A Life of Yes: Live YOUR Dream, Not THE Dream

@sayahillman
#LifeOfYes

@bostoncollege
@bcalumni
#bostoncollege
#wearebc

www.macncheeseproductions.com
Roadmap

• LOY
• homework
• resources
• contact
• Q & A
Life of Yes

- Default is YES, why not?, let’s do it; not NO, what if, I can’t...
- You're yourself among other people being themselves
- Community - give & take, you belong
- Kid’ness - laughter, play, no judgment
- Bumps are bumps, not roadblocks
- Utilize your pluses AND minuses
- You're the owner of your life
Cusp Conference 2012
The design of everything.
September 19-20, 2012

Cusp Conference 2012 has checked in full!
If you’d like to be added to our standby list (you never know), please contact us at info@cuspconference.com
1) Drink “Why Not?” Kool-Aid
2) Let Go
HOLDING A GRUDGE
IS LETTING SOMEONE LIVE RENT-FREE IN YOUR HEAD.
3) Create Your Recipe
LOY Ingredients

- flip-flops and jeans attire
- find & share productivity apps
- connect Person A & Person B
- wake up via sun, not alarm
- do errands during weekday-days
- eye-leaking laughter
- no commute
- personal cheerleaders
Things I wish I could get paid to do

- Make collages
- Make music mixes
- Wear flip-flops and jeans
- Sit on couch and play board games
- Work with inner-city youth
- Scrapbook
- Laugh
- Plan events and retreats
- Share tidbits from various sources with others
Home Criteria

1. School St to Addison St, Ravenswood Ave to Damen Ave
2. Appropriate vegetation to concrete ratio
3. Appropriate independent stores to chain stores ratio
4. Unusual space that has character
5. 1 to 2 bedroom
6. No smoking
7. Neighborhood mix of families and singles age 27-37
8. Easy to take bike in and out
9. One to six unit building
10. Porch (not enclosed)
11. Lots of natural light
12. No one above me
13. Quiet street
14. Easy parking
Boyfriend Criteria

1. Smells like campfire
2. Knows when to use “your” and “you’re”
3. Carries a tube filled with designs or plans across his back
4. Eats meat
5. No roommates
6. British accent
7. Knows who Sylvia Poggioli is
8. Has a bike messenger bag but is not a bike messenger
9. Doesn’t wear converse or penny loafers
"What's money? A man is a success if he gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night and in between does what he wants to do."

- Bob Dylan
**Julia Rohan**  
October 3, 2012 6:19 AM

Saya: I’m hitting my SECOND year of self-employment and you were hands-down THE BIGGEST influence to get my butt to a happier place. Thank you for getting fired. You getting fired led to me getting happy.

**jenusellis**  
Apr 05, 9:15pm via UberSocial for Android

I can't even properly live tweet #FearExperiment because of how awesome it is. I'm laughing, cheering, & having eye leak issues.

**Mentions** (sayahillman)

**jtothenines**  
Jul 24, 9:07am via Twitter for iPad

One of the best keynotes I have heard in a while. @sayahillman @garyvee #elevateNYC #bizbash
4) Recognize, Value, & Utilize Your Superpowers
5) Embrace Your Suckage
Dance Experiment
"I attended the performance & thought the show was truly inspiring! Please add my name to the list for Dance Experiment Two."
- audience member
Fear Experiment
55 strangers. 0 experience. 1 show.
6) Nike It!
“A man of knowledge lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, not by thinking about what he will think when he has finished acting.”

– Carlos Castenada
“One of the best gifts I have given myself.”
- camper
The Kumbaya Connection for Grown-Ups

By SHEILA MARIKAR
Published: July 5, 2013

Digital Detox isn’t the only way people are looking for a break from everyday life. Below, four retreats that will help them to disconnect from their digital devices.

Retreats to Explore in 2013

1. Life of Yes Retreats: Saya Hillman, founder of Mac and Cheese Productions, has been putting on regular “minglers” (mixers) to connect strangers in Chicago for years. She recently took her minglers a step further by introducing her Life of Yes Retreats. The retreats take participants to undisclosed locations for a weekend of inspiration and bonding. The catch? Everyone goes solo. No one is allowed to go with anyone they know. The retreat includes “guitar sing-alongs, firelight discussions, activities that unlock your creative-soul, and an environment where you feel at home with people you just met.” You can get on the waitlist for the winter retreat, or apply now for the summer retreat (which takes place in August).
Perfect Time Unicorn

(doesn’t exist)
7) Stick Out
Campfire

Campfire is a mix of hardwood smoke, evergreen needles, and fresh forest smells.

