

The importance of NO! Posted by Carolyn

It's surprising to me how hard it is for a lot of women to say this word.

I'm not talking about people like me who have a hard time turning down additional responsibility or denying our kid a playstation 3 he wants. I'm talking about a situation where a woman feels manipulated or pressured, whether physically or emotionally, to do something she doesn't want to do and can't bring herself to say NO!

Some of this can be cultural. In many cultures, including some cultures and subcultures in the West, boys reach a point in their development where they no longer submit to adults, but girls are not expected to stop submitting, just like children, to the whims of their husbands, so they never learn the skills to assert themselves and say NO!

It's easy to spot when you're being physically forced into something, but by then, it's usually a bit late to start trying to say no. That "NO!" has to come before the physical altercation even starts, if possible. And you'd be surprised how effective it can be just by itself. See, a lot of the men who attack women are actually somewhat afraid of women and respond very well to what I call "the MOM voice," which is the voice you heard as a child when you had done something bad and mom found out.

What's difficult is when you're being emotionally manipulated into a difficult position, a place where you want to say no, but you don't want to bring on a conflict or you rationalize that it's easier just to go along with whatever it is a little longer.

It's really important to get to that NO! earlier rather than later.

Example: You come out of the store with groceries after dark, and a man approaches offering to put them in your car for you. You don't want him to get close, but you don't want to offend him, either because maybe he's just being nice. What do you do?

You say, "No, thank you, I'm fine."

What if he insists and continues to approach?

You say, "NO! Back off now!" Use the mom voice.

A good man who had no ill intentions will walk away at this point. He may think you're bats**t insane, or maybe he'll say you're being a bitch, but most likely, he'll be sensible and realize that he's just walked up to a woman at night and she has every right to be careful. Regardless, he will walk away. **YOU CAN'T WORRY ABOUT HIS IMPRESSION OF YOU.**

A bad guy who just isn't up for a fight will also take his leave about now, usually calling you names and trying to make you change your mind. Don't.

But if the man continues to approach, you know you need to protect yourself.

Ash: Mom voice !!! Hehehehe!!

Interesting concept and I can see why it'll work I'll surely tell every girl in my class

It's especially important for women like me who have soft girlish voices anyway to be able to grab that ki-ai or the mom voice and belt it out.

Anonymous: *thats true*

well that holds some truth. i had an experience like this during my college days where a forty year old man offered to give me a lift to home. i first was hesitant but then with a stern voice said i need no help. as i said this he started saying he was my neighbor, knew my dad, etc., which was not true .but then i said that's ok n moved away from the place.

but then there are people with good intensions also.....

Yes, sadly, MOST people have good intentions. But people with good intentions understand that there are people with bad intentions out there, and they will not judge a single woman alone harshly for refusing help.

And even if they do, you can't let that affect you. Your first priority must be your own safety, NOT keeping from offending someone who is trying to be nice. Predators play on people's tendency to want to stay within the rules of polite society. You have to be able to step outside those rules to protect yourself.