

# STOP IT!



and

# Start Living for You!



# STOP IT!

ARE YOU A FREAK, CRAZY, OUT THERE, DIFFERENT OR MAYBE JUST DOWNRIGHT WEIRD?

**GOOD!**

*BUT, IS IT OK TO BE WEIRD?* Yes! It is ok to be you, even if you are different. You sure wouldn't be very good at being somebody else. There is no more freeing feeling than when you figure out that you are good enough just the way you are! When you shed the shackles of worry and anxiety about what others think of you. You might even like what you find.

You are going to set boundaries with people like, your parents, friends, bosses, clients, and co-workers and yes, even your children. Throughout this process, you will learn to take YOU back. You will see how the word "NO" becomes your best friend. You will learn to "own your shit" (which literally means: to express your feelings, even if it upsets someone else. The transformation includes changing how you see yourself. Only through learning how to feel okay from within, is it possible to undo the motivation to please others.

If traditional self-help books worked, everyone would be healthy. The one problem with reading self-help books is that people think they can just read the material and they will get better. No matter how life changing the material is, if you don't actually change your behaviors, you're not going to change your life. Use the assignments in this book to make a lasting change in you.

This program is designed for complete "transformation" of feelings and behaviors. It is not something that you can read one time and be done with.

Tips for **successfully** using this workbook

- ✓ Have fun! A major reason you're taking on this challenge is because you want more enjoyment out of life. Start now, by making your transformation FUN!
- ✓ Make a commitment to yourself to complete all the assignments in this workbook even if you do not like it or think it will help, do it any way.
- ✓ Be selfish. Take the time to do the assignments, take the time to enjoy the ride. Put you first for the first time in your life.
- ✓ Prepare for negative responses from others (at first). I promise this will get better.
- ✓ Know that it is going to be very difficult and uncomfortable at times. (but, I will guarantee that it is worth it)
- ✓ Do not beat yourself up for not "following the rules exactly" you have no-one to please but yourself. Don't feel guilty for not completing a step in a timely fashion This is about you.
- ✓ Celebrate the wins. . Each step along the transformation is an opportunity to celebrate.
- ✓ Focus! Give your attention to what you want you, not what you don't want. If you focus on the crap in your life you will inevitably, get more crap.
- ✓

- ✓ Get rid of “escapes”: addictions (drugs, alcohol, gambling, shopping, and computer), self-defeating behaviors (such as not completing each assignment, not taking the transformation seriously) will slow down or eliminate the progress.
- ✓ Never, ever, ever give up. When you make this transformation you will be free from the chains of people pleasing. It is well worth the effort.

You have one life to live, why would you let someone else dictate how you live it. You have FULLY and COMPLETELY given of yourself up to this point (and boy is that an understatement). Now you are embarking on a journey that will change your life forever.

Jeff Miner, *Licensed Professional Counselor*



## SELF COMMITMENT

**Vision:** I will set healthy boundaries. I will say “no” when I do not want to do something. I will speak my mind and express my feelings openly. I will know what makes me happy. I will not constantly worry about what others think of me. I will put my needs and desires equal to, or above the needs of others.

**Goal:** I will complete the assignments in this workbook by: (three months from today)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_.



### Action steps and time lines.

1. I will complete the autonomy contract and make a commitment to working on the following action steps at 100% of my effort for two months.
2. I will identify and ask one person to hold me accountable to complete my assignments.
3. I will have fun during my transformation and I will do my best to enjoy my results.
4. I will complete a minimum of two assignments each week in this workbook.
5. I will keep a daily journal for three months.
6. I have identified specific times to work on the assignments and I have put these times on my calendar.

### The five major reasons why completing this goal is important to me!

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*The difference between commitment and interest is:*

*When you are interested, you do it when it's convenient and when you are committed, you do it, no excuses!*

## STOP RUNNING

This assignment does not need to be *completed* before moving on to following steps. You have to decide if this is the right time to address your escape. Right now may not be the ideal time to give up an escape or addiction, but, it will slow down or hinder the transformation process. Only you can decide when the right time to address your escape(s) would be.

Pleasers are pulling their hair out, stressed out with all of their obligations, overwhelmed because they say yes to everybody requests and they get depressed because they hold their feelings in. Pleasers often find it necessary to escape from all the pressure by turning to; alcohol, drugs, gambling, isolation, sex, self-sabotage or by running from difficult situations rather than facing them.

- Get help. Break the addiction if you have one.
- Be selfish, if you don't help yourself you can't help anyone.
- Eliminate the reasons for needing an escaping, i.e.: people pleasing, taking on too much, saying yes when you should say no, and overbearing/conditional, relationships.