Note: Campfire contains real wood smoke, so it has a naturally dark, smokey color - avoid spraying on light colored fabrics to prevent staining.

Purchase a 1 oz bottle of campfire:
$30 + $4.75 S/H
(low stock)

Buy Now
People -

- clamor to talk to me
- introduce me to others
- remember me
- stay connected to me
TIRED OF CLEANING YOUR BATHROOM?

Let us do it for you

Bathroom cleaning drive
November 17 - 21
Lower Campus

$10 per bathroom

Contact Saya at 6-1073 or Kathleen at 6-5780.

Sponsored by Shaw Leadership Program
8. Go Solo
9) Be Selfish
roommates
boss
tradition
family
friends
society
significant other
coworkers

me
Sometimes living a life of yes means saying no.
10) Ask
Average Chicago wedding
$53,000
Bartered bliss: Crafting a bargain wedding

For Saya Hillman and Pete Aiello, it was important to have an "us" wedding.

No pomp and circumstance. No upholding tradition for tradition's sake.

And when Saya read that the average Chicago wedding costs nearly $30,000, according...
11) Expect Bumps
When something bad happens
you have three choices. You
can either let it define you,
let it destroy you, or you
can let it strengthen you.
• 100%
• Confidence
• HCP
12) Make It Easy
Steal and tweak!
13) Give Yourself Permission
• to be celebrated
• to brag about yourself
• to promote yourself
• to want the spotlight
• to be sad

• to vent
• to be cared about
• to belong
• to act like a kid
• to ask
14) Use Commonsense
• Say "Thank You"
• Don't compare
• Do good
• Be awesome
15) Find Your Tribe
When you find people who not only tolerate your quirks but celebrate them with cries of "me too!" be sure to cherish them. Because those weirdos are your tribe.
I choose to...
- put on pants
- leave the house
- go solo
- initiate. "Hi, my name is Saya..."
- be vulnerable
- give and take
Conditions for Authentic Relationships

- proximity
- repeated, unplanned interactions
- a setting that encourages people to let their guard down and confide in each other
You'll get a lot further if you take a step. Life of YES.

A party of one can be an amazing party, when you like the guest.

Say ‘yes,’ I dare you.

Travel light. Only bring the baggage that serves you.

Embrace your suckage.

Live your dream, not the dream.

Put on your why-not pants.

MACHiNESSE
Homework Assignment...

- email five people RE your superpowers
- create a fake resume
- send a handwritten note
- LOY questions
- create and do a SMART goal
Life of Yes Questions

- If you Why Not’ed, what could or would you do?
- Is there something/someone that if you let go, you’d have more space for goodness in your life?
- What would you include in your “Life is exactly how I want it” recipe?
- What’s something that comes easily to you that you could offer others?
- What is something that perhaps you’re not great at but that you could embrace and turn into good?
- What have you been putting off? What do you keep making excuses for? What can you just DO?
- Where could you insert yourself, somewhere that on paper you have no business being, that might lead to goodness?
- What’s different about you that you can use to your advantage?
- What’s something that you can do solo?
- How can you be selfish?
- What’s something you can say no to that might allow more yes in your life?
- What ask could you make? Who could you make an ask to?
- What’s a tool you have in your toolbelt that will help you deal with bumps?
- What can give you confidence to do something scary?
- What’s a way you can make either your life easier or someone else’s life easier?
- What’s something you can give yourself permission to do, something that perhaps doesn’t feel good but you know it’d be ok to do it?
- Who could you say thank you to and why?
- Where specifically could you find your tribe?
SMART Goal

- Specific
- Measurable
- Action-oriented
- Realistic
- Time-sensitive
Life of Yes Resources
Life of Yes℠ Resources

Books
- *ReWork*, Jason Fried
- *Quiet*, Susan Cain
- *The Art of Non-Conformity*, Chris Guillebeau
- *Daring Greatly*, Brené Brown
- *Rising Strong*, Brené Brown
- *The Happiness Project*, Gretchen Rubin
- *Eat the Frog*, Brian Tracy
- *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action*, Simon Sinek
- *Year of Yes*, Shonda Rhimes
- *Bossypants*, Tina Fey
- *4 Hour Work Week*, Tim Ferriss
- *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up: The Japanese Art of Decluttering and Organizing*, Marie Kondo
- *Going Solo: The Extraordinary Rise and Surprising Appeal of Living Alone*, Eric Klinenberg
- *Yes Please*, Amy Poehler
- *Modern Romance*, Aziz Ansari
- *Is Everyone Hanging Out Without Me? (And Other Concerns)*, Mindy Kaling

