

# Challenging and Changing Your Own Negative Thinking

## SELF ASSESSMENT



LIVES IN THE  
LAND OF

No

Three blue clouds are positioned to the right of the word 'No', which is written in a large, green, sans-serif font.

**YES Lives In The Land of NO Self Assessment**

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# Self Assessment Guide

## Introduction

One of the characters in “YES Lives in the Land of NO” is a sad little guy named Wy Trye. He never ventures into the Land of NO because the biggest NO is inside his own head! He rejects his own ideas before others can. He puts himself down with his negative self-talk. He doesn’t take initiative because he thinks it’s hopeless. He thinks HE is hopeless!

We’ve all had times in our lives when we felt like Wy Trye.

Have you ever heard these negative messages?

- “What’s wrong with you? Can’t you do anything right?”
- “Why can’t you be more like your brother/sister?”
- “You’ll never amount to anything!”
- “Don’t stick your neck out.”
- “Because I said so, that’s why!”



These messages can pile up. Negative programming can condition us to avoid taking risks, keeping our dreams and goals to ourselves, and squelching our initiative before we ever get started.

The following YES! Attitude Assessment will give you an opportunity to take an honest look at how frequently you say NO to yourself.

Take a few minutes to respond to the 15 statements on the assessment to find out whether or not the Land of NO exists in your own head.

Be candid. Answer honestly. You don’t have to show your scores to anyone. Awareness is the first step to developing more YES in your life.

# YES! Attitude Assessment

Below are 15 statements about you and your attitude. For each statement, circle one number on the scale from 1 (Rarely) to 5 (Frequently) to indicate how often you think, feel, or do these things.

Be honest with yourself as you go through the statements. The only way to get an accurate picture of your attitude is to be candid. Make sure you answer all items.

Rarely				Frequently	
1	2	3	4	5	I practice positive self-talk.
1	2	3	4	5	When I have a good idea at work, I share it with others.
1	2	3	4	5	I welcome new challenges that test my skills and resourcefulness.
1	2	3	4	5	When I make mistakes, I correct them and try to learn from them.
1	2	3	4	5	I approach work and challenging tasks with a can-do attitude.
1	2	3	4	5	I am grateful for the good things in my life.
1	2	3	4	5	When things go wrong, I look for solutions, not people to blame.
1	2	3	4	5	I like to think of as many solutions as I can when a problem arises.
1	2	3	4	5	I listen to and consider others' ideas and opinions.
1	2	3	4	5	I trust that other people like me and accept me.
1	2	3	4	5	I believe in myself — I know I am capable, talented, and smart.
1	2	3	4	5	I look for ways to make things work rather than pointing out reasons why they won't.
1	2	3	4	5	When I fall short or fail at something, I keep trying rather than giving up.
1	2	3	4	5	When problems arise, I focus on what I can do, not what I can't do.
1	2	3	4	5	When I feel afraid, I acknowledge the fear but don't let it stop me from doing what I want to do.

.....

\_\_\_\_\_ **TOTAL** (Add points together)

## Scoring on the YES! Attitude Assessment

This assessment instrument is designed to help you become more aware of your attitude toward new ideas, toward problems, toward risk, toward work, and toward yourself. Awareness is the first step toward cultivating YES in your professional and personal life.

### If your score was 70 to 75...

Congratulations! You are a confident, optimistic person who knows how to handle fear, is willing to take calculated risks, knows how to deal with problems effectively, and takes initiative. You go for your goals and have a good attitude toward yourself and others.

### If your score was 50 to 69...

You've got a pretty good attitude about yourself, your job, and dealing with other people. You sometimes let fear or insecurity get in your way, but other times you can get past the negative self-talk in your head.

### If your score was 35 to 49...

You have some work to do in building a positive self-attitude and developing more self-confidence. You frequently get stopped by the NO in your head. You may be fearful of rejection or afraid of making a mistake. You may be a perfectionist. Your worry about not being able to do something perfectly keeps you from doing it at all.

### If your score was 15 to 34...

The Land of NO is alive and well inside your head. You almost always get stopped by your fears, worries, insecurities, and self-doubt. If you want to change that, you have a lot of work to do. Get busy cleaning all those NOs out of your thinking.

### ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING!

This simple assessment is a good start in ascertaining how your attitude supports you in achieving your goals in life... or how it gets in your way.



## Developing a YES! Attitude

Fortunately, just as negative thinking is learned, it can also be unlearned if you are willing to break out of self-limiting patterns and old habits.

Remember, NO provides a safety shield. Saying YES is risky because you never know where it will take you. If you say NO, nothing will change. If you say YES, everything might change. Is it worth the risk? Only you can decide.

Once you've completed the assessment, review your responses. Circle two or three attitudes or behaviors you most want to improve. Give them some thought.

What are you willing to do differently in order to feel and act more positively in your job? In your personal life? With your friends? With your family? Make a commitment to begin working on the changes you want and need.

How do you transform your internal NO into YES? It takes time, practice, and support from others.

### TIME

You didn't develop your internal NO overnight. It took years to form. It may take considerable time to build up your YES muscles and diminish the strength of NO. Be patient. Progress may be slow and unsteady but keep at it!

### PRACTICE

A big part of your internal NO is habit and habits can be changed. Repetition is the key. When you hear your internal censor saying NO, take contrary action. Say YES and take action. It will take weeks, maybe months, of acting in spite of your internal negativity but the more you do it, the easier it will get.

### PATIENCE

It took you a long time to become the person you are today. Be patient while you're trying to become a more positive person. Take a long-term perspective and give yourself credit for the progress you make.

### HUMOR

Being able to laugh at yourself is a wonderful trait that will help you be more positive in all kinds of situations! Lighten up and smile when you discover how limiting many of your own past NOs have been.

### SUPPORT FROM OTHERS

No one can do it for you, but you can't do it alone. Personal change requires support from people you trust. Replacing your negativity with positive thinking will be more successful if you enroll your friends and family in reinforcing your new attitude and behavior. Ask them to support you in overcoming your internal NO. We all need help and encouragement in letting go of self-limiting beliefs and behaviors. Let those who care about you contribute to developing your new, strong, internal YES.

## **If You Say YES More Often Others Will, Too!**

How can each of us contribute to transforming the Land of NO into a World of YES? What can we do to find ways to say YES more often?

### **LOOK FOR WHAT YOU LIKE IN PEOPLE, PLACES, SITUATIONS, AND IDEAS.**

For many of us, our inclination is to notice what we don't like. It's simply a habit — and habits can be changed. Make a point to actively look for what you like, both at work and at home. Say, "YES, I like that," more often.

### **PIGGYBACK ON OTHER PEOPLE'S YESES.**

Instead of saying, "YES, but ...," learn to say, "YES, and here's how I can see that working," or "YES, and here's how I can help make that idea or project even better."

### **WHEN YOU FEEL THE URGE TO SAY NO TO SOMEONE, STOP YOURSELF, TAKE A BREAK, AND REFLECT BEFORE YOU SPEAK.**

What are your motives in wanting to say NO? What is getting in the way of your saying YES? Have a conversation with the person who's asking for YES and share your concerns; see if he or she can address your issues to help change your NO to YES.

### **MODEL THE BEHAVIORS YOU SEEK FROM OTHERS.**

If you want them to do their homework before bringing an idea to you, do the same with them. If you want coworkers, family members, and friends to say YES to you, look for opportunities to say YES. Remember: What goes around comes around.

### **BE RESOURCEFUL IN FINDING WAYS TO SAY YES.**

Don't hide behind policies or tradition to say, "NO, it can't be done," or "NO, we've never done that before." It's easy and safe to say NO — it takes courage to say YES. Be courageous. If someone has a good idea, help them make it happen.

### **RECOGNIZE OTHERS WHO ARE POSITIVE INFLUENCES IN THE LAND OF NO.**

Tell them how much you admire and respect their can-do attitude. Express your appreciation for all the ways they say YES. Let them know how much you enjoy being around them and/or working with them.

Whether your Land of NO is at work, at home, in school, in personal relationships, or in your community, you can make a significant difference in lowering the level of negativity. Your YESes will add up. Other YESes will join yours. YES is contagious; it feels good.

Start now — right where you are. Find more ways to say YES.