Exercise:

1. List any unhealthy escapes you are currently using.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

2. For each escape, write down one way that you will address it. Example: drinking = go to AA, gambling = go to GA, avoidance = engage in exercise, activities, family, self-sabotage = go to therapy.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

## AWARENESS JOURNAL

### Identify: when and how much

**The Awareness Journal.** I know it's hard to write every day but it is the one tool that is guaranteed to work. Why do you think weight-watchers has you keep a food journal? Research states that people lose weight just by maintaining a food journal even if they aren't trying to change their diet. Journaling works.

With current technology, keeping a journal has become extremely convenient as well as effective. Traditional pen and paper journaling typically happened at the end of the day. You would have to sit and try and recall the events of the day. Now, lap-tops, PC computers, smart phones and touch pads all make journaling available in real time. When something happens, you can write about it on the spot. This allows accurate reporting of the events and more comprehensive identification of behavior and behavior changes.

Journaling should not be work. You do not have to compose a book or a paragraph each time you write. You can write one sentences that remind you of situations or you can write 10 pages. There is no right or wrong. **YOU HAVE NOBODY TO IMPRESS BUT YOU!**

Ask yourself a few of these questions:

- Today I am proud of myself for \_\_\_\_\_? Because.....
- What *sensations* did I feel in my body when I was defaulting to someone else's wishes at the expense of my own?
- What challenges did I face today? (Boundaries, saying no, accepting extra assignments, worrying about what someone else was thinking, etc.)
- What are some difficult conversations I had today? Setting boundaries, expressing feelings, standing up for yourself.
- "What do I want to change?"
- My overall feelings about me today were 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
- What is one thing I did for myself today?

Pleasing behaviors to become aware of:

- *Did I put someone's needs before mine today?*
- *Did I say "yes" to a request when I really wanted to say "no"?*
- *Did I suppress my frustrations to avoid confrontation today?*
- *Did I replay a social encounter that I had with someone and beat myself up for something stupid I said?*
- *Was I wishy-washy with my decision making today?*
- *Did I accept any additional tasks that I wish I wouldn't have?*
- *Did I feel guilty for taking care of me today?*



## WHAT MAKES “ME” HAPPY?

Do you know what really makes you happy? You have spent so much time trying to figure out what makes others happy that you have probably ignored activities that you enjoy.

<b>What makes me Happy</b> <i>Personal Life</i> Example: golfing, dancing, swimming, biking	<b>Behaviors that I do just to make others happy</b> <i>Personal Life</i> Example: teach Sunday school, taking neighbor to store, driving daughters and her friends everywhere
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
<i>Professional Life</i>	<i>Professional Life</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Review you list above and identify the behaviors that you want to increase in your life and the behaviors you want to eliminate.



## WHAT I'M GETTING AND WHAT I WANT

An honest assessment of where I am and where I want to be.

<b>What I'm currently getting</b> <i>Personal Life</i> <i>Example: overwhelmed, angry, scared</i>	<b>What I want</b> <i>Personal Life</i> <i>Example: calm, relaxed</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
<i>Professional Life</i>	<i>Professional Life</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

## WHAT I LIKE AND WHAT I'M GOOD AT

<b>What I like</b> <i>Personal Life</i>	<b>What I'm good at</b> <i>Personal Life</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
<i>Professional Life</i>	<i>Professional Life</i>
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Many times we get confused between what we genuinely like and what we are good at. We seem to think that they are the same thing or somehow intertwined. But, if you examine the activities that you are good at, you often realize that you really don't like to do them, other than the fact that you may get kudos or praise for being so good at them.

## PEOPLE I ADMIRE

What is your purpose in life? Without knowing this you will simply go along in life living everyone else's dreams. The exercise will assist you with the opportunity to uncover the true reasons for being on earth. List five people you admire and five characteristics that you admire about each one.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

**PEOPLE I ADMIRE**

(continued)

Once you have completed Part 1, review it to identify three common qualities among the five people (e.g. passion, resilience, etc.). These common qualities are actually values and characteristics that are of high importance to you. Next to the side of each common quality, write down the feeling you have when you demonstrate this same quality. Finally, how do you like to either share these qualities with others or express them? Examples of sharing a value include: “*inspire*”, “*teach*” or “*share*” while examples of expressing a characteristic include to: “*create*”, “*design*” or “*live*”.

**Common Characteristics of the five people I admire**

Common Characteristic	My feelings when I demonstrate this value/characteristic	How I like to express or share this value/characteristic
<i>Example: goal oriented</i>	<i>I feel alive and motivated. I feel like I have direction in my life.</i>	<i>Role-Model/teach</i>

# Values

## What is Important to Me?

Consider each item on the list below on an individual basis and assign a rate to each.

