My People Pleasing Patterns

Kindness is a choice I could also decline. Pleasing feels like I have no choice. Noticing the pattern gives me the choice back.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Signs I am pleasing, not choosing

Tick any that happen often

- [ ] I say yes before I check if I can
- [ ] I hide my opinion to keep the peace
- [ ] I agree, then feel resentful later
- [ ] I find it hard to ask for help
- [ ] I feel guilty resting or saying no
- [ ] I apologize when I did nothing wrong
- [ ] I feel responsible for others' moods
- [ ] I over explain when I say no
- [ ] I change plans so no one is let down
- [ ] I worry for hours that someone is upset

2 Where it happens, and what yes costs

Think of the last time I said yes and did not want to

With whom it is strongest (circle): parent partner boss friends coworkers other: _____

What I agreed to: _____

What it cost me (time, energy, money, sleep, mood): _____

What I really wanted to say: _____

What I needed in that moment: _____

3 Fear check: what I predict vs what happens

Fill in before and after one small no

	Before: my prediction	After: what happened
What I fear		
How likely (0 to 10)		
How bad (0 to 10)		
How I will cope		

What I learned: _____

The next small no I will try: _____

Kind words I can say to myself afterwards: _____

Who can support me: _____

Original layout by Lotus & Tulip. A reflection and practice tool, not a test or a diagnosis.

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My Kind No Practice Plan

A kind no can be warm and clear at the same time. I practice small, and I log what really happens.

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

1 My pause line

Most pleasing happens in the first two seconds. Buy time first.

"Let me check and get back to you." "I need to think about it."

My own pause line: _____

2 Kind no scripts

Tick the ones I will try. Short is kind: one reason, or none.

- ☐ **Plain no:** "Thanks for asking. I'm not able to this time."
- ☐ **No plus alternative:** "I can't do Saturday. I could help Monday morning."
- ☐ **Partial yes:** "I can do the first part, not the whole thing."
- ☐ **Repeat request:** "My answer is still no, and I hope it goes well."
- ☐ **My own words:** _____

3 My small steps ladder

Start at the bottom. Move up one step when it feels easier.

Hard (for later): _____

Medium: _____

Easy (start here, e.g. say where I want to eat): _____

4 My practice log

One line each time I try a kind no

Day	What I said no to	Guilt 0 to 10	What really happened
Mon			
Tue			
Wed			
Thu			
Fri			

For therapists and clients

1. People pleasing is an everyday term, not a diagnosis. It often began as a smart way to keep the peace or stay safe.
2. Practice low stakes situations first and rehearse scripts in session before trying harder ones.
3. With an abusive or controlling person, saying no can carry real risk. Plan for safety before assertiveness.
4. Strong distress, self-harm or hopelessness needs a full assessment and a trained therapist, not a worksheet alone.

In the US, call or text 988 (Suicide and Crisis Lifeline) any time, day or night.

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