



Say ‘Yes,’ and Then Say ‘Yes’ Again!

YOU ARE THE ONLY CONSTANT IN YOUR LIFE, BUT THERE IS ALWAYS MORE TO COME IF YOU LET IT

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Before starting college, I thought I had it all figured out. I graduated from a college-prep high school with an International Baccalaureate diploma, having learned French since I was 11. Naturally, it seemed clear to me that I should take on an International Studies major and a French minor. Naturally, I tried out for and joined the club lacrosse team, since I played in high school. Naturally, I tried to hang on to the same person I was in high school, since that’s the only person I’d ever known, and she was entering an entirely foreign environment. So, naturally, I was scared of losing her.

My first year of college was honestly pretty difficult, as it is for so many who leave their small towns for the first time in all of their 18 years of life. So, I thought that clinging onto familiarities was the best, or even only, way to cope. But what I had neglected, was that “coping” is only sustainable if you’re coping in response to changes that you’re making instead of just changes in the environment you’re in.

Although I may have had to learn it the hard way, I learned nonetheless, and I made changes. I learned it was important to start saying “yes,” and only then was I able to learn how much more important it is to say “yes” again.

I was initially reluctant when I was asked to accompany someone to a rush event for a co-ed business fraternity. I spent the entire pledgship process making progress by shrugging and saying “why not?” However, by the time I got to our initiation, I was proud to finally be able to say “yes.”

Little did I know how many doors this simple affirmation would open for me. Sure, there were many leadership positions within the chapter I could take on to learn more

about myself and my leadership style in a safe space before taking on those within other organizations, which was great. But the most impactful part of that experience was the people. I was suddenly surrounded by people that were so different from myself. Different backgrounds, different majors, different perspectives on the world. Little did I know, it was exactly what I needed. Even though I felt out of place at first amongst this group of people so accomplished in fields I thought I would never touch, I underestimated how contagious it is to be surrounded by such driven and passionate people. Honestly, because of how different our trajectories were I was able to break out of my toxically comparative mindset from high school and appreciate the accomplishments of others more genuinely, without being clouded by how I measured up. I started saying yes, just like they did.

I added a second degree that I have since fallen in love with and found passions within, taken on an undergraduate research position, played countless intramural sports, and get to teach kids French every week. Because of the first “yes” I found the courage to say my first year, I discovered opportunities that I never would have been aware of, let alone considered saying “yes” to as well. As a result, I have found out who I am outside a cloud of familiarities.

Although I could expand on this brief anecdote for pages and pages, I’ll leave you with this: no matter how certain you may be of the person you are, if you only hang on to those certainties, you are denying yourself the opportunity to find out who you could be. Say “yes” to change, and then say “yes” again. ●