

How to Overcome People-Pleasing and Approval-Seeking

If you find yourself people-pleasing or always seeking approval, you're not alone.

By the way, perfectionism is a twin of people-pleasing. They stem from the same thing...a fearful thought that our brain is feeding us. So let's solve this problem!

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Many people struggle with approval seeking, people-pleasing, and seeking validation. For women, in particular, this can be a difficult thing to overcome. Even women in leadership positions experience it.

It is possible to shed these ineffective behaviors once you know why and how to solve for them. This article provides my best tips (including my favorite people pleasing quotes) on how to use your brain to overcome these tendencies.

I've got a great 10 minute routine to help you combat people pleasing. It's called the Remarkable Resilience Routine. **Feel free to download it here** as you read the rest of this article.

Get your copy now:

The Remarkable Resilience Routine

<https://www.realliferesilience.com/remarkableresilience>



Hey, if we're just meeting, I'm **Resilience Coach Stacy Brookman**. I love working with professional women who want to stop hiding behind a facade of confidence and want to truly command their personal power. I get to help them boost their adversity quotient score and level up their resilience in spite of life's drama.

OK, so back to people pleasing...

It's time to escape the cycle of seeking validation and approval

If you find yourself people-pleasing or always seeking approval, you're not alone. It's common to want to make others happy, but it comes at a cost when it disregards your own wellbeing. The good news is, there are things you can do to change this pattern of behavior.

Let's dive in!

What exactly is people pleasing and approval seeking?

People pleasing and approval seeking stem from our desire to keep our image or our persona at a certain level for other people. We try to keep people happy with us, liking us, making sure they believe we're doing a great job or that we're a great human being.

Not surprisingly, it's very common for women to be people-pleasers behind the scenes. They strive to make it to the top, and most often have to work harder in order to "prove" that they are worthy of their positions. So they subtly exhibit people pleasing and perfectionistic behaviors.

By the way, perfectionism is a twin of people-pleasing. They stem from the same thing...a fearful thought that our brain is feeding us. More on that in a bit.

Speaking your truth with confidence is one of the top skills for women to show up for themselves. Here are all of the power skills necessary to advance your career: <https://www.realliferesilience.com/csuite-skills-for-women>

How do approval seeking and people pleasing behaviors show up in real life?

Approval seeking shows up in a variety of ways in our lives. Here are 8 ways that surface because of people pleasing and the need for approval which you might not realize.



Lack of work-life balance - This shows up not only in overwork in business, but also overworking at home, taking on a majority of responsibilities there too, and sacrificing your rest, hobbies, and other vital personal time.

Perfectionism - Refusing to turn in a report or project because it isn't quite right, or you've discovered something extra to make it juuuust a little bit better.

Overpreparation - You probably think you're preparing properly, but all that over-work isn't needed. Dotting the i's and crossing the t's a 3rd or 4th time is a waste of time.

Imposter Syndrome - Never feeling like you're good enough. 'Nuff said here. (By the way, here's a [great article on imposter syndrome](#))

Waiting for Approval - Expecting others to see what a great job you did and THEN praising or promoting you without you having to ask

you without you having to ask.

Hesitant to Step Forward – Not putting yourself out there because it might offend your current boss, or someone in your peer group or your partner.

Not Speaking Up or Speaking Out – Being unwilling to share your point of view, your thought, or your idea, and even reluctance to constructively criticize someone else's idea is a red flag.

Playing It Safe – Never risking yourself to step out of your comfort zone, or being willing to make a mistake (*though every other human on the planet does make them*) is a sure sign that you're holding back out of fear.

Is people pleasing really all that bad?

Approval seeking behavior exhibits as needy and unattractive. And it **attracts the type of people that use and take advantage of others**. Yet, there are some benefits to being a people pleaser.

People pleasers are usually very likable. They have an easy time making friends and keeping them.

People pleasers also tend to be successful in their careers.

They know how to build relationships and often get people to say yes, so being a people pleaser is not 100% bad.

However, being a people-pleaser or approval seeker is different from being a nice person. It's important to find a balance – and often difficult to do.

It's possible to be a nice person without being a people pleaser or approval seeker.

