**THE REWARDS OF SAYING NO - BREAK THE HABIT OF SAYING YES - PART 1**

**Male speaker**: Welcome to the Chalene Show. Chalene is a New York Times bestselling author, celebrity fitness trainer, and obsessed with helping you live your dream life.

**Chalene Johnson**: Hey, there, party people. You are listening to a special edition of the Chalene Show. This episode is brought to you on demand, like literally.

So last week I did this series of live broadcasts with my husband Bret who, I’m sure you’ve heard me talk about in previous episodes, I talk about him quite often because we’ve been married for 19 years and he is completely the yin to my yang. Now, if you’ve ever read one of my books or you’ve done one of my workout videos or you’ve gone to one of my seminars, even if you haven’t seen Bret’s face, I can assure you that he has been a big part - if I’ve had any effect on your life, then he’s had a big hand in that effect because whether you realize it or not, Bret is - well, he is the person who makes this possible. And by this I mean like me to be able to do what it is I love to do and still honor my priorities and take care of my family, that just wouldn’t be possible in the way that it is without his support.

I mean, honestly, it is because of our partnership that I can say I can actually honor my priorities. Now, if you’re like, “Oh, that’s so nice for the two of you, why don’t you just like ride off into the sunset on your unicorns and eat some magical cotton candy, you know,” I mean, I get it. Gag me. It’s - you know, that doesn’t seem possible for some people and maybe you’re single right now and you’re like, “Yeah, it’s a lot easier when you have a partner.”

But here’s what I want you to know. It’s not easy. And we don’t have a perfect life. And we’ve had hard times. And we’ve had really, really, really hard times. And the relationship that you want, the life that you want, the free time that you desire, the financial security that you crave and you deserve, that all takes a ton of work. Anything that’s crazy rewarding does take a ton of work.

So, no, this episode is not about relationships. This episode is about figuring out what it is you want and figuring out how you’re going to find the time to make that happen. You know, you can’t just work and work and work and just, you know, get 100 miles per hour through your day. You can’t just work and work and work and just keep putting out fires and letting people run you ragged and think that your life is going to be amazing. It really does require a plan.

I mean, and Bret and I were two of the most goal-oriented, driven, focused individuals you could ever meet and we were accomplishing all of our goals and we were still terribly unhappy. And I’m here to tell you it is because we skipped a critical ingredient, a very critical ingredient which might be the ingredient you’re missing. And that is our blueprint that we created together.

And if you’re a single person, you need to create this for yourself. But I hope, I hope that your own blueprint will include some plans for what you want your future relationship to look like. You know, that’s really important. I think God really does want us to have somebody else who we can call a partner. And I really do believe everything’s better when you’ve got somebody who’s your biggest fan and your best friend. And I want that for you but you’ve got to give it some thought in terms of what does that need to look like.

So when you’re describing your perfect life, quote-unquote, “perfect life”, when you’re describing what it is you want to feel, what it is you want to live, what it is you want to have, that should include some things about your partner or your future partner. You know, and Bret and I had been able to accomplish so much but we ended up super unhappy and stressed out and just felt so obligated to so many people and we were overwhelmed by the chaos despite the fact that we were more organized than most people and had accomplished more than any of our friends, and set out to do these crazy things and then we had done them but we’re like, “Why is this so overwhelming?”

And we just had to put on the brakes and figure out what - I don’t get it. What’s missing? And what was missing is we never did that critical first step and we certainly never did it together. And that was creating a blueprint like a serious, written out, pages long, what do we want our life to look like, and more importantly, what do we want it to feel like, you know. What was it supposed to feel like?

I’m going to save you some time. If you haven’t listened to my previous episode called Overcome the Overload, then I want you to listen to that show now because this is like a cake mix and if you miss that first ingredient, it just - the cake flops. You’ll end up being like super effective and amazing at time management but you might not be happy. And the key to that is creating a plan for what you want your life to look like. Once you create the plan, then you create a clear system so then you know what you’re supposed to say yes to and what you’re supposed to politely decline.

