

The Signs of *Silent* Suffering: People Pleasing

People pleasing, often referred to as 'Overextension', is the act of taking on an excessive amount of responsibilities and burdens, often at the cost of one's own well-being, in an effort to meet the expectations of others or to avoid conflict. This behavior is often driven by a fear of letting others down, disappointing them, or a need to seek validation and worth.



MENTAL HEALTH AND BURNOUT

People Pleasing (Overextension) has significant ties to mental health:

- **Emotional Burden:** Continuously trying to please others can create an intense emotional burden, leaving individuals feeling trapped and overwhelmed.
- **Anxiety and Stress:** The fear of not meeting others' expectations or being judged negatively can amplify anxiety levels.
- **Depression:** Over time, if one consistently neglects their own needs and desires in favor of others, it can lead to feelings of worthlessness and depression.
- **Burnout:** The physical and emotional toll of constantly trying to accommodate everyone else can lead to burnout, characterized by extreme fatigue, reduced performance, and detachment.

PEOPLE PLEASING MAY LOOK LIKE:

- **Difficulty Saying "No":** Always agreeing to tasks or commitments, even when already overextended.
- **Seeking Validation:** Constant need for approval or affirmation from others.
- **Avoiding Conflict:** Going out of the way to avoid any form of disagreement or confrontation.
- **Feeling Responsible for Others' Happiness:** Believing that it's one's duty to ensure everyone else is content, even at personal expense.
- **Over commitment:** Regularly finding oneself overbooked or stretched too thin.

STEPS TO TAKE:

- **Self-awareness:** Recognize and acknowledge the behavior. Ask yourself why you're agreeing to a task or responsibility. Is it out of genuine interest or just to please someone else?
- **Set Boundaries:** It's essential to establish clear personal boundaries. Understand that saying "no" is not a rejection of the person but a way of honoring your own needs.
- **Seek Support:** Talk to friends, family, or professionals who can offer insights and help you navigate and change the behavior. It's okay to ask for help in understanding and managing your people-pleasing tendencies.