Don't let the need for approval control your life.

When people are excessively focused on winning approval from others, they may start to engage in people-pleasing behavior with negative consequences, both for the individual and for the relationships they're in.

People-pleasing leads to internal resentment, because the individual is always putting others' needs above their own. This produces feelings of frustration and burnout.

Approval seekers may have difficulty setting boundaries and saying "no," which results in them feeling overwhelmed and taken advantage of. They may also struggle to assert themselves and stand up for what they believe in because they don't want to upset or disappoint others.

Additionally, it's difficult to maintain healthy boundaries when you're always trying to please others and get them to validate you.

One of the most common problems with approval seeking is that it leads to a loss of authenticity.

The approval seeker may start to wear a mask, hiding their true selves in order to get others' approval. This creates problems in all areas of life, from work to personal relationships.

Finally, people who seek approval too much may have difficulty making decisions. This is because they are constantly looking for other people's opinions and approval, rather than making their own decisions. Instead, they may find themselves second-guessing themselves or feeling unsure about what to do.

People pleasing trauma response

People who are constantly seeking approval from others may be doing so because they experienced trauma in their past. This trauma could be from abuse, neglect, or any other type of traumatic event.

When someone is constantly seeking approval, they are likely trying to please everyone in order to avoid any more pain or hurt. This is an exhausting way to live and often leads to more trauma.

People pleasers often start out as parent pleasers. Whether the people pleasing is from childhood trauma or an adult trauma response, these folks often feel that they are not good enough and that they must constantly prove themselves to others. This produces stress and anxiety.

The direct result is burnout. If you find yourself constantly seeking approval from others, it may be helpful to talk to a therapist about your childhood experiences.

Whatever the cause of an approval seekers behavior, there is hope. Buckle up, buttercup, and let's explore our brains for a sec.

What are our brains trying to do, or trying to solve for, when we engage in people-pleasing or seek validation?

When we go out of our way to please others or to seek their approval, what are we really hoping to achieve?

When we seek approval, we are really seeking to please others. We want to be liked and accepted by those around us. *We may do things that we don't really want to do or say things that we don't believe just to get the approval or validation of others.* Sometimes this happens unconsciously or so quickly you don't even realize you're doing it.

While there's nothing wrong with wanting to be liked, this need for approval often holds us back from being our true selves. It prevents us from speaking our minds and living our lives in the way we really want to.



We shouldn't let the approval of others dictate our actions or control our lives.

For some folks, people-pleasing behavior may stem from a deep-seated need for approval. This need pulls us so strongly that it drives our choices and actions, even if those choices are not in our best

interest.

People who constantly seek approval from others may do so because they don't feel like they are "enough" on their own. They may feel that they need the validation of others in order to feel okay about themselves.

As mentioned previously, **the consequences of people pleasing behavior is detrimental to our relationships and our own wellbeing**. It causes us to make decisions that are not in our best interest, and it makes us feel bad about ourselves when we don't receive the validation we're seeking.

Essentially, the opposite of the desired result.

What does seeking validation mean? Is that wrong too?

There are many reasons why we seek validation. For one, it helps us gauge how well we're doing in life. If we constantly receive positive feedback, then we feel we're on the right track. On the other hand, if we receive criticism, then we're able to use that to improve ourselves.

In addition, validation helps boost our self-esteem and confidence. When someone tells us that we've done a good job, it feels good and makes us feel proud of ourselves.

And there are all kinds of inappropriate validation: Parents seeking validation from their child, seeking validation from an ex, seeking validation from a narcissist, women seeking validation from men, seeking validation at work, seeking validation from parents, and so much more.

When we seek validation from others outside of ourselves, we're looking for reassurance that we are doing something right or that our actions and thoughts are acceptable.

One problem with seeking validation is that *it makes us reliant on others for approval*. We may start to doubt ourselves if we don't receive the validation we're looking for.

Additionally, seeking validation causes us to act in ways that are not true to ourselves just to get approval from others. It's important to strike a balance between valuing our own opinion and listening to constructive feedback from others.

How to stop approval seeking and people pleasing

The most important thing you can do to stop this behavior is to be honest with yourself about why you do it.