Because the program you’re about to listen to is my follow-up - you now know what it is you want to create and you’ve got to put some space in your schedule now to make this happen. And in order to do that, we’ve got to start saying no to some things and yes to certain things. We’ve got to figure out how to politely decline and how to bow out of some things that currently are on our plate, are a part of our life but that they really have nothing to do with our new fully-developed planned blueprint, like this place that we want to go, this thing that we want to feel.

So you see, if you don’t have the space emotionally, if there’s no rhyme or reason to the chaos of your day, if you’re just like going and going and going and you think you’re super effective and, you know, you’re just going as hard as you can, a million miles per hour and everybody seems to need you and there’s no time for you and you’re not quite sure where you’re headed, then you need to clear the clutter of everyone else’s priorities off of your plate and create some breathing room, some space in your schedule so you actually can not only dream but execute on some of these things that need to happen in order for you to build your blueprint.

You know, blueprints are plans. But then there’s the building, the execution of your plan. And that requires time and it requires reprioritizing some things that you’re doing right now that don’t move you towards your dream life so that you’ve got the time to do the things that do.

Okay, and before we go into this broadcast that you’re about to hear, I have to tell you about some messages that I was just reading before I started recording this. And they were on my Facebook wall. And I couldn’t believe how many people were saying something very similar to this.

They would say, “Chalene, I actually don’t feel overwhelmed or over-scheduled. I actually feel underwhelmed. I don’t have like enough important stuff going on, you know what I mean?” Like they were saying repeatedly, “I know there’s more I could be doing. I just don’t even know where to start or what it is or what my purpose is or - you know, I just - I don’t know where to begin. And I’m not overwhelmed. It’s like I can hear echoes in my head and echoes in my home.” And I thought, “Wow.” Okay, somebody who feels that way, my friend, you really need to go back. Don’t even listen to this episode. Can you believe I’m saying that? Pause and go back and listen to the Overcome the Overwhelm episode.

Because really what I want you to do in that is - and maybe you’re not feeling overwhelmed but what you’re not clear about is what it is you could be doing. And I want you to re-listen to that episode and hear me clearly. Put pen to paper. You’ve got to put pen to paper. There is a huge difference of just listening to me and then doing your homework. There’s a huge difference from things just bouncing around in your head and then you finding the clarity that comes to you when you put pen to paper, when you answer in writing the questions that I’m asking you, according to your heart, your soul.

I want you to do a little soul-searching. And you just have to start to believe that your happiness and having this crazy, cool, fun life is possible. That’s not for other people. That’s something you have to believe is possible for you. And that’s step one. And if you’re not there yet, then don’t waste your time in this episode. Go back and listen to that one, okay?

So no matter where you are in your journey, this episode will serve you. Because if you’ve ever wished that there were more hours in the day, some extra breathing room or a system so that at the end of the day you felt very accomplished, like you did the things you needed to do and you found the right time to do them in so that it honored your highest point of energy, when you felt the best, and you took care of the things that matter so that you could work on your blueprint. Well, if you’ve ever wanted a very simple system to use, you’re about to get a refresher course.

And I’m going to say refresher course because some of this is going to sound extremely familiar and you’re going to, like, you know, can you hear that? You’re going to smack yourself upside the head and go, “Oh, my gosh, I used to do this. I used to do this. And I’ve got to discipline myself and I’ve got to go back to it,” because it does require discipline but the rewards are pretty freaking cool.

All right, so if you’re still with me, let’s get to the lesson.

Hey, everybody, welcome to the broadcast. I’m Chalene Johnson, the author of New York Times bestselling book, PUSH. You might recognize me from late night infomercials. I’ve done tons of fitness infomercials and I am most proud to be the creator of the SMART Success Academy. It’s why I’m here today.

Now, if you missed our earlier broadcast, in that episode, my husband and I shared with you how it was we had completely reached our breaking point. And in particular, how it was we had almost decided to just give up, like it had caused stress on our marriage, it had caused stress on our relationships with our friends, my health was suffering. But most importantly, I just - I couldn’t do it anymore and I knew something needed to change.

And we talked about how it was we decided - we made the decision like, “Okay, enough is enough. We just can’t - this isn’t right.” And I think people in society right now, we’re at this like tipping point where everyone kind of feels that. It’s like, “How much more can I handle? How much more can I take?” And there are days when you’re like, “Okay, I managed through this.” But most of the time, people are feeling so overwhelmed that it comes to a point where we have to make a decision to make a change. And that’s exactly what we did.

