RELATIONSHIPS, BOUNDARIES & AUTONOMY

The Pleaser Map

About 10-15 minutes with one everyday example

This workbook offers a gentle introduction to the practice for you to explore on your own; deeper work is best undertaken with the support of a professional counsellor.

Understand how you arrive at your response

You may sometimes agree to something before you have had time to notice what you want or can offer. This exercise helps you look at one such moment with interest.

Helping others can express care, commitment or enjoyment. The question here is how much room you have to consider your response, including the times when you genuinely want to say yes.

1. Choose one manageable example

Recall an ordinary request or invitation. Choose something small enough to consider without becoming overwhelmed. Describe what was asked, and what you said or did.

2. Notice what happened in you

What thoughts, feelings or sensations did you notice before responding? Perhaps you knew your preference, or only recognised it afterwards. You can leave anything you do not remember blank.

3. Explore the pull to agree

Was there something you wanted to offer, something you hoped would happen, or something you wanted to avoid? You might have wanted to be helpful, keep a commitment or avoid disappointing someone. Use what fits your example; there may be several reasons.

4. Include your own circumstances

What did you want, need or have capacity for? What other responsibilities mattered? Notice what the response made possible and whether it had a cost for you. A cost does not automatically mean your choice was wrong.

5. Consider what you would like to remember

If a similar situation arose, what would help you respond with more consideration? You might want time to check your availability, a clearer understanding of the request or words that express what you can offer. You do not need to act on this reflection now.

This map is for private reflection. It does not make you responsible for another person's harmful behaviour. Leave situations involving threats, punishment or harm out of this exercise and seek appropriate support.

THE PLEASER MAP

Map one response

What was asked, and how I responded:

What I noticed in myself, and what mattered to me:

What my response made possible, its costs, and what I might remember next time:

Keep the map specific

You may have different responses with different people, or on different days. One example does not define you as a people-pleaser. It gives you something concrete to consider.

> You can recognise a preference without announcing it or changing a relationship. Reflection and action can happen at different times.

THE PLEASER MAP

Returning to the practice

Over four weeks

If this practice is part of your Development Map plan, follow the pace suggested there. Use one everyday example at a time. You do not need to monitor every interaction.

Week 1 | Notice your response

Describe a request and what you did. Include any preference you recognised, even if you noticed it later.

Week 2 | Understand what mattered

Look at what influenced the response: care, practical needs, expectations, worry or something else. Check whether your explanation still fits. A pattern may emerge, or the example may remain particular to that situation.

Week 3 | Make room for one choice

Consider a small adjustment in an ordinary situation. You might check your time before agreeing, ask what is needed or privately rehearse a reply. Trying it with another person is optional.

Week 4 | Review the balance

Where did you have room to consider yourself and others? What would you like to keep noticing? You can continue with private reflection or leave the practice aside.

What would help me give my own response more consideration?

This practice supports self-reflection. It is not a treatment or a substitute for professional support.

Work with me

If this workbook has opened up something you would like to explore further, you are welcome to get in touch. I offer psychotherapy and counselling in Dalston, East London, and online. We can use an initial session to consider what brings you to therapy and whether working together feels right for you.

BOOK AN INITIAL SESSION	CONTACT ME