

LIVING A

**LIFE**

WITH NO EXCUSES

THE TRUTH ABOUT EXCUSES, HOW  
TO STOP MAKING THEM  
AND START GETTING RESULTS

KAREN DONALDSON

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# How To Live A Life With No Excuses

**The Truth About Excuses, How To Stop  
Making Them And Start Getting Results**

**Karen Donaldson**

Personal Growth Strategist, Certified Confidence Coach

Executive Public Speaking Coach, International Speaker

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**KAREN DONALDSON**, Personal Growth Strategist, Certified Confidence Coach, Executive Public Speaking Coach, International Speaker

**To Schedule Karen to Speak at Your Next Event:**

1.416.414.2082 [admin@karendonaldsoninc.com](mailto:admin@karendonaldsoninc.com)

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## **About the Author**

Author Karen Donaldson is die-hard foodie (A recent pescatarian foodie), mom of 5, 3 kids, an over-opinionated Parrot named Jazz, and mini-budgie with a big bark. Karen is also the owner of Karen Donaldson Inc.; she is a Personal Growth Strategist, Certified Confidence Coach, Executive Public Speaking Coach and International Speaker (mouth full I know), but that is Karen D in a nutshell.



Karen has been speaking for over 20 years, showing individuals exactly how to take powerful action to achieve more at work and in life, lead themselves and others better, increase their performance and productivity level and be more confident in themselves while doing it. She is the secret weapon behind many CEOs, Senior Executives, Superintendents,

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and Politicians as she guides them and helps them to increase their capacity to truly connect, engage, and authentically increase their impact with any audience. With her dynamic and interactive style as an expert speaker, she has the ability to move any audience to action and show any “ready and willing” individual, how become *that leader* who knows how to connect, engage and empower themselves and others.

Visit Karen at [www.karendonaldsoninc.com](http://www.karendonaldsoninc.com), [www.speakconfident.com](http://www.speakconfident.com), [www.speakandgetbooked.com](http://www.speakandgetbooked.com) for more products, free tips and information about her coaching programs, live events and products.

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## **Acknowledgments**

A humungous thank you to my Sebastien who keeps me on my toes and reminds me to push harder and act bigger every minute of every day. As well, to my Gemini sister for life Rowena R and my sister from another mister, Vickie G. Always there reminding each other to ask ourselves the right questions; what if it does work? And why not? I love you ladies.

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# Welcome

## **Welcome to Living A Life With No Excuses: The Truth About Excuses, How To Stop Making Them And Start Getting Results**

This book is intended to be your pocket guide to consistently break your pattern of making excuses and empower you to lead yourself to new levels of success. Just as important it will give you the tools to equip those around you to do the same. I believe in constant and consistent self-development; reading, conferences, webinars, teleclasses, magazine subscriptions, etc. However, what is equally important as personal development i.e., reading, workshop, is taking ACTION. We have all been to that place where we have read and read and read and our minds are on personal development information overload. We are filled with great, new ideas and strategies but, we have yet to take any action or implement any of the great strategies that we have absorbed. Don't get me wrong, it's not that we don't want to take ACTION; it's sometimes that we just don't know what to start with or how to get started in general, so we get stuck in our excuses.

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Well, let me tell you, this book is about learning and taking ACTION. The length of this book is short and to the point for that exact reason, I want you to absorb information and take action now! After every lesson, one through thirty, I have left an area for you to write down two action steps that you will intentionally take to make the lesson a reality in your life today. If you are already applying the lesson in your life, I want you to step it up a notch and do more of it, or do it in a bigger or better way.

Some lessons you read may involve change over time, but many are as simple as changing your choice of words or doing things a bit differently. Some of what you read may be hard to hear, however, the reason it may resonate with you is because it may be your current reality. This book is about taking action and making no excuses.

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## The Commitment and The Oath

Before we begin, I would like to ask you to take this Oath, and, make a commitment to yourself, by signing where it is indicated to do so.

**Please repeat the oath while standing in front of a mirror, looking directly into your own eyes as you speak. Stand at attention with your right hand over your heart.**

**OATH:** I [insert your name] hereby commit to doing things differently. I commit to stay open to learning, quickly implementing and taking action based on what I read. I understand that the tools will be in my hands and it is up to me to make the choice to truly lead myself to achieve amazing results in my life. I commit to taking consistent action!

Perfect!

Next, I caution you to continue reading this book **ONLY** if you are serious about doing what it takes to become a naturally confident speaker.

Sign and date here if you commit to challenging yourself to become a confident and kick butt “You”:

Sign Here X \_\_\_\_\_

Date X \_\_\_\_\_

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## My No Excuses Story

Allow me to share my “huge” (at least in my eyes), no excuses experience.

I’ve had a few books fully written for the past 10 years. Yet I sat on it because I couldn’t decide if I wanted to go the traditional publishing route or the self-publishing route. Excuse!

I spoke to authors from the self-publishing lane as well as authors from the traditional publishing lane. I listened, re-asked, re-listened and still sat on my books. Excuse!

The questions I was asking to myself and the answers I was giving myself were all excuses.

I told myself my book wasn’t long enough,

No one was going to buy it,

What if it’s not good enough?

What if I’m not good enough?

I don’t know what to do when I finish writing it,

The writing wasn’t up to par and the list goes on.

