is potentially poisonous to your well-being. Start spending more time with people rated eight and above, and less with everyone else - especially those who are lower than five. Distancing yourself from these people may be

difficult at first as it will require you to overcome obstacles, like switching up your behavioral patterns.

Author Claudia Altucher, for instance, learned this lesson the hard way when she realized that she always pursued unavailable men. In one case, she even pursued someone for almost two years and convinced herself that she was in love with him. Yet, she had only seen him four times! Eventually, she realized her behavioral pattern of craving unrequited love, so she started saying no to these kinds of relationships and finally ended her destructive pattern of behavior. Saying no to her addiction meant attending support groups, which helped her prepare for a healthy relationship based on love, honor, and respect. Now, she's been happily married to co-author James for over five years.

Using Your Assertive No and Finding Your Path

Do you ever find yourself saying *yes* to things, only to realize midway through that you aren't being yourself? Maybe you've taken on an assignment at work that doesn't align with your values or maybe you've stayed in a relationship with a person who brings out the worst in you. It's time to stop doing the things you no longer want to do.

According to James, using your *assertive no* means declining things that other people ask you to do, just because they expect you to do it. You see, when you say yes to things you don't want to do, you might begin resenting the people you are trying to please or even begin disliking the work. Even worse, the people who ask you to do the work might begin to feel bad for burdening you with the work. For instance, perhaps you've asked a friend for a favor even though they had an exam the following day. You likely felt guilty taking them away from their study time. Situations like these are "lose-lose;" instead, it's time to stop conforming to other people's expectations and begin forming your own and following your own path.

To figure out your own path, start by heading to the bookstore. As you browse the shelves, take note of the books that you are interested in. Perhaps you find yourself drawn to industrial design or architecture. Or maybe you are drawn to interior design, graphic design, or photography! As you listen to what interests you, you can then begin to start exploring your interests. Meanwhile, you'll begin to increase a mental muscle that will help you appeal to other people. After all, how do you feel when you listen to someone with passion and enthusiasm? You feel good, right? Enthusiasm can be infectious and get people to like you. Ultimately, people who like you will trust you and what you say.

The Scarcity Complex and Saying No to Noise

In the past, our ancestors experienced scarce resources. As a result, they kept searching for more food, better shelter, and more human contact. This trend continued throughout human history, as people continued to search for more money, more knowledge, and more *things*. Today, we continue this trend despite our abundance of resources; as a result, we still suffer from our historical scarcity complex. We continue our search for more shops and restaurants, purchase houses with more rooms, and search for more followers on social media. In the end, the quest for more is futile and will only make you feel more stressed.

To rid yourself of the scarcity complex, it's time to shift your focus from what you are missing to the abundance you have around you. For example, say you are on your way to work and get caught in a traffic jam. Instead of focusing on the frustration of being in traffic, think about how amazing it is that we no longer have scarcity in our lives. We have enough people, money, and cars to stimulate the economy. Or when your neighbor's music is being played too loudly, try focusing on the abundance of music we have today, all of which we can play at the touch of a button!

When you focus on the abundance in life, you go beyond the optimism of seeing the glass as half full. Instead, you realize that there is plenty of water and that you aren't going to die of thirst. You realize that you should be thankful for both the glass and the water. Additionally, you should say no to *noise* - the things that prevent you from finding peace within yourself and the world. Instead, replace that noise with silence. Take note of the things that fill your head with noise, the things that fill your head with negative thoughts and anxiety. Perhaps it's the news spreading fear, people complaining about drudgery and pain of life, or the noise of gossip, manipulation, and aggression.

You choose, however, the information and how you communicate. So if there is bad news on TV, turn the TV off. If someone is gossiping, walk away

or change the discussion. If negative thoughts in your head start whispering of regret or anxiety, stop yourself and replace them with gratitude and thoughts of abundance. You should also notice when you are in pain. When you are feeling anxious, regretful, or angry, those emotions tend to manifest into physical pain. You might feel pain in your chest, stomach, or back. When this happens, pause and ask yourself, “Why? What is causing this pain? Am I worried about a future that probably will never come true? Do I feel bad about something I said ten years ago?” You can’t change these things, but you can identify them.