Articles
- *Some Friendly Advice*
- *18 Things Children Can Teach Us About Happiness*
- *Everything I Am Afraid Might Happen If I Ask New Acquaintances to Get Coffee*
- *The 14 Habits of Highly Miserable People*
- *How To Make Friends In The Post-Collegiate World*
- *The Busy Trap*
- *Everything you know about love is wrong* by Aziz Ansari
- *Stop Thinking and Start Doing: The Power of Practicing More*
- *How Improv Can Open Up the Mind to Learning in the Classroom and Beyond*
- *Find What You’re Meant to Do: Ask Your Friends*
- *50 Commandments of Networking*
- *You’re probably doing email introductions wrong*
- *The Right (and Wrong) Way to Network*
- *The Science Of Why You Should Spend Your Money On Experiences, Not Things*

Video
- *The Power of Vulnerability*, Brené Brown
- *Why we all need to practice emotional first aid*, Guy Winch
- *Randy Pausch Last Lecture: Achieving Your Childhood Dreams*
- *As many TED videos as you can consume!*
- *The power of introverts*, Susan Cain
- *The Hero’s Journey*, Jason Silva
- *How to Be Alone*
- *The Secrets of Happiness – in 60 Seconds*
- *This Is Water*
- *Work As Play - Alan Watts*
- *Amanda Palmer: The art of asking*

Career Resources
- Npo.net
- Idealist.org
- Indeed.com

Tech Tools & Apps
- This is a topic too big to tackle in depth here (I teach a 4-hour productivity workshop!) but here’s a list of Husband and I’s favorites to get you started

---

"Finish every day and be done with it. You have done what you could; some blunders and absurdities no doubt crept in; forget them as soon as you can. Tomorrow is a new day; you shall begin it serenely and with too high a spirit to be encumbered with your old nonsense." - Ralph Waldo Emerson
Life of Yes™ Activities

Live Lit/Storytelling/Presentations
- Morified
- Pecha Kucha
- Ignite
- TEDx
- The Moth
- Write Club
- Toastmasters

Comedy/Art
- lo (formerly Improv Olympic)
- Upright Citizens Brigade
- Second City
- SoFar Sounds

Food
- underground supper clubs in general
- Mealsharing
- Eat With
- Chaos Cooking
- Dinner Lab
- Dîner En Blanc
- The Dinner Party – for those dealing with grief/loss

Entrepreneurism | Inspiration
- Creative Mornings
- One Million Cups
- Unreasonable Institute
- The Awesome Foundation
- The School of Life
- Mastermind Groups

Conferences | Camps
- 99U
- World Domination Summit
- Bullsh!t Conference
- Yes and Yes Yes
- Camp No Counselors
- Digital Detox

Classes | Education
- Dabble
- Coursehorse
- Skillshare
- Dev Boot Camp
- Starter League
- The Experience Institute
- Kahn Academy
- Coresys
- Society of Grown Ups
- Next Door Chicago

Dating
- Project Fix Up
- How About We
- Smart Dating Academy
- Coffee Meets Bagel
- Hinge

Physical
- Dance Dance Party Party

Volunteering
- Hands On Network, e.g. Chicago Cares
- Taproot
- Open Heart Magic
- Women on Call
- Catchafire

Un-Networking
- Tea with Strangers
- Coworking spaces; Desktime is a coworking directory

Self-Plugs
- The Life of Yes™ Store (notecards, posters, decals+) – self-gifts, gifts for others!
- TeamPete: my husband does Workplace Improv – if you’re looking for team-building and/or a way to work on enhancing business skills that isn’t painful, Pete’s your guy! Based in Chicago, but travels.
- If you’re in the Chicago area, come to an event of mine! If you’re from outside the area, come to a Life of Yes™ Camp! Or bring me to you!

“A man of knowledge lives by acting, not by thinking about acting, not by thinking about what he will think when he has finished acting.” – Carlos Castenada
Get In Touch

I WANT MORE...
play • boldness • inspiration
personal growth • new experiences
• genuine connections

VIA...
classes • workshops
social gatherings • keynotes
performances • camp

THAT ARE PEERLESS.
everyone attends solo • comfortable discomfort
encouragement to be yourself • broad spectrum
of participants • immediate bonding
positivity-infused

#LifeOfYes

www.macncheeseembitions.com
@sayahillman