That was until I truly owned the fact that everything that did and did not happen in my life up until now was my fault. The good and the bad. The reason I didn’t have a book that could help people all over the world, was because I chose not to put one out there - it was all on me.

So, I decided to start making intentional choices, most importantly, the intentional choice to always choose.

**Here’s what I chose when I let go of my excuses;**

I believe in me!

I am enough!

I can do it because I say so!

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If it wasn't long enough – so what!

If it wasn't perfectly written – so what!

I had to refocus on helping and stop being attached to the outcome.

My excuses are only my own insecurities talking way too loud, I chose to knock them down with all that I did do well!

Every time I started down the road of what if, I asked myself what if it does work and focused on that outcome.

What I have to share is not for everyone, but it is for someone. If it can help at least one person in any capacity, that's what I will focus on.

Let me tell you, as I wrote this paragraph right here, I was questioning myself. I was scared of not being accepted, yes, I was. But, I did it anyway because I reminded myself that I accept myself, I am enough, I believe in myself, and all I can do is give of myself. So that is what I have done with this book, that's all I can offer.

This book is a sincere gift from me to you, my only request is that you use what fits, if it fits, and leave the rest by the wayside. Just be you, believe in yourself, and know that you are enough because you say so!

I could share story upon story, however, this is not the autobiography of Karen D, so let's get you on the road to living a life with no excuses.

# How To Live A Life With No Excuses

## Chapter 1: The Truth About Excuses and Personal Achievement Myths

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### The Back Ground On Excuses

Let's start with getting crystal clear around the definition of excuse.

**Excuse:**

**A: to make an apology for**

**B: to try to remove blame from**

As we continue through this book, I want you to focus on a definition (b); to try to remove blame from.

Let's start with a suite of excuses that most people have as a part of their verbal and non-verbal vocabulary. You either say it out loud, under your breath, or say it in your head.

**Here Is A Partial List Of The Normal Suite Of Excuses.**

Not enough time

Not enough money

Not talented enough

Not smart enough

Too young

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Too old  
Don't know-how  
It's not time  
I'm not ready  
I'll do it later  
It's not perfect yet  
It won't work

## HERE'S THE REAL TRUTH:

I'm afraid to fail and I'm afraid to be judged when I fail.

Anthony Robbins once said; "Fear is nothing more than "False Evidence Appearing Real".

It's our perspective of fear that frightens us and prevents us from moving forward.

## So What Are Excuses?

Excuses are justifications we make to ourselves about events, circumstances, the action and inaction we fail to take. They're invented reasons we create to defend our behavior, lack of action taken, or simply a way to excuse ourselves from taking full responsibility. Excuses are essentially a means of placing blame **OF** an internal problem (us and our mindset) **ON** external factors (someone else, the situation, etc.).

## Why We Make Excuses?

There are a lot of reasons why people make excuses. In fact, everyone has different reasons for making them. However, when it boils down to it, there are some key ones. Here are the main reasons we make excuses:

- Fear of Failure
- Fear of Embarrassment
- Fear of Success

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Fear of Being

Fear of Being Perceived as Different

Fear of Standing Out

Fear of Change

Fear of Uncertainty

Fear of Responsibility

Fear of Making Mistakes

Perceived lack of confidence or resources

To start eliminating excuses from our lives we have to look at combating as many traces of fear as possible. As well as, learn to feel the fear and take action anyway.

Take a good look at what fear does to us. Fear holds us hostage and locks us away in our comfort zone. For some people, fear has held them, hostage, for days, for some months, for some people even years.

Fear is often a large by-product of; a lack of experience, understanding, perspective, information, or resources. If you're lacking in these areas, it will negatively impact your level of confidence. You will fail to take the action necessary to achieve your goals and objectives. As a result, you'll make excuses about your life and circumstances in order to help increase your self-esteem. This unfortunately is the wrong type of self-soothing. All you're doing is creating the illusion of security. You're simply disguising the discomfort by taking short-term pain medicine. The pain is still there and will continue until you finally acknowledge, own, overcome your fears and act in spite of your fears.

### **The Loss We Experience By Making Excuses**

You may not realize it, but you lose so much when you make excuses. Not only do you lose out on experiences and opportunities, but you also

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start to lose “*yourself*” by living in your excuses. In addition:

You start to lose your self-worth.

You start to lose your self-confidence.

You start to lose your focus.

You start to lose your ability to act courageously and take risks.

You start to get used to waiting and waiting becomes your new normal.

You lose out on truly living your life to the fullest.

It’s tough to hear, but true if you’re honest with yourself.

Now, I’m not referring to the cliché airy-fairy live life to the fullest. I’m speaking about freakin living, making choices because you can, saying no to things you don’t want to do, and saying yes to more of the things that make you smile.

For years, I’ve made up all kinds of excuses for the things that I wanted to do and why I haven’t done them. The truth is that I was just scared. Because of that, I never started, you never started, and we never started.

Making excuses is also an easy way to fool yourself that *you* are not the problem, convincing ourselves that it’s something or someone else. It makes it easy to lay external blame. When we lay external blame the root of what needs to get handled never gets addressed, you never get addressed, we never get addressed.

## Excuse Reality Check

Here are the 2 most harmful excuses that guarantee you lose out on all things great:

***“I Could”***

**And**

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## *“I Would”*

*I Could*, essentially means that you have been thinking about it for far too long, and have talked yourself out of it on numerous occasions.

