



EPISODE 54

## The Signs and Symptoms of Being a People Pleaser

**Nancy:** This is how you cure the people pleasing tendencies that you are currently living with. This is an inside job, and this is a 180 shift away from focusing on what everybody else needs and what you need. This is the way we pull our attention off of everyone else. Pull our antenna in. And like I said, at the beginning, this is not an either/or this is a both/ and. You can learn how to consider your own needs and someone else's. You can give to yourself AND someone else.

But I will assure you that resentment will rise the longer you go without.

Hi, and welcome to Your Permission Prescription the podcast that teaches you how to confidently say yes to you and consciously create the life you desire. I'm Nancy. Best-selling author, master life coach, and founder of Levin Life Coach Academy. But it wasn't too long ago that I was a burnt-out people pleaser.

Living my life for everyone around me and ignoring my own needs. Fast forward to today. And I've successfully coached thousands of recovering people-pleasers to set boundaries with themselves, and the people around them, so they can live a more fulfilling life on their own terms. I created Your Permission Prescription to help you do the same.

Be sure to tune in for actionable coaching methods, from me. Interviews with other incredible coaches, speakers and authors, plus one-on-one live coaching calls and so much more. If you're ready to start saying yes to you, then you're in the right place.

Welcome back to another episode of Your Permission Prescription. A few episodes ago, back in episode 45, we talked about getting to the root of people pleasing in a live coaching session.

And so many people have responded with questions with wanting to know more about the root of people pleasing and how to make a shift.

So today I thought I would share with you, what are the signs of being a people pleaser, how we can move out of people pleasing into pleasing ourselves. And I want to be clear from the get-go. This is not an either/ or it's a both/ and. So, here's the thing. People pleasing tendencies are really a symptom of a deeper issue and everything, no surprise, is going to funnel into self-worth and boundaries. So, if you have self-worth issues, if you have boundary issues, chances are you are a champion people-pleaser. It is essentially a trauma response. People pleasing is the way that we ensure we feel loved and safe. You've probably heard of fight, flight, and freeze.

And there is a fourth: fight, flight, freeze, and please. So you might have heard fight, flight, freeze, and fawn. Fawn and please are about the same, but I like the rhyming, a fight, flight, freeze, and please. And that means that we people pleasers default into pleasing as the way that we get our sense of regulation in our system.

So, like I said, it's a trauma response. It's a reaction when something happens and it's where we go to in terms of the way that we are going to regulate ourselves. Some of us disappear - flight, some of us fight, some of us freeze. We become immobile. And some of us go into over-giving and over-pleasing. So if you are someone who wants to keep everybody happy, wants to keep the peace, wants to not rock the boat.

This is you. So let's look at some of the tendencies of people pleasers. One of the big ones is "I don't want to be selfish." and "I just want to be a good person." And those two things can really allow other people to take advantage of you and take you for granted. So we've talked about selfish before in the podcast.

I will, I love talking about it. I'll always bring it back around. If you are consumed with not wanting to appear selfish, what's likely happening is you have gone to the other end of the spectrum to self-less, which means you're disappearing, which means you're also drawing needy, selfish people toward you.

So something to look at there. In terms of other tendencies, you may have, you likely do not offer your own opinion, and instead, you agree with everybody else. You likely feel responsible for how other people feel, meaning you cross your own boundary into someone else's territory and take responsibility for their experience, not only your own, or instead of your own.

Quite frankly, it's highly likely that you are forgoing your own self-care because you care more about what someone else is experiencing. You likely apologize often you likely say you're sorry for things that are either not your fault or you blame yourself for the bulk of whatever is happening. So there is this expression I've used it before in the podcast.

I'm sure. We are each one hundred percent responsible for 50% of every relationship. And yet people pleasers will take 110% responsibility. Another way, you know you're a people pleaser is if you cannot be with the discomfort of someone else's disappointment or anger. And you consistently internalize their disappointment and anger being aimed at you, or about you.

So the people pleaser does anything and everything to get out of that discomfort. People pleasing also causes you to create a to-do list long beyond what you are actually capable of and what's in your capacity to do. Because what's happening here is as we tie people pleasing back to self-worth. If your self-worth is rooted in what you do, achieve, and produce, you will create a long list of things to do, achieve, and produce so you can get the love you want.