1 = Critically important to me

2 = Important to me

3 = I can live without it

_____ Acceptance by others	_____ Accomplishment	_____ Activity
_____ Admiration	_____ Appreciation	_____ Authority
_____ Beauty	_____ Being Liked	_____ Compensation
_____ Serenity	_____ Security	_____ Certainty
_____ Challenge	_____ Choice	_____ Comfort
_____ Community Service	_____ Competition	_____ Creativity
_____ Enjoyment	_____ Ethics	_____ Excellence
_____ Excitement	_____ Fame	_____ Fitness
_____ Financial Security	_____ Flexibility	_____ Fortune
_____ Fulfilling my potential	_____ Freedom	_____ Fun
_____ Personal Growth	_____ Harmony	_____ Health
_____ Helping others	_____ Honesty	_____ Independence
_____ Individuality	_____ Leisure	_____ Mastery
_____ Making a difference	_____ Morality	_____ Nature
_____ Novelty	_____ Originality	_____ Peace
_____ Personal Development	_____ Pets	_____ Pleasure
_____ Popularity	_____ Power	_____ Prestige
_____ Privacy	_____ Prosperity	_____ Quality
_____ Recognition	_____ Relaxation	_____ Respect
_____ Risk	_____ Solitude	_____ Spirituality
_____ Stability	_____ Status	_____ Stimulation
_____ Time for family	_____ Time for friends	_____ Uniqueness
_____ Surprise	_____ Variety	_____ Wisdom
_____ Learning	_____ Confidence	

**LIST YOUR 5 TOP VAULES**

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



**FEELINGS**

**The purpose of this exercise is to help you identify ideal feelings and the activities and areas of your life associated with them.**

Now describe your feelings when you engage in activities or experiences listed in the “What I like/what I’m good at” exercise. Examples of this include “When I travel, I feel anticipation and excitement” or “When I spend time with my children, I feel joy and contentment.” For each activity or value and associated feeling, write in parentheses to the side whether it is a personal or professional life activity. *Examples: I feel confident when I play tennis (personal); I feel energized and excited when I start work on a new project (professional);*

<b>Targeted Feeling</b>	<b>Activity/Interaction that creates feeling</b>	<b>Area of Life (Personal/Professional)</b>
<i>Example: Joy</i>	<i>Spend quality time alone with my children</i>	<i>Personal</i>

This collective group of feelings is called “**your feeling zone.**” (Example: happy, energized, hopeful, motivated, and satisfied)

The objective is to increase activities that create positive feelings and decrease activities that cause negative feelings by aligning your personal and professional activities so that you experience life in “your ideal feeling zone” in some combination 50% to 75 % of each day.

### **YOU'RE LIFE PURPOSE**

*“Great minds have purpose. Little minds have wishes” Washington Irving*

In this exercise you will combine the work from previous exercises to develop a statement of your life purpose. Our life purpose drives our behavior and our attitudes. Our primary motivation comes from understanding why we are here on earth. Purpose isn't just what we do; it is also how we feel as a result of what we do. Purpose is the feeling you get as a result of your actions and choices. This section is where you combine the 4 previous assignments to help you identify why you are here.

List your top two feelings listed from “**you're feeling zone**” in the Feelings exercise: *(example: motivated and inspired)*

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Write down your top 4 values from the “**Values**” assignment. *(example: honesty, fun, community, friendships.)*

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List the two most meaningful characteristics for you from “**Five People I Admire Most**” exercise. *(example: assertive, strong, funny)*

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Next, list two ways that you want to express or share those qualities to others such as to empower, to encourage, to teach or to create. Again, this comes from Part 2 of the “Five People I Admire Most” exercise. *(Example: teach, role model, inspire)*

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Combine the above three parts into your Purpose Statement.

Example: I feel that I am living my core (values of 2-4 core values). I feel my (my top 2-3 feelings) when I use my (two most meaningful characteristics) to (how I like to express or share these qualities) to (how others feel or are impacted by me living on purpose).

*Example:* I feel **motivated and inspired** when I use my **energy and enthusiasm** to **teach others** to be **inspired to reach their goals and dreams**.

## Life Purpose

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Once you've completed the purpose statement exercise, take some time to step back and reflect on it. Does it resonate with you? If your answer is yes - fantastic! If not, set it aside and provide yourself some additional time for reflection. As necessary, modify and tweak it, so it resonates to you.

Notice I said "reflect" vs. "think about" your purpose statement. While this exercise requires some thinking on your part, a good purpose statement must speak to your heart. You need to feel it. Your purpose stirs emotion from within.