Let me know if this sounds familiar; I could do that if only I/ he/ she/ they (you fill in the blank). I could do that if had (you fill in the blank).

*I Could* = No action.

*I Would*, essentially means that you are scared out of your living daylight's to take action. It normally precedes an extended long-winded excuse. This is normally where we lay external blame.

Never forget that you can only control your external environment to a certain extent, however, you always will have full control over what you do and don't do, if you choose with intention.

## **Excuse Reality Check**

When the course of your life passes you by, and you realize that excuses have dominated and influenced the majority of your decisions, or lack thereof, it's a sign that your excuse-making is a habit.

Making excuses is and can be a habit.

A habit that we have made a commitment to.

A commitment to stay and live within your comfort zone.

A commitment to being just ok.

A commitment to getting by.

## **Consequences of Making Excuses**

Living a life of excuses can have very serious and lasting consequences.

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Remember those aspirations and dreams you had when you were younger and felt unstoppable? They still exist; they simply have a hard layer over them. The layer makes it feel like it has disappeared and is unreachable, but I guarantee you it's still there.

Living a life of excuses holds you back from recognizing opportunities, which most often are right in front of you. Unfortunately, you're not able to see them because your focal point is *on, and in* your excuses. It's like standing in the water at the beach and trying to enjoy the beautiful turquoise Jamaican water while 2 stingrays are circling you. You just can't do it. You're totally focused on the stingrays. The same thing happens with your excuses.

The bountiful opportunities that surround aren't even in your peripheral vision.

Living a life of excuses keeps you from acknowledging and using talents and skills that you already possess.

Living a life of excuses keeps keep you from tapping into your strong ability to problem solve. We all have the capacity to problem solve, each and every one of us.

Take a moment and think of a time when you were in the middle of a challenge, and recall how you got out of it. You did it, you managed, you knew what to do when the s#\$t hit the fan like you always do.

When you live in your excuses that skillset becomes dormant, rusty, and stiff, but the skillset never fully disappears. However, at the same time, it doesn't get any stronger.

If you don't challenge yourself to grow, fall, get back up and reach new levels of success, you'll never really know what you're truly capable of. New opportunities are hidden around every corner, but you will never find them if you saturate your mind with constantly making excuses.

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Making excuses creates a false security blanket that you start to rely on. Along with it comes; a lack of responsibility and growth, self-limiting beliefs, huge regrets, imaginary walls hold you in your comfort zone and self-induced mental blocks suppressing proactive action and your natural creativity.

Clearly, these consequences don't lead to a rewarding lifestyle. Truth be told, they paralyze us and prevent us from moving forward in all areas of our lives.

With all of the personal development and achievement gurus and experts out there, I profess to be none of them. I'm not here to tell you something you don't already know. Most of the time we know exactly what we need to do, but for some bloody reason, it's so hard for so many people to get it done.

I am here to give you a different perspective on what you probably already know, as well as some thought about how to stop thinking about it and get it done.

In my personal experience and my client's experiences, here are a few personal achievement myths we had to de-bunk before we ventured down the road to creating and living a life with no excuses

**Myth #1:** Changing the way you think is the first step to becoming successful.

**TRUE and FALSE.**

Thinking alone is passive.

However positive thinking, when partnered up with taking action, equals

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results. If you want to create different results in your life, you have to start thinking and acting differently.

Once again, thoughts don't always lead to actions...if they did, procrastination wouldn't be the big problem it is for most people.

By nature, people are masters of self-deception and they do it with their thinking. I've done this at times in my life and so have you. Thinking and action are like the front and back of your hand when it comes to personal achievement. You can't have one without the other.

### **Another Personal Achievement Myth That May Surprise You**

***Myth #2:*** Habits are more important than goals and planning.

#### **TRUE.**

A plan is external to you, while habits are internal and become a part of you of your being and your subconscious mind. If you develop the habit of being a better listener, you'll build better relationships, if you develop the habit of exercising every morning, you'll become healthier and more energetic. Most important, habits become a part of your lifestyle and allow you to enjoy success as a process rather than an event.

Many people create plans and become more attached to the plan than they are to the goal that it was created to achieve. Goals are often just as bad, especially when they have deadlines. It's easy to throw in the towel when deadlines aren't met and plans go off course.

Again, success is not an event; it's a process and a lifestyle. Those who don't take this approach get stuck in the achievement for achievement's sake, they set one goal, achieve it, and move on to the next one with little or no commitment to an overall purpose for their life.

Here's what to do with the Myth above to create a life where excuse-making is no longer a core part of it:

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Get crystal clear on **“what” you want and “why” you want it.** Get clear on what habits are a disservice to you and where you want to be, and replace them with new habits that will move you closer to your “what”.

Most important take consistent action and replace those non-progressive habits with habits that lead to your success...success defined by you.

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## Chapter 2: Commitment and Excuses

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Here's my question to you:

### *What are you committed to?*

Are you committed to your excuses, or are you committed to creating and living a life that you wake up to with a smile? A life where each and every morning you wake up ready to happily start your day.

When you make excuses, you are saying *YES* to conformity and *YES* to staying comfortable. At the same time, you are saying *NO* everything great that could possibly come to you, and that you could potentially experience. You're also saying *NO* to growth, success and so much more.

