

Breaking Free from People Pleasing: Reclaiming Your Authentic Self



People pleasing is often a learned response to seeking approval, avoiding conflict, or maintaining a sense of belonging. It can stem from a number of sources, including childhood experiences of benign neglect, cultural expectations, or past trauma.

While kindness and empathy are valuable, constantly prioritising others at the expense of your own well being can lead to burnout, resentment, and loss of identity.

Is saying "yes" to something you don't want to do part of your day to day life? How does it make you feel afterwards?



by Judi Johnson

Signs you might be a people pleaser

- Difficulty saying no, even when overwhelmed
- Constant need to seeking external validation to feel worthy
- Fear of disappointing others or being seen as selfish
- Feeling responsible for others' emotions
- Over apologising, even when its not necessary
- Ignoring personal needs and boundaries

Reflection Question:

Which of these signs resonate with you the most?

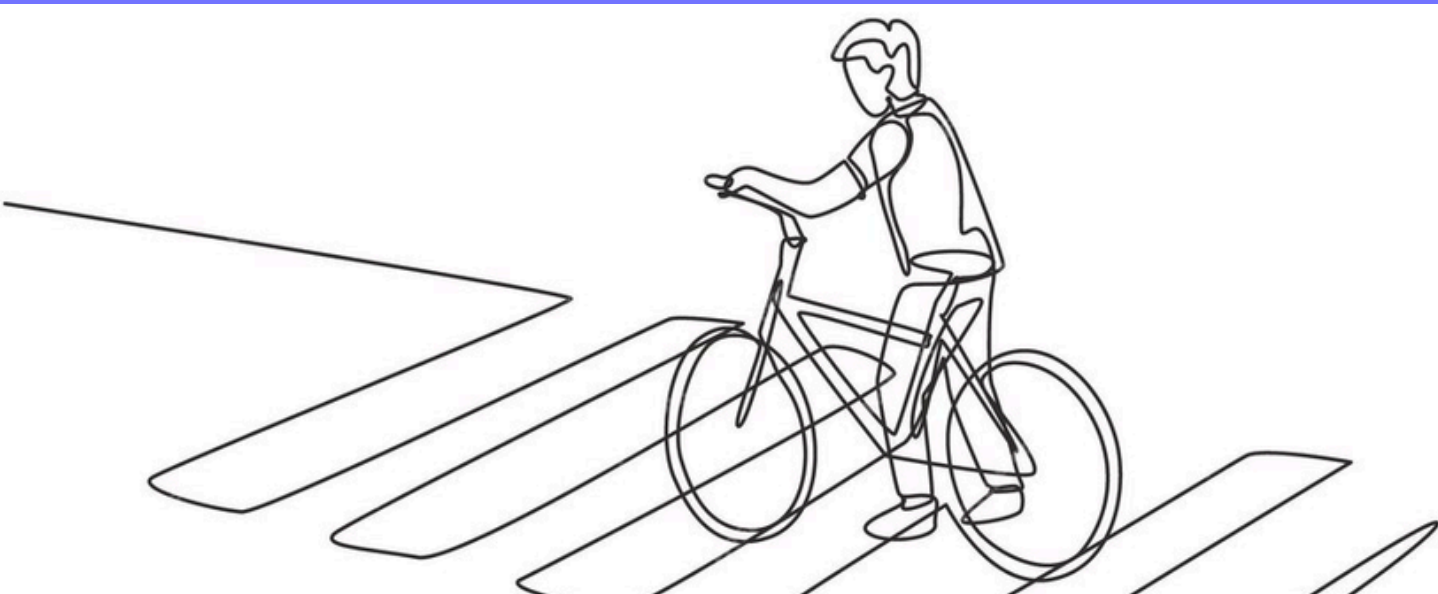
How has people pleasing affected your relationships or well being?

The connection between people pleasing and grief

Grief can amplify people pleasing tendencies, as many feel pressure to “grieve correctly” or avoid making others uncomfortable. Some may suppress their emotions to avoid burdening others, while others seek validation for their pain. Recognising this pattern and allowing yourself to grieve in your own way is key to healing.

Reflection Question:

Have you ever felt pressure to manage your grief in a way that made others comfortable rather than honouring your own emotions?



Setting healthy boundaries

Overcoming people pleasing involves learning to set and uphold boundaries. This means saying “no” without guilt, expressing your needs, and allowing yourself to prioritise self care.

Practical Steps:

- Pause before saying yes. Give yourself time to reflect.
- Practice small no’s. Start with low value situations.
- Use “I” statements. (“I need some time for myself today.”)
- Acknowledge discomfort. It’s normal if setting boundaries feels awkward at first.

Reflection Question:

What is one small boundary you can set this week to honour your wellbeing?

Reclaiming Your Authentic Self

Healing from people pleasing is a journey of self discovery. It means recognising that your worth is not tied to external approval but to your own values, needs, and emotions.

Embracing authenticity allows for deeper, more fulfilling relationships, both with yourself and others.

Final Reflection:

What does being your authentic self look like to you?

How can you take one step toward that today?

By understanding when and in what circumstances people pleasing most occurs, and what or who can trigger this response, you can start to take control, draw boundaries, and regain a sense of self.

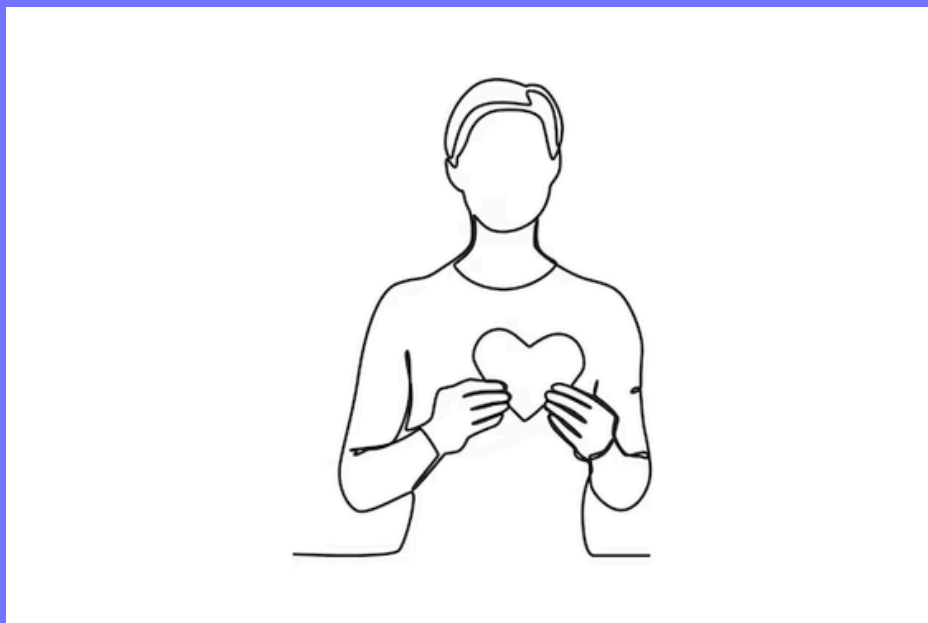
With time and practice, saying no with confidence and without fear will become natural and normal.

If you would like to talk about how you personally can overcome people pleasing, contact me to arrange a **free** discovery call at

embraceyourfuture@outlook.com

or book a session/package with me at:

www.embraceyourfuture.net



“I loved how I learnt to be my own best friend, and I feel that I have achieved this. I felt it was a way to prioritise myself and treat myself well” Anon