Knowing your life purpose is fundamental to the rest of your work in this book. It is the foundation for creating a vision for your life and the goals you need to attain your vision.

Once you have created a Life Purpose statement that resonates with you, read it several times a day. First thing in the morning, at noon and again in the evening.

As you move forward, you will use your "life purpose" statement to help you define your vision and goals and that will guide your daily activity.

Exercise: Tell 3 people your life's purpose. Ask for their honest feedback. Listen to them but do not change your vision based upon what they said. You can change your vision if you decide to change it. You can do whatever you want with your vision. It is your vision!



## PRIORITIZE

### **Don't steal from your bucket.**

Imagine your life as a bucket. Inside the bucket you have activities that you enjoy such as: your family, hobbies, spirituality, exercise, travel and friends. When someone asks you to do something additional or you don't say no to something, you then have to make a decision about what you are going to remove from the bucket that you really enjoy.

### **Get a small bucket or a bowl**

Get notecards and write down the life enriching activities and commitments that you would like to have in your world. Also, put the amount of time you would like to spend on these activities each week.

Example: One week

*8 hours with my family*

*40 hours at work*

*2 hours with friends*

*2 hours on my spirituality*

*5 hours exercising,*

*2 hours on my hobbies*

*3 hours relaxing*

*Total 62 hours*



Put the notecards in your bucket

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Now, I want you to take a stack of note cards and write down additional activities that you take on as they arise. These are activities that you often say yes to but you really want to say "no". You may even enjoy doing some of these activities but, in the end, they steal from what you really want in your life. These activities may include:

*4 hours of extra assignments at work*

*5 hours of volunteering at church*

*2 hours of taking care of needy friends*

*5 hours of doing the entire house work by yourself*

*3 hours of mowing your 80 year old neighbor's yard*

*6 hours of cooking*

*Total 25 hours 11 minutes.*

Keep a stack of blank notecards by your bucket at all times. When you say yes to an activity, write that activity on a card along with the time it will take to complete. Put the card in your bucket and take out another card that takes the same amount of time. This will help you understand what you are giving up by saying yes to others requests.

## FOCUS

Whatever you give your attention to is what you will get more of. If you give all of your attention to pleasing others, you are going to get more of the stresses that accompany pleasing others such as: resentment towards others, frustration, anxiety, stress and guilt.

**Gratitude's** get you focused on the good things in your life. Refocusing is not a natural skill, it takes practice and persistence. I have found that writing your gratitude's on the mirror in your bathroom with a dry erase marker encourages you to read them at least two times a day, when you are going to bed and when you get up in the morning. Some examples of gratitude's are:

- I am grateful for my family.
- I am grateful for my friends.
- I am grateful for my free will.
- I am grateful my ability to say no whenever I want.
- I am grateful for my own happiness.
- I am grateful for my intelligence.
- I am grateful for my pets.
- I am grateful for my education.
- I am grateful for my relationship with God.

**Power questions** are questions that you ask yourself that will help you to focus on what you want. These questions will help you to understand your true value. Read these questions out loud and think about all the reasons why each question is true.

- Why are my feelings as important as anyone else's?
- Why am I so confident in who I am?
- Why do I see failure as a part of success?
- Why do I live my life for myself?
- Why do I get what I want in life?
- Why should I base my happiness on me?
- Why am I successful?
- Why do I need to overcome my need to please others?
- Why is it so important for me to succeed for myself?
- What makes me such a strong person?
- What makes me truly happy?
- Why am I responsible for my own happiness?
- Why am I so good at what I do?
- Why do I portray confidence to everyone I meet?
- Why do I love what I do?
- Why do I set healthy boundaries with others?
- Why do I worry about letting others down?
- Why can I say no when I don't want to do something?
- Why do I enjoy my life?

## **EXERCISE!**

### **The world's best anti-depressant**

The best anti-depression/anti-anxiety medication in the world is exercise! Exercise raises dopamine levels (feel good hormone) and reduces cortisol (stress hormone). You need to make a commitment to yourself and make exercise a top priority if you are going to take "you" back.

Pleasers are often overweight because they are stressed, overwhelmed and they don't take care of themselves because of the guilt they feel if they take the "time" to exercise. In a pleasers mind, they would be neglecting the people they love and care about if they take time away from them to exercise. Pleasers also don't want to spend money on a gym membership or by getting a personal trainer for themselves because that would be unfair and selfish.