When it comes to letting go of your excuses, and moving beyond them, it's not a matter of determination, nor is it a matter of personal strength.

It's a matter of *willingness* paired with commitment. Willingness is a conscious choice that you have to make to yourself, it can't be imparted on you by someone else.

Are you *willing* to stay the course, a course that includes ups and downs and at times a broken road?

Are you *willing* to do what it takes? I mean any and everything to get what you want, and, to get to where you want to be?

Are you *willing* to live outside of your excuses? In a place where I

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guarantee that nothing but greatness exists and a feeling that can't be described with words? But, at the same time, a place where I guarantee will be riddled with hardships, naysayers, falls, and stumbles?

Are you *willing* to endure the challenges to stand in and own your worth?

Are you *willing* to believe in yourself when no one else does?

That is what you need, a serious *willingness* to stay the course and take consistent action on what matters most to you. No matter what presents itself in your path.

As we walk through life there is a certain number of guarantees, a few of them are as follows; change will happen, we will get older, we will always have the choice to choose and we will continually be judged by others.

This comes back to your commitment level and your willingness. What are you committed to and willing to do?

If the above guarantees are things that we can't control why do we spend so much time focusing on them when we have no capacity to change them? It's time to reset how we operate.

Start by recreating your language, what you say to yourself. Your internal talk.

Every time you are about to utter an excuse, say this to yourself:

*"Yes, I Can."*

No this is not about saying a rah-rah statement. It's about taking back the reigns of what you think about yourself.

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Yes, I Can, which means letting go of the scarcity and "what if" mindset.

Far too often we focus on the wrong thing and walk and talk ourselves away from growing and creating bigger and better versions of ourselves.

It's not our environment, it's us.

Now, I have something new for you to consider and try.

For the next few days (and for life).

I want you to only ask yourself a version of the questions listed below. It will help you step into what's awaiting you, help you grow bigger, faster, and accomplish more of what you want.

It's about asking yourself the right question(s) that will successfully lead you in a positive and progressive direction, and keep you focusing on succeeding instead of making excuses.

## **The questions:**

How can I make it work?

How can it get it?

How can I get it sooner?

How can I do more of it?

How can I contribute more?

Who can I help?

What can I do to make it work?

How can I fix this?

What can I do to make it better?

When you ask yourself "the right" question; a question that will successfully lead you in a positive and progressive direction, and keep you

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focusing on succeeding - you will naturally start to focus on what you need to do to make things happen.

Choose to ask yourself the right questions, especially when in a tough situation.

Sometimes it's as simple as walking away and saying nothing at all.

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## Chapter 3: How to Lose Your Excuses: Language and Decisions

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### The Power of Your Words

Your words hold more power than you give it credit.

You must be intentional with your language, it can and will build or break you, whether you realize it or not.

We all have a little voice in our head, and at this moment you either are or are not aware of it.

That little voice is often called our inner critic or our self-talk. It's that little voice that silently yet loudly tells you that; *you can't do it, you're not good enough, don't embarrass yourself, you'll look stupid, just wait, you're going to fail, you're going to fail, don't do it, say no, it's too hard or even; you don't know what to do.*

If you're not aware of that little voice, become aware of it today. That little voice is more than likely responsible for stifling your growth, and, feeding your excuse-making.

When we don't even know it exists, we will never have a chance of creating a life of no excuses.

The language of your little voice is almost never positive, never supportive, and never encouraging. If you don't re-program it to be so. The role of your little voice is to protect you from hurt, but in most cases, it overprotects you and hinders you.

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

To start creating a life of no excuses, the intentional action you have to take is twofold;

First off, you must acknowledge what your little voice tells you on a regular basis.

Second, you must create a new positive and empowering script for your little voice.

When you become aware of what you're thinking and saying to yourself, you can then edit and revise the little critic with phrases that empower you.

Now let me be clear with you, resetting your little voice to steer away from the overly negative and protective mode, is constant work. It's something that will take time, but it's so worth it.

The language we choose is of vital importance.

It's about finding and choosing language that inspires you, motivates you, amps up your confidence, reminds you to focus and keep moving forwards, especially during challenging times.

Phrases such as: *let's do it, keep your head up, just breathe, you have this, I can do it-* are just examples.

The key is to find your own phrases that work for you, phrases that build you and are unique to you.

When it comes to your language, you must be willing to do the work that it takes to manage your negative self-talk and intentionally recreate your

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positive self-talk.

It's the practice of: acknowledging and taking back control of your internal language. It's the most important language that will ever exist in your lifetime.

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*What new positive phrases can you create for yourself? Phrases that will replace your inner critic. Take time out and write them here.*

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## Making the Decision to Remove Excuses Out of Your Life

Making no excuses can be simple or it can be difficult when you understand that there is no such thing as maybe or trying it.

Here is my philosophy:

**Maybe Does Not Exist  
And  
Trying Does Not Exist**

**You either DO IT or you DON'T.**

**You either say YES or you say NO.**

There is no in-between.

When you **try** something, in essence, you never put your full effort into what you are doing. When you try, you walk forward with a 50/50 expectation of failure. One foot in and one foot out. Just tasting it and being ok if it doesn't work out.

When you say **maybe** it allows for 0% of everything and anything, Maybe is a non-answer.

