Learning to Say "NO" Successfully

Situations develop, particularly in social settings that can pose a big challenge to an individual's ability to say "No" and really mean it. Often these events can be prevented just by thinking ahead about where you are going and what is likely to happen once you get there. At other times you may get caught off guard. How you respond in certain challenging situations can make the difference of a lifetime. Developing a good set of skills for saying no successfully is essential. Consider some of the following basic yet effective strategies for saying NO:

Tips for saying "NO"

1. **Avoid uncomfortable or dangerous situations if possible** – You might not have to face negative peer pressure if you stay away from negative peers.

2. **Be direct and assertive** – Look other in the eye confidently and stand your ground. Remember you don't have to say "YES" to others just to get them to like you or be your friend.

3. **Get out!** – If someone wont take "NO" for an answer don't stick around to let them keep pressuring you, get away and go somewhere else if possible.

4. **Don't entertain the conversation** – If someone doesn't accept "NO" for an answer then firmly tell them "NO" one last time and don't discuss it with them further if they don't respect your right to say "NO".

5. **Prepare and Practice** – If you know you will be entering a tough situation, have a few statements prepared that will help you say "NO" effectively.

6. **Have a friend present** – Plan ahead of time with a friend, if possible, who shares your desire to say "NO". It can be easier to say "NO" with support.

7. **Use Humor** – You can sometimes use humor to divert peer pressure and conflict by saying something witty.