Exercise:

1. Make a commitment to exercise for you and you are not going to feel guilty)
2. Start small
3. Set measurable goals
4. Get a partner
5. Keep a workout log

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## **RELAX!**

It's quite possible that you don't even know what that means. You have heard others talk about relaxing but it has never been something you are good at because it seems self-centered to have non-productive time. If you are a pleaser you are most likely on the go at all times. Relaxing would take time and energy away from the people you are trying to please. Often pleasers feel guilty for taking the time to relax; therefore, it usually gets neglected.

1. Learn and practice some form of relaxation skill.
  - a. Meditation
  - b. Yoga
  - c. Progressive relaxation
  - d. Dance
  - e. Tai Chi
  - f. Visual imagery
2. Commit to doing some type of relaxation behavior at least one time a day.
3. The key to consistently doing a relaxation technique is to put it on your schedule. Decide what you are going to do and when you are going to do it and write it down.

## EXAMINE YOUR MOTIVATIONS

If you are a people pleaser, you are most likely getting something out of it. No matter how illogical it may sound, you are getting some type of reinforcement for doing it. By identifying what you are getting by pleasing will help you to be able to change. Although people-pleasing seems like the epitome of niceness, pleasing is most often done for many unhealthy reasons.

Some examples are:

1. It may keep me safe from getting hurt.
2. It may allow me to have less conflict with others.
3. It may increase the likelihood that someone will accept me.
4. When I please, I don't get rejected by others.
5. I don't want to hurt anyone by expressing my opinion.
6. It seems to make everybody else happy.



What are your motivations to please others? (What do you get out of pleasing?)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

**Look at your beliefs. Are they realistic?** Will the truly horrible happen? Will people not like you, or leave you if you express your true feelings. For each motivation listed above, identify if the behavior is really getting you what you are desiring.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.

## **SOMETIMES, PEOPLE FREAK**

### **Dealing with others reactions to your changes**

Throughout your transformation, among the uncomfortable feelings that you may encounter is one that people pleasers tend to avoid at any cost, “rejection”. It brings feelings of pain, disappointment, guilt, possibly depression and the need to try harder, do better, and please more. For the pleaser, this is the beginning of the downward spiral into the eternal core of people pleasing.

Now, before we get into dealing with others, we want to prepare you for what might be the “worst thing that could happen”. What happens if you start opening up to people, express your feelings, attempt to resolve deep seated issues, and they don’t seem to care or even worse yet, they reject you? You are then faced with your worst nightmare, rejection. So what do you do?

#### **a. Be prepared for initial resistance**

- i.** Initial reactions to your changes taking place is that of surprise, anger, confusion or maybe even fear from being “attacked” or perhaps even offended.
- ii.** Anticipate their confusion and their potential inability to handle their feelings appropriately. You have spent a lifetime of pleasing them. Standing up for yourself is bound to have a confusing effect on them.
- iii.** Quite possibly they are going to react by taking passive aggressive shots at you because that has worked in the past. They may even be direct expressing their anger through yelling or by demeaning you.
- iv.** Don’t over-react or even react for that matter. They have learned to control you through guilt and fear. When they realize that isn’t working they are going to panic.

#### **b. Buy some time to process the situation**

- i.** No matter your emotional state at the time, getting away from the situation for a time period will allow you to deal with it in a healthier manner at a later time.
- ii.** Taking time also allows them to process their feelings and hopefully give them the opportunity to evaluate their response.

#### **c. Write in your journal!**

#### **d. Decide whether the relationship is worth pursuing by making two lists:**

- 1.** The value they provide in your life
- 2.** What is the emotional cost to you if you decide to by keep them in your life.
  - a.** Make a conscious decision to readdress the issue with the person or to cut ties with them.
  - b.** If you decide to address your concerns with them, continue to the (Straight shooting exercise)
  - c.** If you decided to cut ties with this person, go to (getting rid of dead weight exercise).

Usually the worst thing that could possibly happen when speaking your mind is that person may choose to no longer be in your life, at all. At that point you would need to ask yourself, why is it so important to have someone in your life that does not respect you? Do they really benefit you? Do you feel like it is your moral or ethical responsibility to keep them in your life (such as a family member)? Do not let the fear of rejection stand in the way of your happiness. Remember that YOU COUNT and if others can’t see that they are not worth having in your life.

## SAYING NO!

### “NO” IS NOT A FOUR LETTER WORD!

Saying “NO” does not turn you into an uncaring, selfish person. The word NO actually protects you, earns the respect of others, and frees you to be there for yourself and those individuals that you truly care about, like your family and friends.

**Don't make up excuses** – give the real reason for not wanting to do something, and stick to it, no excuses. This may be hard at first but it allows you to feel honest and genuine.

**Stall for time.** If someone puts you on the spot, politely defer: "I'll check my calendar and get back to you tomorrow." Then you can assess whether the request fits in with your schedule and goals.