It started with this crazy blueprint, this crazy dream, I should say, for a life. And when I say crazy, it’s kind of funny to me now to call it crazy because it’s the life that I’m living. But when I wrote it out on paper, it was so far removed - so completely, 180 from anything we were doing or anything that we were living that it seemed crazy. It seemed unthinkable, impossible. But we decided that even if we could get just a little bit closer to that, even if our lives looked something like that, it would be better than what we were living in that moment.

So we created a blueprint, like what would we need to do, what would we need to have, what things would have to change, what things would we have to remove, what things would I have to learn, what things would I have to let go of? How would everything have to be changed? Like what pieces would we need to build this dream life? In other words, the blueprint meant what materials did we need, what did the foundation look like, what would the walls look like. Almost like building a house. This dream life we wanted to build required that we created a blueprint.

And that’s the difference for so many people. They’re creating this vision board, they’ve got this dream for what they want their life or their day or their week to look like but they never figure out what it takes to make that happen. And that’s the blueprint.

From there we talked about how do you execute this? I want to make this happen. I want to take what it is I know I need to do and I want to start doing it. And for most of us, that means carving out the time to do it, right? Like figuring out, how am I ever going to do this when right now I don’t even have any time to do the things that I don’t want to do? How will I ever find the time - the extra time it’s going to take to change my life?

Well, I’ve got good news for you because today, even though in my last broadcast I told you that we would work on your schedule. But as you know, we went to a live chat. And in that live chat, it was very clear to me that what people were dealing with was overwhelm. And the thought of like rearranging your schedule for so many of you, you just flat out told me, like “I don’t know how I can do that. My finances are a wreck, I’m a wreck. I have so much that I have to do and so much that I’m responsible for that I - can you just fix that? Can you first fix the overwhelm?”

And because of your honesty, I am here to tell you that today, that’s exactly what we’re going to do. My objective today, my promise to you is that if you stay tuned and if with me you’re writing down exactly the steps that I share with you - this is a very serious promise. I promise that you are going to feel less stress. You’re going to feel an immediate sense of calm. We are going to actually step in and clean out the closet that has become your cluttered life. Like there’s just no room for more. There’s no room for breathing room. There’s no wiggle room.

But by the end of this episode, I promise you this. You are going to feel a sense of confidence. You’re going to feel that peace. You’re going to have space. You’re going to have more time. All you have to do is follow along with me and I promise that what you will feel is exactly what we can create more of by learning the system of SMART Success.

You see, one of the reasons why we feel this way is because, as a culture, we have been conditioned to say yes to everything. We say yes to the thing that we don’t have time for. We say yes to that thing where it’s like, well I was - I guess if I moved this and I left 10 minutes early from that, I guess I could do that. We say yes to strangers. We say yes to everything. And unfortunately, that used to work and it used to be easier for people like in the ‘60s, ‘70s, and ‘80s. You know why it was easier? Because we didn’t have one of these. This, quite frankly, has changed everything and it has forced us to a tipping point where we just realized, “Okay, there is too much demands on my attention and my time and I can’t focus and I can’t think and I’m so distracted and I’m so unhappy. I’m just unhappy.” And it’s because there are so many people and things and objects and digital devices that are demanding our attention. That’s why.

By the end of this exercise, this is what you’ll feel. You’ll feel the confidence to say no. You will feel this guilt-free sense that what you’re doing is the right thing. You’re going to feel less stressed. You’re going to be doing less of the unimportant things and you’re going to sit up really nice and tall and feel like every day, when you’ve finished your day, I did the right things in the right order. And you’re not going to feel that sense of like, I don’t know, it’s almost like a feeling in your gut when you know the next day you have to do something you don’t want to do, because we’re going to clear your schedule. How awesome is that? How awesome is that? We are actually going to take things off of your schedule and make some room in your life for the things that matter. Because if we don’t do that, then you will never have the time to create your blueprint.

