



Do you find it difficult to say no?

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I have observed that many people in the Reiki community find it difficult to say no. This often comes from kindness and we don't like to disappoint, to let people down or to deny someone the possibility of enjoying the benefits Reiki might bring to them. We don't like to hurt anyone's feelings when we see them suffering so much already. Sometimes not saying no, even when we know what we are agreeing to do will be detrimental to our well being, comes from fear. Sometimes it is fear of what might be lost, other times it is fear of what people might think of us.

Perhaps this is partly due to how we were educated in our British culture, but I have observed a similar tendency in Reiki people in other countries. In essence I think we like to be kind but often are less than kind to ourselves.

One of the results of being reluctant to say no is that your own well being can be compromised. How often have you said yes to doing something that you knew was not good for you but you didn't want to let the other person down. I'm not saying we shouldn't put ourselves out for other people, but it is worth taking a moment to check what result this will have for our own well being and making a decision based on that, rather than simply saying yes and then regretting it later. Saying yes when no would have been kinder to ourselves can lead to feelings of resentment and self blame, which are further damaging to our well being.

It is also really important for Reiki practitioners working with the public to know when to say no. Some

people think that if someone asks you to treat them, you are obliged to do so. This is not true and there are various circumstances when it is completely appropriate to say no. Clearly one reason is if you feel your own safety could be at risk from the other person: if they are drunk or under the influence of drugs, if you are a woman alone with an unknown man and no-one close by or if the person appears to be mentally unstable. You are also perfectly within your rights to decline to treat someone if you feel that what they need is more than your experience or training prepares you to offer. It is much better to refer them on to a more experienced practitioner who can give them the support they need than to struggle with a situation which may leave both of you feeling that it was not the best for you. Some people will also try to take advantage of you in asking for extra time or treatments for little or no exchange: saying no can help to establish and clarify your boundaries. Having clear boundaries are important especially when you give Reiki to people you don't know or who are only acquaintances.

So while it may feel awkward at first and may go against your inner programming, it is more helpful to be mindful about your response and have the courage to say no on some occasions.