And tying into that as well is needing that validation, that praise, that applause in order to feel worthy. So in other words, you are putting your worth and value in the hands of someone else instead of yourself. One of the other things that we can recognize as people pleasers is not inhabiting our own lives on our own terms.

So living someone else's life or living life according to someone else's terms. That's when we get into being the chameleon. And another way that we can recognize that we are people pleasers is when we are not honest about the truth of our own feelings. So if our feelings are hurt, we tend to swallow. We tend to deny that we are angry.

In fact, we highly likely disown our anger, disown our sadness. And we just keep rolling along, muscling through and we do whatever it takes to keep a relationship harmonious. So I have shared before, when I've been talking about boundaries, most of us think that the goal of relating is harmony at all costs.

However, harmony at all costs comes at a very high cost to us. So everything I've just named in terms of signs of people pleasing or being a people pleaser are also signs that you are not setting and maintaining healthy boundaries. So while the root of people pleasing is highly likely in our family of origin all the way back as the way that we can ensure love, ensure safety, and keep the peace, the healing of people pleasing will be found in learning how to set and hold healthy boundaries.

I know in my own life, and if you've been listening to the podcast for a while, you know my story. And if you haven't, I encourage you to go back and listen or read a book of mine because all my books share some element of my own origin story around this.

When I was very young, when I was two, my six-year-old brother died. He had been very ill, incapacitated, and when he died, I felt this strong need to A) be more than I was. So to take up the space of two children for my parents. So here, also in the people pleasing comes in this idea of not enoughness. So I felt I had to be more than one child for my parents.

I also felt that I wanted to heal a grief in my parents that could never be healed. So I went overboard in trying to be more for them and in trying to heal something in them that was not possible for me to do. This was the root of my people-pleasing. This was something that carried on for decades of my life.

Trying to fix, heal, save, rescue. Take a moment to notice where in your life, which relationships are you in, where you assume the role of fixer, saver, rescuer, healer. These are telltale relationships where you are crossing your own boundaries in order to stay in them. Where you

are investing more in making sure the other person is “okay,” than that you are. These are the relationships where you are foregoing your own needs in service of someone else.

You're abandoning yourself for sake of someone else. This will always come back to, Are you willing to give yourself permission to consider your own needs AT LEAST as much as you're considering the needs of others? Are you willing to give yourself permission to consider your needs MORE than you're considering the needs of others?

And then the real boundary ninja move, Are you willing to consider your own needs FIRST before you consider the needs of others? This is how you cure the people pleasing tendencies that you are currently living with. This is an inside job, and this is a 180 shift away from focusing on what everybody else needs and what you need.

This is the way we pull our attention off of everyone else. Pull our antenna in. And like I said, at the beginning, this is not an either/ or, this is a both/ and. You can learn how to consider your own needs and someone else's, you can give to yourself and someone else. But I will assure you that resentment will rise the longer you go without.

Resentment rising is a telltale sign of boundary needs to be put into place. And your boundaries are your limits that you set around what you will or will not do, accept, or tolerate. Your boundaries are directly linked to your preferences and your needs, your ability to express them, and maintain them.

This is the antidote to people pleasing. This is the way out of living someone else's life. This is the way into authentic connection. So the next time you find yourself abandoning yourself for the sake of someone else, I really invite you to take a pause, reconnect within, and identify what you need, not what someone else needs, but what you need to continue loving you.

Instead of thinking that you can buy love and safety from someone else. Thank you so much for joining me and I will be back here with you again next week.

Thanks so much for listening to today's episode. If you loved what you heard, I'd be so grateful if you'd leave a review and share your experience. Even better follow this podcast so you never miss a new episode. And if you'd like some extra support or guidance, head over to my Transform Together Facebook group for an engaged community.

Where you can speak your truth, receive inspiration and ask for help as you navigate life's journey, or visit my website, [Nancylevin.com](http://Nancylevin.com), where you can find resources to help guide your path to reclaiming what's truly important to you. Thanks again for joining me.