And I know that just by going through that exercise in my first broadcast that you understand how delicious, how fun, how peaceful, how rewarding your life could be if it actually look like that. And it’s very possible. But it does require you follow these steps. It’s not going to be easy, but it will be simple.

I want you to imagine for a moment, what would it be like if we looked at your schedule for the next four weeks? And I know this is just hypothetically speaking. But what would it feel like if we got rid of say, half of the things that you’re supposed to do? Half of the things that are like, eh, I’m not looking that forward to, but I have to go to work and I have to go to this meeting. And I have this call on Thursday night and I promised so and so that we will go to their party on Friday.

And if I could just remove half of those things for you, what would you feel? Would you feel relaxed? Would you be able to focus? Would you be happy? Would you feel motivated to do the things that you really want to do? Would you feel as though your life had become your own again? Would you feel like you had control? Because that’s really what this exercise is all about.

I’m going to give you just a few things that we’re going to be able to remove immediately from your schedule. Guess what I’m going to do? You’re going to love this. At the end, I’m going to give you a written permission slip so that you don’t have to show up to something you don’t want to go to. And that is just the backup plan because more importantly and more useful is I’m going to give you the exact script that you can use from this point forward to set up those boundaries so that you no longer have to say yes or no. People know it’s inappropriate to ask you to do this because they know what it is that you’re working towards and what it is you will and won’t do.

Guess what else I’m going to do? I’m going to give you the exact script to get out of something that you totally are dreading right now, the exact script so that you look like a winner. The other person isn’t mad at you, they completely understand and you walk away with no hard feelings, but most importantly, you’ve got that time now to work on your blueprint. Sound good? I hope it does.

Now, I’m not the first person to ever say, “We all have to learn to say no.” I mean that’s becoming a really common theme. People have finally recognized that we have to learn to say no, but that’s like saying, we have to earn it. We have to learn to eat less. We have to learn to be more fit and nicer to people. That’s great, we all know that.

How? Well, I believe the first step is identifying why it is we say yes to everything. And I believe the reason why we do that is because it’s very rewarding. I mean I caught myself yesterday. I was at the gym, ran into somebody. And he said, “Hey, so glad I ran into you. I’ve got you in mind for this thing. And it will only take, you know, less than 15 minutes per week, Chalene. I just need you to check in, it’s an amazing opportunity for you.” And you know what I said? I said, “That sounds awesome. That sounds great. You have to send me the details.” I said yes. Even though the second he said, I had that twinge in my stomach and the first thought that popped in my mind was like, you don’t want to do this.

But I said yes because it’s automatic. You know why? Because I was triggered. I was triggered by the reward and so are you. That’s why you yes even when the first thought that pops in your head is, “I don’t want to do this. I don’t want to say yes.” But you smile and you go, “Absolutely, sure. Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you. That sounds great. Sure. No problem. I’ve got time for that. No, I don’t. Yes, I do. No, I don’t.” And you just say yes because of the feeling it triggers.

We want people to be happy, that’s number one. We’re people pleasers. Number two, I want to be your go-to guy, your go-to girl. I want to be the person who you think of as reliable. I want that pat on the back. I want a smile. The immediate gratification for me in that moment is I’m going to make him happy. This is somebody I don’t even know very well. But I want to please him, I want to make him happy. And I’m giving him a yes even, though, in my head, I’m thinking, “What does this have to do with anything I need to do?”

You see, we say yes without even thinking about it. It’s just a reaction sometimes. And then once we’re in it and we know it’s wrong, then we start justifying all the reasons why we should just go ahead and go through with it. “Well, he’s a nice person. I could meet other people. Maybe I’ll make more money. Maybe it’s the right thing to do. Maybe it’s for the greater cause.” And we start justifying all the reasons why we should uncommit ourselves to things. Because there are some things what we’re going to do, you and I together, that are going to remove you from some places where you’ve already made a commitment and you’re going to feel good about it.

And the other person who you’re going to say, “Hey, sorry, I’ve got to bow out,” they’re going to feel good about it too. You’ve got to trust m eon this.