Allow me to use an overly simplistic story. I have a number of wonderful godchildren, and on this particular day, we were ending our outdoor play date at the park. Just before we walked over the car to head home, I asked everyone if they wanted a last slice of cantaloupe before left the park. I asked everyone individually, everyone said yes and took a slice except one of them who said maybe. I told her to decide because there was very little left. *I'm sure you know the rest of the story.* I sliced up the

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rest of the cantaloupe for those who said yes and when we arrived back at the car, she then stated that she wanted a piece. At that time there was no more left, which meant she got none, she lost out.

That's exactly what happens when we say *maybe*, we lose out on everything and gain nothing.

It's simple.

**You either DO IT or you DON'T.**

**You either say YES or you say NO.**

When you keep it that simple and stay away from using the terms *maybe* and *trying*, you will find that your use of excuses starts to decrease.

It will lead to you easily making clear and concise decisions. It's not until you make clear decisions, will you be able to focus on what you need to do, to get the results that you want.

### **Removing Excuses Out of Your Life.**

To overcome your excuses, you must first come to terms with and admit that you are making excuses in the first place.

You can't change what you can't acknowledge. Full acknowledgment and awareness of your excuses are paramount if you're serious about creating and living a life of no excuses.

This can be difficult to do; however, it's absolutely necessary and critical if you want to eliminate the resulting consequences of making excuses.

Here's how to start your walk down the road to no excuses, ask yourself

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the following questions below, and be honest with yourself.

Answer the questions without judgment. Take the time now to write it down.

*What excuses do I tend to make on a regular basis?*

*When I hit a wall? When I feel stuck? In personal and professional settings and situations?*

*What is the excuse(s) that is common in both my personal and professional life?*

*When I make these excuses, what am I settling for?*

Now, you must also identify the reasons for your excuses. To do so ask yourself the following questions, and be honest with yourself:

*Why am I making these excuses?*

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*When I make excuses, what am I saying yes to? (Some thought starters; saying yes to staying small, staying safe, staying the box, etc.)*

*Whatever you are saying to yes, what is it costing you? (Some thought starters, living a life you like, settling for average, etc.)*

Use the previous pages to truly get clear on; your excuses, the cost to your self-worth, your greatness and you're why behind making and living in your excuses.

Doing this will shine a light on your current reality and this is exactly what needs to happen before a change can even be considered.

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## Chapter 4: How to Lose Your Excuses: The Power of Intention and Choice

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“Intention is one of the most powerful forces there is. What you mean when you do a thing will always determine the outcome. The law creates the world.” **Brenna Yovanoff, The Replacement**

### The Power of Intention

You’ve got to really “want” something in order to accomplish or attain it. Yet, it’s not just the “want” that makes us achieve our goals in life.

Success will only come about if we acquire the *intention* to achieve it. Acting with *intention* is a decision.

Removing excuses from our daily routine comes with acting with intention.

The strength of our decisions depends on the willpower that we have to achieve it. The greater the intention and willpower, the easier ***choosing*** instead of ***making excuses*** will become.

One of the most powerful aspects of intentions is that we have the full capacity to control how we experience everything around us.

Many of us relegate a bad occurrence to saying we had a bad day.

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

Have you ever been at work and your boss comes over to your desk, and says something that thoroughly pisses you off? *Most of us have been there.*

You then declare that you are having a bad day or that your boss has ruined your entire day?

In that example, you have chosen to ruin your own day. Yes, you did it to yourself.

You see, the 5.5 seconds in which the boss took to speak, was just a moment in your entire 24-hour day. You experienced a bad moment, not a bad day. If your intention is then to jade your entire day with that one bad moment, then that is completely you're choosing not your bosses. Alternately if your intention is to call it what it is; a bad moment, then let it go and move on, that's how you set yourself up for consistent success.

We cannot always control what is happening beyond ourselves, but we can definitely always control how we feel and think about everything that is happening, in every moment that we breathe.

Living with intention in only your mind is a completely different thing and won't get you very far. Acting on it in a positive way will change everything.

The result of your intentional thoughts and actions can be profound in either a positive or negative direction. It's always within your control to choose.

Take a moment to truly grasp this concept about acting with intention. Use the boss analogy to allow it to deeply resonate.

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When you marry making an intentional decision, being willing to do what it takes, and acting with focus and intention, there is no space for excuses.

Your life can be whatever you want it to be, but it won't happen just because you want it to. The power of intention can change the course of your whole life. Don't settle for average. You weren't put on this earth to be average, so stop sitting in it like it's your final resting spot.

### The Power of Choice

*"I've made a decision and now I must face the consequences."*

**J. Michael Straczynski**

Positive thinking is the core of what dreams are made of, but it is truly the choices that we make that move us along the path.

The most remarkable thing about choice is that anyone can experience the thrill of embarking on a new intentional and self-directed path, by simply choosing.

When you start to make intentional decisions and intentional choices, you will start to gain something I call "success momentum".

Things around you start to align much faster, everything you had wanted starts to appear around you. It's not that new things are happening, it's that you are now seeing differently. It's that you are now *present* to the largest and most important role that you play in your life. It's a new place

## **How To Live A Life With No Excuses**

where you start to take back your power and no longer be a product of your environment, but create your environment.