Finally, you should promote your physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual health. This means taking care of your body and surrounding yourself with people who love and inspire you, coming up with ideas to help people, and expressing gratitude. Acknowledge that you can’t control everything in the world. When you change the conversation, you change your life and the lives of the people around you.

Unleashing the Power of No Allows You to Say Yes to Yourself

There is the story of the son of a king, a rich playboy, who gets everything he wants. He then gets the most beautiful bride, but on the night his son is born, he becomes terrified of the responsibility and flees! He abandons his responsibilities as an heir, husband, and father. Eight years later he returns, only to leave again with his son. This man is Siddhartha Gautama, later known as Buddha. He understood that he had a responsibility to provide for his family and kingdom, but he also had a greater calling; a call that took him years to realize. He finally realized that he no longer had to say *yes*.

Throughout Siddhartha's life, his father protected him from seeing the pain and suffering that surrounded the kingdom. It wasn't until he fled that he saw the suffering beyond the gates that he realized, "Life is suffering." This isn't necessarily pessimism, but reality. For example, we get sick, our jobs and relationships go through ups and downs, our anxieties and regrets come and go. Oftentimes, we grow up thinking that we will be happy if we just go to college, get a good job, establish roots, have a family, and make a lot of money. Only then, can we be happy. Of course, these things can provide happiness; however, it's when those things *don't* happen that we feel disappointed.

Maybe those things listed above aren't what you crave, that's fine. But you likely have something that you'll be disappointed about if you don't achieve. A job that you want, a trip you want to take, or something you crave. Well, as Buddha suggests, "Craving is suffering." So how can we stop craving so that we don't suffer? By simply understanding the power of No. "Should you gossip about that co-worker who backstabbed you? No. Should you buy that house? Possibly. But if it could bankrupt your family and put you into massive debt, then no." Find something within your budget, even if it means sacrificing something you *craved*. Simply put, "say no to the things that may harm you."

Instead of craving more, simply find gratitude. Here's an exercise on giving gratitude a workout. Begin by listing out all the problems in your life. Perhaps you lost your job, can't find a job, your spouse cheated, your house is in foreclosure, your neighbor is too loud, or maybe you're in a job you hate and want to pursue something creative. Next, list all the good things in life. This may be difficult, but start somewhere like, *"I love my wife and two daughters, and I'm grateful for them."* You can even start smaller like, *"I'm grateful that I am breathing right now."* Start somewhere, and begin somewhere as small as being grateful for breathing.

Next, it's time to go on a Gratitude Diet. For the next ten days, when you wake up, think of ten things you are grateful for. They can be important things, like your friends and family, or they can be small things like the sun is out that day! This will help you focus more on the good in your life and allow you to say no to the bad. Finally, use the alien technique for surrendering, and catering to the four bodies we mentioned in the last chapter: the physical, the emotional, the mental, and the spiritual.

The alien technique works best early in the morning. When you wake up, your first thought should be *"Who am I?"* Imagine yourself as an alien from outer space sent here to inhabit this body you are in for the next 24 hours. On the first morning in your new human body, you should become aware of what the body needs. Is the human suffering stress? Your job is to solve that stress. Whatever you do today, you know it will help the human; after all, that is why you are here. You will make the right decisions for him or her, whether it's going for a run, reading a book, or meditating. "But it doesn't matter that much. Because tomorrow you will wake up in another human body. You are a special agent. And your job is to save lives."

Final Summary

When you make the conscious decision to say no, you unleash the power to say yes to your needs and your desires. You say no to stress, anxiety, fear, and regret and say yes to reinventing yourself. Every day you make the choice to reinvent yourself, each morning you should decide whether you want to move forward or backward. If you have a dream to accomplish something and to reinvent yourself, cast aside doubt, and don't worry about what your friends and family think. Say no to the people and things that are hurting you, you have the right to be happy. The Power of No is about building your power from the core outward. And when you finally say yes to yourself, "it's like dropping a pebble in the center of the ocean. Ultimately, the ripples from that yes will ripple outward and hit every shore. They will change the world. They will change you."



QuickRead

F R E E B O O K S U M M A R I E S

Go to QuickRead.com/App now to download our app and get access to thousands of free book summaries as both text and audiobooks.

Get the key insights of non-fiction books in minutes instead of hours. Listen to our free audiobooks while you workout or on your commute to work.

