



Coptic Orthodox Diocese of  
the Southern United States

The Monthly Message  
to the Priests' Wives  
August 2015

## Addiction of the Word "YES" (2)

People addicting the word "Yes" which they used to answer any request from them need to be trained how to say "NO" when they do not really want to say "Yes". This training needs perseverance in order for the person to acquire this skill and to get rid of the *Disease to Please*. Here are some **practical exercises**:

### (1) *The Buying Time Technique:*

Do not rush to give an immediate answer to what is requested from you. This will help you to break the habit of automatic answer with "Yes". Postponing answer gives you a good chance to think and evaluate different options. You can use one of the following statements:

- *"Let me get back to you with an answer after I check my calendar"*

- *"I need a little time to think about that. I'll call you back tomorrow"*
- *"I might have a conflict. I'll check and get back to you with an answer after two days"*
- *"I need a bit of time to check on some things, but I'll call you back with an answer just as soon as I know. Tell me the best times to reach you"*
- *"I can't give you an answer right now. But I'll get back to you very soon"*
- *"I'm not sure if I will have the time (to do the request), so I'll have to let you know about it next week"*

### (2) *The Broken Record Technique*

This technique is used when facing a requester who is insisting on his request or resisting its denial. He usually puts pressure on you until you comply. This technique is composed of repeating the same answer in different ways. Start usually with a phrase that clarifies that you clearly heard and understood the request.

#### **Example:**

- *"I know how much you want me to help you out. But I have to check my calendar first"*.

- *"Oh, I can't wait. Can't you tell me now? I really need to know if I can count on you as always".*
- *"I understand that you're anxious for an answer. But I might have a conflict that I have to check, so I'll get back to you as soon as possible".*

### ***(3) The Counteroffer Technique:***

There will be occasions when you do not want to say "NO" definitively but you want to make a counteroffer. For example, if a friend asks you to help her in a task that will take four hours, you might respond by saying that you can't do four hours but you can spend one or two. You really do not wish to give a definitive "no" as you really want to share this task with her but you need to modify the demand to meet your conditions. Be careful not to fall into the trap of using this technique as an excuse not to say "no" and you are worried that the person will be angry. Do not use it unless you really want to share this task with her.

### ***(4) The Sandwich Technique:***

It is a highly effective way to say "NO" by sandwiching a negative response in between two complimentary or positive statements.

### **Examples:**

- *"I want to get back to you about that very nice invitation from the other day. I'm sorry to say I won't be able to accept this time. I hope you'll think of me again"*
- *"You are a wonderful friend but I'm calling to tell you that I won't be able to do the favor you asked the other day. If I could I would, and I know that you understand"*

When you use this technique be sure that you mean every word you say using real sincere statements. You must also take care that your voice tone and your body language in general must show relaxation and firmness. Feel no guilt as if you are delivering bad news.

### ***(5) The Reverse Sandwich Technique:***

It is composed of presenting the counteroffer using the Reverse Sandwich Technique. In contrary to the Sandwich Technique, a positive message is sandwiched between two negative messages. The first negative is to inform the requester that you will not be able to fulfill the request as proposed. But the good news is that you are willing to do your counterproposal.

Then you end by a firm statement that this is the only alternative take it or leave it.

### **Example:**

- *"I'm calling to get back to you about your request. Unfortunately, I won't be able to help you all day. But I can come for one hour in the morning. If that won't work, I'm afraid I just can't make it at all"*

### **(6) Delegation:**

You must do a list of all tasks required from you in a specific period like next week for example. The next step is to determine which tasks you can delegate and which ones you have to fulfill by yourself. Usually the "do not delegate" category are one of the following:

- Tasks that are absolutely essential for you to do yourself; nobody else can do them.
- Tasks that you truly enjoy doing yourself.
- Tasks which you personally derive an important value or sense of purpose or meaning.

To cure the Disease to Please, you must commit to delegating to others at least 10 percent of the tasks required from you.

### **(7) Modifying the Ten Commandments of People-Pleasing**

They are **false assumptions** that all people pleasers believe in. You must discover these assumptions within you then answer and modify them:

- 1) *I should always* do what others want, expect, or need from me.
- 2) *I should* take care of everyone around me whether they ask for help or not.
- 3) *I should always* listen to everyone's problems and try my best to solve them.
- 4) *I should always* be nice.
- 5) *I should always* put other people first, before me.
- 6) *I should never* say "no" to anyone who needs or requests something from me.
- 7) *I should never* disappoint anyone or let others down in any way.
- 8) *I should always* be happy and never show any negative feelings to others.
- 9) *I should always* try to please other people and make them happy.
- 10) *I should try never* to burden others with my own needs or problem.