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TED TALK

***MY YEAR OF SAYING  
YES TO EVERYTHING***

**SHONDA RHIMES**

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QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

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## INSTRUCTIONS

Individually or as a group, watch the TED talk “My Year of Saying Yes to Everything” by Shonda Rhimes (available at [leanin.org/education/year-of-yes](https://leanin.org/education/year-of-yes)). Then use the questions below for a group discussion on the ideas presented in the video.

## QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

- In her “year of yes” Shonda committed to doing the things that scared her (public speaking) and the things that she felt too busy to do (playing with her kids). Are there people or activities in your life that you’d like to say yes to more often? Who or what are they?
- “The hum,” according to Shonda, is the energy and excitement she feels when she is deeply engaged in an activity that brings her joy or love. Do you have an activity that makes you feel “the hum”? What is the activity? What do you enjoy about it?
- Shonda urges everyone to do something that makes her feel great for fifteen minutes a day. What could you do and when could you find fifteen minutes to do it? Be specific—in the morning before work? After work? During your lunch break?
- There was a point when Shonda no longer felt that her work was satisfying. She asks, “What do you do when the thing you love tastes like dust?” Have you ever felt this way about your career? If so, what did you do about it? As a group, share strategies you’ve used to regain interest and satisfaction in your work.
- As a single working mother, Shonda felt she could focus on either her children or advancing her career but not both. Whether you are a mother with a partner, a single mother, or do not have children, do you feel that you have to prioritize either work or your home life? As a group, share some strategies you’ve used to find your work/life balance.
- According to Shonda, a dream job should be “somewhat dreamy” in addition to being hard work. Do you agree with this? What would your dream job be? Why?
- What’s one key takeaway from the video that you’d like to share with someone else? Who would you share it with?

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## ONE ACTION

*The little push you need to go for it*

We recommend you close every meeting by committing to a “One Action”—one concrete thing you’re going to do before your next Circle meeting to step outside your comfort zone or practice a new skill.

### **Step 1: Identify the action you’re going to take.**

Think of five activities that scare you and/or you feel too busy to do.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Choose one activity from your list that you will say yes to between now and your next meeting.

What do you hope to gain from this activity?

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## Step 2: Share your One Action with your Circle

One by one, go around your Circle and complete the following statement:

- Over the next month, I will \_\_\_\_\_ [insert activity]. By doing this, I hope to \_\_\_\_\_ .

Move quickly from member to member, and consider cheering one another on as you go.

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITY

### Committing to saying “Yes!”

Go around your Circle and have members respond to the following:

- Raise your hand if you’d be willing to commit to a week of yes
- Keep your hand up if you’d commit to a month of yes
- Keep your hand up if you’d commit to a year of yes

Take note of who raised her hand and how long she kept it there. Find someone whose hand was up when yours was and agree to be accountability buddies. Choose a time to check in with each other on what you’ve said yes to. For example, you could text each other at the end of each day or have a phone conversation once a week.