**The Oreo technique:** You put your “no” between two positive statements.

Example: I really appreciate it that you asked, unfortunately I won't be able to go with you, it really does mean a lot that you considered me.

Be aware of your tendency to automatically agree with, or defer to, others. Rather than respond immediately to a statement or request, recognize that any reflexive reaction is likely to be steeped in your old people pleasing programming. Instead, pause before you respond and think less about what the other person may want from you and more about what *you* want.

Ask yourself the following questions before you say yes.

- **Is this something I really want to do?**
- **Will I be mad at the person making the request?**
- **Will I be mad at myself for saying yes?**
- **What will I have to take out of my own bucket if I say yes? (What will I have to give up if I say yes? *Spouse, children, football, sleep, free time, friends, exercise, hobby, money*)**



Write these questions everywhere you can to remind you to have readily available to remind yourself to use them. Screen saver, wallet, day time, cell phone, wrist band, and note card in you back pocket.

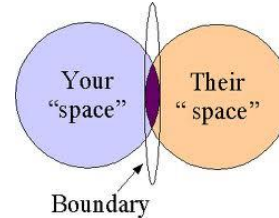
In your journal record when you have asked yourself these questions and what the results were.

*The road to “YES” starts with “NO”*

# Get Rid of Dead Weight

Pleasers often stay in unhealthy relationships way too long because they don't set healthy boundaries and they are typically afraid that they will hurt the other person. It doesn't make much sense to keep people in your life who lack a sincere interest in your welfare. Additionally, you have the right to minimize or eliminate contact with unhealthy people altogether. These individuals may include:

- Family members
- Friends and acquaintances
- Co-workers
- Bosses
- Church members



Unfortunately, the dead-weight people are quite often the closest people to you including: your family members (mothers, fathers and siblings), friends, co-workers and partners. Many pleasers think it just isn't right to set boundaries with family and friends. Well, after all, our parents have been there for us our whole lives, even though it may have been unhealthy way. Setting boundaries that are based on what you want in a relationship is the only way to change how you feel about yourself. This is typically where the pleasing cycle began and it is where it has to end.

*Example: my mother calls me three times a day to check on me, to ask me to do something for her and to impose guilt on me. I cannot make positive changes to my thinking while these behaviors persist. I have to set a healthy boundary and tell her that we were only going to talk one time a week. Yes, it upset her, but it was the only way for me to focus on myself. If she truly loves me unconditionally, she will eventually understand and if she doesn't, that is not my problem.*

Make a list of the people that pose the biggest challenges to my personal growth.

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Make a list of the issues that I will address with each of the above people.

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New boundaries I will set as a result of our conversations.

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## STRAIGHT SHOOTING

This exercise may be one of the most challenging, but most beneficial assignments that you are going to be asked to do. Facing your demons. You will pick a person that presents “pleasing” challenges for you. Examples: They attempt to make you feel guilty, they take advantage of you, they give unsolicited advice or they just aren’t nice to you.

Your assignment is to address the main challenge that you are having with another person without apologizing, accommodating or being too concerned about their response. This exercise is simply to get you accustomed to expressing your feelings, honestly, and openly.

### Exercise

- Name of the person that I am going to express my concerns and feeling to.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Main topic of discussion.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Explain the emotional feelings this challenge is causing you. (I am sad, angry, frustrated because of .....)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Explain what is at stake if this issue isn’t resolved. (example: if we can’t resolve this issue, I am afraid that I won’t be able to attend any further family functions)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Express my contribution to the problem. (what have I done to cause or maintain this problem)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Indicate my desire to resolve this issue. (by using the word “resolve”, allows the other person know that you want to fix the problem)  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Express the positive outcomes that would occur when we resolve this issue?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- Encourage the other party to express his/her view of the issue. Do not argue, respond to questions, and try to fix or give your opinion. This is the other person’s opportunity to disclose.



- Resolution (ask the other person the following questions)
  - Do we want to fix this issue?
  - What have we learned?
  - Where are we now?
  - What is needed to resolve the issue?
  
- End the conversation by making an agreement to hold each other accountable to changes that were discussed.

What if the issues cannot be resolved? Be prepared to set a boundary for you. Not a boundary designed to please the other person or a boundary based on a fear of rejection or abandonment. A boundary that will move you forward in becoming a healthy well rounded individual.



**DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY**

**Do you care too much about what others think?**

Do you worry when?

1. You said something that hurt someone's feelings.
2. Your hair looks stupid.
3. You may not be good at something.
4. You might let somebody down.
5. You said something that made you look dumb.
6. You appeared weak.
7. Some might not like you.
8. Somebody thinks you are self-centered.