But here’s the deal, one of the reasons why this happens to you is because you are that go-to guy, that go-to girl. You see, here’s that pitfall of success. The reason why we become successful at anything at the kind of thing that someone will go, “Hey, I know someone who could do this.” People think that about you because you’re good at something, whatever it is. Maybe it’s organizing the team roster for your daughter’s soccer team. Or maybe it’s a filling in for everybody when they need a sub. Or maybe it’s you’re the person who organizes the flowchart. Whatever it is, people come to you because you’re good at it.

The reason why you’re good at it is because there was a point in time when you were able to focus on it. You did just this. And you didn’t do a lot of it. You did enough that you could focus on it and give it 100% of your effort. But the irony of it is that success has turned into people giving you more opportunities and more ideas and more diversions and more distractions and all your energy is going in all these different ways now.

So whereas before your energy was all moving towards one important goal, to master one important task, now it’s segmented, it’s kind of going everywhere. So you can see how your energy and your focus and all of the things that used to make you great are now fragmented. And that’s the pitfall, that is unfortunately why so many people like myself, like yourself who in the past felt focused and that’s how we attributed our success, now feel fragmented.

You see, what I want to help you do, just like any habit, is focus on the reward. Focus on what feels good. You see, the second I said yes, I already had a pit in my stomach as I was walking out of the gym towards my car. I’m already thinking, “How do I get out of this? I don’t want to do this. Okay, I can just do it. I’ll just suck it up and do it.” You know, I’m going through all those thoughts in my head, but I already felt the negative side effects of saying yes. Unfortunately I allowed thinking about the positive side effects of yes to immediately influence my reply.

Now, what I want you to do is focus on all of the rewards of saying no. In fact, I’m not even going to make you say no because sometimes those words, even for myself, it’s really hard to say no. I rarely do say no. I have another way of handling that that makes the other person feel as though I’m not dismissing them, they’re still important and there’s a reason why I have to say thank you for thinking of me but unfortunately I don’t have the room in my schedule right now. Thank you for thinking of me, I wish I could do this for you right now. Unfortunately, I’m not able to.

And the rewards of that are these - self-worth, confidence, control, peace of mind. That feeling you’ve got when you know, I know I did the right thing. It’s a pride. You know, I asked people in preparing for this episode, while we’re live online and in the day since then, asking people like, “Okay, tell me about a time when you didn’t want to say no and you felt very guilty and you felt like I need to say yes to this.

Or maybe something that you did say yes to and you’ve got to bow out of it? It’s just it’s killing you, it’s not going to fit with your schedule. And there’s going to be too many sacrifices and you keep dreading it week after week after week. Tell me what you felt like before you said, “I can’t do this.” And absolutely, everyone says the same thing. “Well, I worried that the person will be mad at me. That I wouldn’t be popular. That they would be upset. That I would disappoint someone. That I owed it to them. That they would think of me as someone who is a quitter, someone that they couldn’t rely on. I was worried that that person would be upset with me. I felt nervous and anxious and afraid. And I kept pushing off the fact that I knew I needed to say, I can’t do this.”

And of those same individuals, I said, “Tell me now, how you felt once you did it.” You may be at phone call, you sent that email, you sent a text and you said, here’s why I can’t do it and I’m sorry, but I have to bow out. And they all use the same words. Now, tell me if these words don’t excite you. “It felt like Christmas morning. I was excited. I felt relieved. I felt so surprised that they weren’t upset with me. I felt that I had control over my life and my schedule. I felt value. I felt as though I had more self worth. I felt like I was making myself more important than complete strangers of people who quite frankly didn’t value my future, my life, the way I do.

That’s what it feels like when you say no. But you have to understand this, there will be fear. There will be the presence of fear. You are going to feel anxious and nervous. I have to be honest with you. But that’s a good thing. You know why? Because that’s what’s going to give you courage. You see, you can’t be courageous - there’s no need for courage unless you have fear. And the best part about courage is that it’s always rewarded by, “Wow, that wasn’t so bad. What I thought would be the worst case scenario wasn’t even close.” It’s always a monster in your head, right?

So we know we have to get rid of some things. You know you have to say no. The problem is, sometimes people are saying no to the wrong things. They’re saying no to things that would move them forward and saying yes to things that keep right where they are. So yes, today, we are going to take some things off of your schedule. But it’s very important to me that I help you identify what the right things to say no to are so that you can say yes to the things that matter.