"*I just want to be a nice person*," you say. Well why do you have to people-please to be a nice person? Keep asking yourself that. Because being a nice person doesn't equate to people-pleasing. It equates to seeking approval from others.

Who you really need to get approval from is yourself.

As I mentioned at the beginning of this article, I've got a great 10 minute routine to help you combat people pleasing. It's called the [Remarkable Resilience Routine](#). I

want to give it to you so you're able to combat that approval-seeking behavior and level up your life.

FREE GUIDE

Remarkable Resilience Routine

A 10-minute routine to help you combat people-pleasing.

Go get this now.

I want
this!

People pleasing quotes to use when you need a reminder

"Don't be afraid of losing people. Be afraid of **losing yourself** by trying to please everyone around you." Anonymous

"I can't tell you the key to success, but the **key to failure** is trying to please everyone." Ed Sheeran

"People pleasing **doesn't allow** you to receive." Abiola Abrams

"Don't set yourself **on fire** trying to keep others warm." Penny Reid

"Givers need to **set limits** because takers never do." Irma Kurtz

"If you live for **people's acceptance**, you'll die from their rejection." Lecrae Moore

"The greatest gift you can give yourself is **letting go** of other people's expectations for your life." Rachel Hollis

"Sometimes you **aren't listening** to your body because you're listening to everybody else's expectations." Ann Voskamp

"People pleasing pleases everyone **but the pleaser.**" Sanjo Jendayi

"There's something **very addictive** about people pleasing. It's a thought pattern and a habit that feels really, really good until it becomes desperate." Anne Hathaway

"People pleasing **hides** the real you." Gigi Young

"Stop asking why they keep doing it and start asking why am I **allowing it?**" Anonymous

“People-pleasing is **rooted in fear** and focused on earning love. Genuinely love yourself instead.” Anonymous

“To **be yourself** in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment.” Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Care about what other people think and you will always be their **prisoner.**” Lao Tzu

“Everybody does not have to like you. That is not their job. Liking you is not anyone’s purpose in life except **yourself.**” Lyanla Vanzant

“When you engage in people pleasing you are **out of integrity** with yourself, your goals, your dreams and your life’s mission.” Eileen Anglin

In the age of social media, it’s easy to get caught up in people-pleasing and approval seeking. We post pictures and updates about our lives, hoping to get likes and comments from our friends and followers.

But what happens when this need for approval starts to take over our lives? We become afraid to speak our minds and stand up for ourselves, because we don’t want to upset anyone or risk losing their approval.

It’s time to escape the cycle of approval.

[Download your Remarkable Resilience Routine now](#)

[so you can get started uncovering those thoughts that cause it.](#)

Now you know how and why people pleasing and approval seeking happen...and what to do about it, but what about our old nemesis: imposter syndrome or setting boundaries? What about raising your adversity quotient? I’ve got three amazing blogs below for you to read next to help you with that.



Ready to rid yourself of people pleasing?

It's easier than you think...and totally possible.

Let's work together!

[GET STARTED NOW>>>](#)



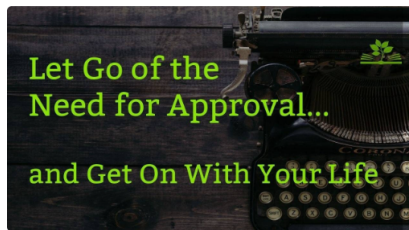
Here's what you should read next...



Setting Boundaries Doesn't Make You Selfish, It Makes You Smart

Being able to set boundaries is one of the smartest skills you can implement. And setting resilient boundaries is entirely possible...even if they've been trampled before, or if you've "failed" in enforcing them.

[Now I'm Curious!](#)



Need for Approval Keeps You From Moving Forward in Life

Some social scientists believe that seeking approval evolved from a survival advantage that group acceptance provided. That means...

Seeking approval is downright primitive

[Now I'm Curious!](#)



Imposter syndrome: Why do I feel like a fraud?

Ever felt like a fraud despite your successes? You may be suffering from impostor syndrome. Left unchecked, imposter syndrome can lead to self-doubt, anxiety, and even depression. The good news is that imposter syndrome can be overcome.

[Now I'm Curious!](#)