*“Your life is the sum result of all the choices you make, both consciously and unconsciously. If you can control the process of choosing, you can take control of all aspects of your life. You can find the freedom that comes from being in charge of yourself.”*

**Robert F. Bennett**

**Karen Donaldson**

## **Chapter 5: How to Lose Your Excuses: Comparisons**

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Stop judging yourself and comparing yourself to others. In a world where we are all unique individuals, why do we waste time comparing when there is nothing to compare.

It's like comparing oranges to a pair of winter boots, ridiculous right? So why do we spend so much time doing such ridiculous things?

### **Avoid Making Comparisons Altogether**

Making comparisons between yourself and others will often make you feel disheartened, especially if you're unable to live up to other people's standards and achievements. Instead, only compare yourself to your "best self". No other comparisons are necessary. If through your highest efforts you surpass your personal best, then that's good enough, at least until your next attempt.

### **Stop apologizing for being you**

There is Nothing Ordinary About You...So Rock "you" like it's nobody's business!

Realize that you weren't meant to be like, look like talk like, walk like, think like act like, anyone else.

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So why do we spend so much time trying to be like, assimilate to, walk like, think like, act like everyone else?

When we try to align ourselves with those around us, why is it that we measure how dissimilar we are from them? Then instantly go into what I need to do better mode?

In actuality, it's a type of subconscious programming.

What if you changed the paradigm and adopted a yes "I do this well" mode.

A new mode where you choose to see and focus on your assets. A new mode where you intentionally choose what happens to you. A new mode where you take back full control of your life, your place in it, your contributions, and all decisions that affect you.

It's not about being selfish, nor self-praise, it's about self-worth.

It's about trusting yourself and realizing that you are enough - as is.

It's about owning that you are perfectly imperfect just like you're supposed to be.

## Karen Donaldson

*What if you stopped criticizing yourself? What would it be like, what would it feel like? Write it down.*

*What if you started to approve of yourself, and chose to see your differences and unique assets and abilities as a blessing, a gift of your USQ (Unique Standout Qualities)? Write down your U.S.Q's*

## **How To Live A Life With No Excuses**

You are worthy of everything great because you declared it...plain and simple.

Ensure that your U.S.Q's are shining all of the time, always aim to attain that feeling of acceptance, and stay away from self-criticism.

Karen Donaldson

## Chapter 6: How to Lose Your Excuses: Redefining Failure

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I want you to consider redefining failure!

*What if I asked you to consider failure a good thing?*

*What if I asked you to consider failing with a smile?*

Failure is a state of mind, which has the ability to both paralyze and propel.

The great thing is that you can choose which effect it has on you.

If you choose to focus on failing and why things won't work– I can promise you that you will have a long road ahead of you to attain business or personal success.

The right mindset, taking full control of your beliefs and thoughts, and staying in action are what's required to redefine failure, and allow it to propel you.

**Here's how you can start to re-define failure:**

1. Start viewing failure or falling as practice. No more, no less- it's just practice.
2. Acknowledge that failure/falling/practice is essential to get to where you want to be. An essential step if your goal is to attain success in any area of your life.

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3. Know that you can't have success without failure, it's like your hand- you can't have the front without the back.

4. Failure is only permanent, if you quit or never even try in the first place.

5. Make the intentional choice to view your "falls" as one step closer to success.

How you view failure is a choice and always has been, make the choice to choose. Commit to getting started and never quitting.

### Change your "F" WORD from fear and failure to focus

Enough with the overused "F" word!

The only way that you can FAIL is if you give up!

The only way that you can FAIL is if you don't even try!

The only way that you can FAIL is if you don't get started!

The only way that you can FAIL is if what you want stays a thought!

It's time to adopt the only "F" word that ensures achieving success -FOCUS.

The right question to be asking yourself and acting upon is:

How will I set myself up for success?

It starts and ends with the "F" word FOCUS.

ONLY consistently Focus on the positive end result.

By doing this you create the right frame of mind to get there or get it done.

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By doing this the universe can't do anything, but support you to fulfill whatever you focus on.

Make it happen NOW.... Change your "F" WORD from Fear and Failure to FOCUS!

Use your focus to combat your excuses. Every time you feel an excuse emerging, refocus.

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

# Chapter 7: How to Lose Your Excuses: Defining Success on Your Terms

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### Finding success on your terms.

A number of years ago, I got caught up in reading books and trying to duplicate all of the great leaders that I was reading about. Getting up super early visualizing, reading, and listening; because they did it. Don't get me wrong, it worked well for a while until I just got exhausted.

You see I was making myself wrong for not adhering to someone else's success path. As much as they were my mentors and I admired them, what they accomplished and how they got there. There was a moment when I came to the realization that they are not me and I am not them. And I'm not supposed to be them, and I really and truly never want to be them.

I want to be a successful Karen D, successfully defined by me.

It wasn't until this realization that I started to grow as a person and the success that I defined for myself began to happen.

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I didn't have to wake up super early at 5 am because my mentor did. I found and defined what was a fit for me. I'm naturally an early riser and a morning person and 6 am was good enough because I said so and it worked for me.

Yes, I wanted to read 1 hour a day, however, it didn't all have to happen in the morning. Yes, I was committed to spending time visualizing, but it didn't have to be with candles around me in the quietest place in the house (I have 3 kids, a quiet place does not exist and I like it like that). I could visualize mid-day in my car, after I grabbed my favourite tea, turned my phone on silent, and sat in the car as the sun beamed in my face.