Assignment

I sure wish I could tell you to stop worrying about what others think. If I could make that happen I would be the richest therapist ever. Guess what? It really can be that easy.

Make a list of all the people you would like to impress. Then, write why it is important for you to impress them.

Name:

Why you feel you have to impress them.

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Look at all the people you listed above. Is there anyone that would really stop loving you or love you "less" if you didn't try to impress them?

If the answer is "no", talk with them about your "need to impress them". Help them to understand your feelings without blaming them.

If the answer is yes, write down what it would feel like for you if they stopped loving you or they loved you less because you let them down.

## VICTIM OR VICTOR

In life you can chose to live as a victim or a victor. There is no middle ground. In your life you make a choice to either blame someone else or to accept responsibility for your happiness. The Victim blames others and the world for his failures and the Victor understands that he has complete control over his life as long as he accepts full responsibility for his happiness.

**Victim** = blames, accuses others for their lack of happiness, always has an excuse, doesn't take responsibility for personal unhappiness.

**Victor** = 100% responsible for personal happiness and does not let anyone else ruin his day.

Make a list of ways I don't accept full responsibility (victim) for my own happiness.

Examples:

- I allow what others think to ruin my day.
- I self-sabotage myself to keep my expectations low.
- I do not make commitments because I don't want to let anyone else down.
- I blame others for not recognizing and praising how much I give.
- I let others take advantage of my "giving" nature.
- I don't want to pressure others so I don't ask for what I want.

Victim excuse list

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Victors list (responsibilities that I can control)

Examples:

- Nobody can ruin my day.
- I am responsible for my moods.
- I am in control of my happiness.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____



## OWN YOUR S#\*%.

### **When deceiving others feels like the right thing to do**

You probably don't consider yourself a liar but boy, do you do it. Lying comes in many forms and omitting the truth, concealing feelings, making up excuses and misleading are all forms of deception that cause you to have guilt and shame.

1. Do you hold your feelings in because you don't want to express them and hurt others? LIE
2. Do you act like you are calm and relaxed when you are really out of control? LIE
3. Do you put on a mask when you are around others? LIE
4. Do you ever exaggerate to impress others? LIE
5. Do you make up excuses about not wanting to do things? LIE
6. Do you say "yes" to things that you really want to say no to? LIE
7. Are you reluctant to express how important something is to you because you don't want to pressure the other person? LIE
8. Do you hide things from people because you don't want to upset them? LIE
9. Do you try to portray happy to others even though you are completely overwhelmed? LIE
10. Do you tell yourself that you don't deserve good things to happen to you? LIE

**Don't take it too hard.** You are not lying to hurt anyone, actually, just the opposite. Your lying is more like misleading that is designed to allow you to not hurt someone or too avoid confrontation.

Unfortunately, the more we try to hide from others the more we feel guilty. But to a pleaser, you are just trying to protect the other person. You don't want them to feel bad or be upset.

"Own your sh#\*%.." refers to owning and expressing your feelings, preferences, actions, desires, wishes, frustrations and concerns even though the other person may not like it. Example:

1. When you are mad at your spouse for never cleaning the house. If you hold it in and never express your feelings it will build, and build and build. By expressing your feeling you are stopping the frustration from becoming paramount. Even if it doesn't change their behavior, at least you got it out.
2. Because of your pleasing behaviors you begin to feel overwhelmed, so you take a drink. The drinking becomes your only escape and so you attempt to hide it from your spouse because you don't want to worry her. This behavior continues and your partner becomes suspicious. Then your partner finds out and you are embarrassed and you feel guilty for hiding it, which causes you to want to (escape) drink that much more.

Exercise:

In your awareness journal, write down every lie you told that day. No matter how big or how small the lie was. Do this behavior for two weeks and by the end of the two week period you will begin to see the intensity of the intensity your deception.

## A SELFISH/OUT THERE/CRAZY LIST!"

When our values, desires, feelings and morals all match up, we are living on purpose. Live the life you want, not the life you think others would want you to want. Make a list of the crazy things you have always wanted to do but haven't because you were worried about what people might think if you did it. Some *examples* are:

1. Buy a tiara
2. Go skydiving
3. Go to the toy store and play
4. Enter a race
5. Go camping in your backyard
6. Dance in a fountain
7. Take a pottery class
8. Take kayaking lessons
9. Start a band
10. Paint a portrait

### Your Selfish out There, Crazy Behaviors List

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

Plan of action. (When, where and how am I going to make these things happen?)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.

## **THERE IS NO PSYCHIC CONNECTION**

People pleasers have the crazy idea that others are supposed to know what they want and need without expressing it out loud. They stay mute and hope someone will understand them or **figure out what they want**.

