



The Nice Girl Syndrome – Quick Reference Worksheet

Author: Beverly Engel - Goal: Break free from the pressure to always be “nice” and instead live with self-respect, balance, and authenticity.

7 “Nice Girl” Rules & Healthy Alternatives

The Old Rule (Nice Girl Belief)

The Healthy Alternative

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| 1. Always put others first | Value your own needs as much as others’ needs. |
| 2. Don’t disappoint or upset anyone | Accept that others’ feelings are their responsibility, not yours. |
| 3. Don’t burden others with your needs | Your needs matter. Express them openly and respectfully. |
| 4. Always be pleasant and agreeable | Be authentic—honest, kind, but not fake. |
| 5. Avoid conflict at all costs | See conflict as an opportunity for growth and clarity. |
| 6. Don’t stand up for yourself | Protect your boundaries with confidence and calm. |
| 7. Don’t say no | Saying “no” is healthy, protective, and self-respecting. |
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Reflection Prompts

1. Which of the 7 rules feels most familiar to me?
☐ _____
 2. When I say “yes” but really mean “no,” what do I feel afterward?
☐ _____
 3. What is one small situation this week where I can practice saying no?
☐ _____
 4. What boundary do I need to strengthen in my life right now?
☐ _____
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Quick Self-Talk Reframes

- Old belief: “If I say no, they’ll be angry.”
→ New belief: “If I say no, I’m respecting myself. Others can handle their feelings.”
 - Old belief: “I have to be liked.”
→ New belief: “Being authentic is more important than being liked by everyone.”
 - Old belief: “I shouldn’t upset people.”
→ New belief: “I can’t control others’ emotions. I can only be true to myself.”
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Action Steps

- ☒ Practice saying **“no”** once this week in a low-stakes situation.
- ☒ Write down your top **3 non-negotiable needs** (sleep, rest, time alone, fairness, etc.).
- ☒ Role-play assertive responses: “I appreciate your request, but I can’t commit right now.”
- ☒ Track moments when you choose authenticity over people-pleasing.

💡 **Remember:** Being kind and compassionate is a strength—but self-respect and honesty are equally essential. You don’t have to stop being caring; you only need to stop sacrificing yourself to be “nice.”

🌟 Top Tip

When you start feeling guilty for saying no, remind yourself:

“Every time I respect my own needs, I make space for healthier, more authentic relationships.”