What I'm trying to say here is that it's not about becoming someone else. It's about becoming a top-notch kick-ass version of yourself with no excuses or apologies.

Please don't get me wrong or read more into this than intended. Keep reading, keep listening, learning and incorporate the pieces that help you grow.

Just remember, it doesn't have to be everything or it can be everything, don't make yourself wrong for not doing it exactly how your mentors do. Your path is going to be and is supposed to be different.

I don't want you to lose a couple of years like I did trying to replicate everything to the 99th degree.

Choose, learn, practice, duplicate, half or whole it's always up to you.

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

Now let's take at the word success. Success is such a loaded word.

Before you utter the word success out of your mouth again, I want you to get clear on what success looks like to you and for you.

If you don't define success for yourself, you will continue to wander aimlessly through life, just maintaining the status quo. Yes, it's kind of rough to hear, but it is the absolute truth.

How will you know when you have arrived if you don't even know, where you want to be, and most importantly WHY?

Let's talk about the importance of the WHY. Taking time out to define success on your own term is only the first step.

When those curves and bends in the road come your way your WHY will keep you committed to working hard. Your WHY will allow you to persevere when naysayers are around you, your Why will fuel your willpower, your WHY will hold your confidence and commitment level high when your skills or worth gets questioned. Your WHY is what's necessary to remind you why you got started in the first place, and why you need to never quit and finish.

Be clear on what success means to you and why— leave the opinions of others out of it!

Never allow the words of others to define you, and, as shared above, define success on your terms – not society's.

Karen Donaldson

## Chapter 8: How to Lose Your Excuses: Loving Judgment

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Here's where I want to talk about judgment. What you're about to read is taken from something I shared in one of my private online groups.

It's Ok, Judge Me! I recently spoke at an event and what we spoke about was judgment.

We spoke about changing the way we perceive judgment, and the emphasis and focus we put on "not wanting to be judged".

Being judged doesn't hold any power unless you give it power. Too often "fearing being judged" holds us back from taking any action at all.

You see here is the reality, the number one thing that we can't control is what other people think.

People will think what they want to, no matter the situation. It is simply a matter of personal perception and opinion, which everyone is entitled to.

However, here's where the power lies.... The only person's perception and opinions you can control and shape is YOURS.

Here's an example, if I had \$1000 and I gave \$100 to 10 people, there would most likely be someone in the group that was grateful and also someone who thought they should have received more money. That is just the nature of human beings. You can't please everyone, so stop trying.

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

As individuals, we have so much power, "IF" we choose to intentionally use it.

Too many of us fear being judged...and I want you to take a moment to truly realize something; you are spending precious time fearing and focusing on something that will never change.

Fearing judgment is like fearing sidewalks, they will always be there if you plan to go outside of your home.

I ask you to consider something. Consider changing your relationship with judgment.

I want you to walk into every situation expecting to be judged and fully knowing that you will be judged.....Take away the power of judgment by acknowledging it.

ALSO, walk-in and stand in the power of your worth, your greatness, your ability to give, your ability to just be you, your capacity to be amazing, perfection, imperfections, and all.

You see the only thing that truly matters is what you think about yourself, no one can take that away from you UNLESS you allow them to.

Think about that for a moment. Walking into a room and fully acknowledging that absolutely everyone will judge you - saying "so what" and walking tall in your worth.

That's power, that's powerful and you are powerful.

## **Karen Donaldson**

As I end this chapter here - it's Ok, Judge Me!

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

# Chapter 9: How to Lose Your Excuses: Believe

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Do you believe in yourself? I mean if you had to bet 1 million dollars on you, would you bet it all?

If you answered yes, why?

If you answered no, why?

Take a moment and answer that question.

Whatever you wrote is the reason why you are where you are right now in your life.

If you answered yes, your self-worth is in a good place, and keep building it.

If you answered no, your self-worth is in a not-so-great place. When you question your worth, you essentially set yourself up to only see what you need to fix about yourself. The improvements you need to make and what happens is that keeps you in a vicious cycle of questioning your worthiness.

Let me share something with you. A couple of years ago I delivered a leadership training session for the senior leadership team at a large corporation. When I walked into the room, it was the old boys club, there wasn't but one woman in a senior leadership role.

It was a wonderful session and at the end, the woman came up to me and asked to speak to me in private. I gladly told her yes and asked her to give me a moment to pack up. When we spoke, she thanked me immensely

## Karen Donaldson

for the session that I did, and then she opened up and told me something that I truly never expected. She told me that prior to the session she had intended to take her life and commit suicide when she got home. There I stood looking at a powerhouse senior executive, successful wife, and mother, who visually was in need of nothing. She continued to share that her time there in the organization had been a rough one. She was the top-performing senior executive and brought in the highest number of large accounts to the organization. Yet she was often harassed by her male counterparts and her self-worth and confidence were suffering as a result. I was humbled that she chose to share that with me. We continued to talk and I asked her the following things; what makes you one of a kind, who made you the powerhouse that you are right here, and right now, why are you a wonderful mom? She responded. I then asked her if she truly believed what she just said. She responded by saying; “of course”, those things I know indefinitely with no question. I then asked her to find power in who she is and what she has to offer the world, not as an employee but as a person. You see no one can take what you just said away from you unless you allow them to. You are not defined by someone’s snicker or nasty comment. It only defines how little they think of themselves, especially if they find the need to put someone down to feel superior. They are the ones that are insecure.

