How To Say No
The Ultimate Boundary Setting Cheat Sheet

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4 DECISION-MAKING MODELS

1. The Eisenhower Matrix

This helps you to prioritise options by urgency and importance.

	Urgent	No urgent
Important	SAY YES TO	SCHEDULE FOR LATER
Not important	DELEGATE	SAY NO TO

2. The 80/20 Principle

This aims to maximize your efficiency by helping you focus on the most impactful options.

- ◆ **Identify:** The tasks that require 20% of your effort but drive 80% output.
- ◆ **Focus on:** Those tasks to obtain the best results.
- ◆ **Say No To:** The tasks that are not driving 80% output.

80%
20%

3. The 2 Minute Rule

This encourages you to take immediate action on quick tasks.

- ◆ **Break Down:** Complex tasks into 2-minute, bite-size chunks. (e.g. Break down writing a book into writing 200 words).
- ◆ **Say No To:** The tasks that can't be done within 2 minutes.

4. Warren Buffett's 25/5 Rule

This helps you focus on your most important goals and avoid distractions.

1. **Write Down:** A list of your top 25 projects and initiatives.
2. **Rank:** The 25 projects by importance.
3. **Select:** The top 5.
4. **Say No To:** The 20 tasks below your top 5.

8 ALTERNATIVE RULES FOR SAYING NO WITH GRACE

Rules	How to Execute
1. **Discuss existing commitments.**	"I'd love to help, but I have prior commitments that I need to prioritise."
2. **Offer constructive feedback instead**	"I'm unable to participate, but I'd be happy to provide feedback or guidance if that would be helpful."
3. **Set boundaries without giving too much detail**	"I've reached my limit for taking on new projects at the moment, but I appreciate you thinking of me."
4. **Politely decline with gratitude**	"Thank you so much for considering me, but I'm unable to take on any additional responsibilities right now."
5. **Be concise and respectful**	"I'm afraid I have to decline, but I truly appreciate the opportunity."
6. **Express genuine regret**	"I'm really sorry, but I won't be able to commit to this. I hope you understand."
7. **Offer alternative forms of support**	"While I can't participate directly, I can offer assistance in other ways, such as sharing resources or connecting you with someone who can help."
8. **Acknowledge the request's value**	"Your project sounds amazing, but unfortunately, I'm not able to contribute at this time."