What matters? What matters is anything that helps you build your blueprint. Whatever helps you to execute - remember, we talked about what it is you want to have happened? This perfect dream life. We say dream, but it’s only a dream in step one when you’re picturing it. It becomes a plan now. It becomes a plan when we scrape off nos and we make room for the things that matter.

It’s taking a look at all of the things that you have scheduled in the next - this what we’re going to do, we’re just going to do this as a short - I don’t have a lot of time here. This is a stuff we go into deep and in-depth one area of your life at a time in SMART Success. But today, I just want to give you that relief that I promised you. So I want you to pull out your calendar, which for a lot of you is probably right here. Some of you might still be keeping it on paper. That’s awesome. I love it, old school stuff. But if you’ve got your phone or whatever you’re keeping maybe an electric device, your calendar, I want you to look at what’s on your schedule right now.

Go ahead, just open up your phone now. If you’re happening to be listening to this broadcast and you’re not watching us live and maybe you’re in your car, well then promise me that you will do this the second you can even if that means pulling over because I want you to look because I want you to specifically think about some things that are upcoming in the next four weeks that really have nothing to do with where you want to go with that blueprint. Remember those things that we talked about. You’ve got objectives.

So when I sat down with Bret and I said I can’t do this anymore, I can’t have this many employees, I can’t - we can’t continue, I have to learn to let go, I have to scale back. What that meant was we had some objectives. We had some things that got to happen. I call them got to happens.

So whatever you have scheduled in the next four weeks, I want you to look at and say, “Does this have anything to do with my got to happens? Because if it doesn’t, we need to get out of it. It doesn’t have anything to do with the design of your future, if it doesn’t have anything to do with action, you need to take to take control of your life and reduce the overwhelm and to move that much closer to what it is you want to feel each day, then those are the things I want you to circle and identify as items we need to remove.

Because you think about it, you have a limit to the amount of time. Now, this is a really, really easy decision for you to make. Right now, if I were to tell you, you have a week to live or the person you love the most is even better. The person you love the most has four weeks to live and they want to spend time with you, how easy would it be for you to say, “Hey, guess what, I can’t be there. I can’t do this. I know I promised you to the responsible party to get everybody from point A to point B, but I can’t do it.” It would be so easy for you to make that decision. You wouldn’t feel any guilt whatsoever to make that phone call, right?

Why? Because you knew that somebody else was more important than all these other people who you’re trying to please, who really don’t care. They really aren’t going to be in your life at the end of your life. And they have nothing to do with your future. So it would so easy to say no to them. You pick up the phone right now and say, “Listen, this isn’t even an option, I can’t do this.”

Okay. So are you in the right mind set? Are you thinking about what that would feel like to have something on your heart, something that you felt so strongly about someone that you felt strongly about that making the call to say, “Hey, listen, I can’t do this thing. I won’t be at this particular party. I’m sorry I can’t volunteer for this event. I regret to tell you that I won’t be able to be there in this regard. I can’t take care of your problems. I can’t drive you to that doctor’s appointment. I can’t make your problems my own because there’s someone who means the world to me and they need me right now.” How easy would it be for you to be able to say no, right?

So as long as you’re in that mind set, as long as you realize it would be easy if that was your mind set, well then, we can move on to part 2 because in part 2, we’re going to talk reality. We’re going to talk about the fact that people do place this kind of demands on us. And we want to learn to say no and we want to do so and still maintain our relationships. Nobody wants to let someone else down.

And in this next episode, I’m going to share with you specifically the things that you can say, how to say them and to feel guilt free. Feel guilt free because you’ll be honoring your own priorities and helping to create the time and the space and the wiggle room that you need to execute your blueprint, to build that life.

Thanks so much for spending time with me today. I hope you’ve got time right now to listen to part 2. If you don’t, don’t forget to put it in your phone, remind yourself that you’ve only listened to part 1. And part 2 is so critical. Thank you so much for being a part of this. If you want to make sure that you don’t miss out on upcoming episodes, the only way you’re going to know about it is if you’re in the know. So be sure to subscribe to all of our updates by going to chalenejohnson.com.

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