### **Ask for what you want.**

There's nothing wrong with voicing your opinion, and it doesn't have to mean you're making a demand or being bossy.

Just for the heck of it, ask for exactly what you want this week.

1. Ask for a back rub
2. Ask to go out to eat where and when you want to go.
3. Ask to go to a movie that you really want to see
4. Ask for a hug!
5. Ask someone to go for a walk.



### **Ask for help**

Express yourself! Express your feelings! Express your needs and desires! Typically pleasers don't want to talk about themselves or bother others with their problems. This appears to be one of the major roadblocks to overcoming the pleaser syndrome. Pleasers usually wear the mask that everything is great. They don't want anyone to know that they aren't great or when they are struggling.

Write down 5 people and 5 issues that you would like to disclose to someone that you feel you can trust. You don't have to do all five right now.

*Examples:*

Jenny (older sister)      Talk about how I felt blamed by mom and dad while we were growing up.  
John (friend)              Talk with John and explain how I feel overwhelmed all the time.

**Person**

**Personal Issue you are facing (not with this person)**

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## Financial

8. I am making enough money. Yes      No
9. I am currently making \$\_\_\_\_\_ a year. I should be making \$\_\_\_\_\_.
- 3 things getting in my way are of making more money are:
    - i.
10. I currently have a comfortable savings? Yes      No
11. I have a good retirement plan in place. Yes      No
12. If I could afford some amenities that I currently don't have, they would be: (boat, motorcycle, vacations, bigger house, nicer car, etc.)
- i.
  - ii.
  - iii.
  - iv.
  - v.
13. My family is covered if something should happen to me. Yes      No
- Currently, I would leave my spouse and children \$\_\_\_\_\_ if I were to pass away.
  - I would like to be able to give them \$\_\_\_\_\_.

## Health

14. I am satisfied with my current health condition. Yes      No
- Why or why not?

## Spiritual

- I am spiritual? Yes      No
  - i. I am satisfied with my level of commitment to my spiritual beliefs.
  - ii. If not, what are the behaviors that you would be doing that would make you feel more complete?

## Travel

15. Would you like to travel more? Yes      No
- i. Where would you like to go?
    - 1.
    - 2.
    - 3.
    - 4.
    - 5.
16. Do you have a plan to help you get to these places? Yes      No
17. Do you have the income to pay for these trips? Yes      No



**Past**

18. What are 3 positive events that have affected my life?

- i.
- ii.

19. List the 3 biggest challenges that have negatively affected my life.

- i.
- ii.
- iii.

- Are they still affecting my life in a negative way.? Yes No

- i. How?

**Future**

20. Make a list of all the things you **want** before you die? Off to the side rate each one from 1-10 as far as importance. Examples: (*make \$1,000,000, sky dive, own a boat, visit your home country, etc.*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

21. List 5 changes that you can make today that will help you to live the life you want.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

# STOP IT

"He who trims himself to suit everyone will soon whittle himself away." (Raymond Hull)

"I don't know the key to success, but the key to failure is trying to please everybody." (Bill Cosby)

"If everyone else likes you, you probably don't." (unkown)

"The person who seeks all their applause from outside has their happiness in another's keeping." (Claudius Claudianus)

"People who want the most approval get the least and people who need approval the least get the most." (Wayne Dyer)

"There just isn't any pleasing some people. The trick is to stop trying." (Joel Rosenberg)

"Those whose approval you seek most give you the least." (Rosanne Weissman)

"Please all, and you will please none." (Aesop)

"Speak your mind and enjoy the results" (Clara)

"I'll always be number 1 to myself." (Moses Malone)

"If you aren't good at loving yourself, you will have a difficult time loving anyone, since you'll resent the time and energy you give another person that you aren't even giving to yourself." (Barbara De Angelis)

"Don't worry about growing older or pleasing others. You don't have control over either." (David Brown)

"Some people have so much respect for their superiors they have none left for themselves." (Peter McArthur)

"This above all: to thine own self be true, Thou canst not then be false to any man." (William Shakespeare)

"I don't need anyone to rectify my existence. The most profound relationship we will ever have is the one with ourselves." (Shirley Maclaine)

"It's so hard when I have to, and so easy when I want to." (Sondra Anice Barnes)

"Other people's opinion of you does not have to become your reality." (Les Brown)

"To be strong enough to help someone, you must be strong enough to help yourself first." (Jeff Miner)

"Solve a problem with a friend, not for a friend." (Harriet Braiker)

"The Road to Yes starts with No" (Brian Gray)

"You have one shot at life! Why let others decide if it is going to be good or not!" (Jeff Miner)