So, as I said to her, I say to you: NEVER allow the words and actions of others to define you, you define you because you can.

## **How To Live A Life With No Excuses**

Never take people and what they say too personally at all, people are who they are before they meet you. Trust me when I say, it's not you, it's them.

### **Creating the Most Wonderful Day of the Year**

It's the day that you realize and believe that you already have everything you need to succeed.

It's the day that you stop making excuses for what has happened or what has not happened in your life.

It's the day that you decide that falling doesn't mean you stop; it means that you are getting closer to success.

It's the day that you stop allowing the opinions and words of others to be your reality.

It's the day that you stop thinking of taking action and take action.

It's the day you stop waiting for perfection and perfect along the way.

It's the day that you stop waiting for doors to open and create your own door.

It's the day that you stop doing what you did last week so that you can get bigger and better results.

It's the day that you realize that you create your own destiny, it's not pre-determined by where you were born, where you live, or your childhood.

It's the day that you decide that "I am going to make now" the time that I accomplish all the goals that I didn't accomplish in the previous years.

Karen Donaldson

## Chapter 10: How to Lose Your Excuses: Being True to You

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### A Message About Being True to You

There comes a time when we realize and become very present to the fact that what we are doing is just passing time.

Just going to work...

Just doing what's required of us...

Just collecting your paycheck...

Just existing...

Just = A Cost

The cost of your happiness.

The cost of walking through life unfulfilled.

The cost of not even getting close to what you were put on this earth to do.

It's time to stay true to you...

This past Christmas Eve my son set out a healthy snack for Santa so he wouldn't get diabetes. He left him almond milk and red pepper slices.

My daughter was taunting him and pushing him to leave Santa some good stuff: cookies, chocolate, and juice.

My son wasn't worried about what others thought.

He was ok standing out on a limb and making a decision that he believed in.

Are you?

## **How To Live A Life With No Excuses**

He was ok standing out from the crowd because he was staying true to himself and his concern for Santa getting diabetes from all of the sweet snacks he would eat that night.

A question to you...

Are you ok being the only one to walk in a different direction?

Stay true to you!

Stop making excuses as to why you stand out!

You're supposed to be different from the rest!

Your choices are yours and don't have to be justified to anyone!

Karen Donaldson

## Chapter 11: Creating a No Excuses Mentality

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One of the biggest fears of them all is the fear of making the wrong decision.

The fear of making the wrong decision paralyzes us, it paralyzes our minds, and the action we do or don't take. It holds us hostage to conformity and staying average.

I don't know about you but I refuse to be average, I wasn't born average and either were you!!!!

Here is the reality:

We will all make mistakes and wrong decisions at different times in both our personal and professional life...that's life, that's reality. Acknowledge it, own it, and get over it because you can't change it.

For me, I have made a ton load of wrong decisions and those wrong decisions have been the foundation of what has propelled me forward in all areas of my life. Making the wrong decision gives you something that money can't buy, it gives you EXPERIENCE.

Here's are a few things that you can do to get past the fear of making the wrong decision:

1. Take action knowing that, wrong decisions will be made.

## How To Live A Life With No Excuses

2. Know that if you fail to make decision things will stay the same. Are you ok with things being the exact same, next year this time?

3. Just choose and if it works out keep going, build on it and if it doesn't work out, take a deep look at what did not work and choose to not do it again. But keep going.

My friends, no more average, no more fearing making the wrong decision. Just make a decision and get in action.

Your biggest enemy, your biggest critic, and your biggest cheerleader are in between your two ears.

Intentionally choose which one you will empower and listen to; I choose the latter and encourage you to do the same.

Karen D

Karen Donaldson

# MY NO EXCUSES LOVE NOTE TO YOU

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What I've learned over my 30 plus years of life.

People will have opinions and share them whether you ask or not.

People will cheer you on.

Haters will talk.

Relationships will come and go.

Jobs will come and go.

You will make some great decisions.

You will make some bad decisions (and some really crappy ones).

You will be blessed with some wonderful people in your life.

You will learn some serious life lessons from the not-so-great people in your life.

Opportunities will come (you grab some and some you don't even see).

You gain weight and you lose weight.

There is a lesson in absolutely everything that happens in your life.

Time will pass and never return.

You are not a Product of Your Environment...Your Environment is A product of you.

Money can't replace happiness.

Always give with no intention to receive.

My happiness is in my hand.

## **How To Live A Life With No Excuses**

You can truly create anything you want whenever you want.

People will come and go in your life.

Absolutely no one can take away my smile...unless I allow them to.

It's ok to say NO.

"Real" friends will be there forever!!

*The most important thing I have learned is:*

**The Words and Actions of Others Will Never Define Me  
I DEFINE ME**

*Never forget:*

When You Lose Your Excuses, You'll Find your Results.

Stay Amazing!

**Karen D**

## Karen Donaldson

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# How To Live A Life With No Excuses

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**KAREN DONALDSON**, Personal Growth Strategist, Certified Confidence Coach

Executive Public Speaking Coach, International Speaker

**To Schedule Karen to Speak at Your Next Event:**

1.416.414.2082 [admin@karendonaldsoninc.com](mailto:admin@karendonaldsoninc.com)