

Ep #03: Tell People-Pleasing to Suck It



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With Your Host

Melissa Parsons

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Hey, this is Melissa Parsons, and you are listening to the *Your Favorite You Podcast*. I'm a certified life coach with an advanced certification in deep dive coaching. The purpose of this podcast is to help brilliant women like you with beautiful brains create the life you've been dreaming of with intention.

My goal is to help you find your favorite version of you by teaching you how to treat yourself as your own best friend. If this sounds incredible to you and you want practical tips, I'm changing up how you treat yourself, then you're in the right place. Just so you know, I'm a huge fan of using all of the words available to me in the English language. So please proceed with caution. If young ears are around.

Welcome back to Your Favorite You. We are now on episode number 3. I want to thank you for coming back here for three weeks in a row. If you are anyone other than my mom or my husband, thank you for remaining in this long-term relationship with me. This week, we're going to be talking about people-pleasing and how it gets in the way of you being your favorite you.

People-pleasing shows up in huge ways and in tiny ways. For most of us, my favorite version of me no longer says yes to things that I don't want to do. So, this is part of my people-pleasing tendency. We all people please, because we want other people to like us, or it wasn't safe for us, not to people-please, when we were younger.

So, let's just normalize this behavior for what it is pretending to do: things to make other people happy so that they will ultimately like us, or not leave us or abandon us, which of course is one of our greatest fears based on creating safety for ourselves back in the day. And heck, even now, at times, it's not safe to be left alone, especially if you're a woman or a marginalized member of society.

But I digress. Okay, so my favorite me is selfish with my time, which ironically leads me to being very generous if I'm selfish with my time and I schedule time to take care of me to do the things that I love. Things like walking outside in nature, reading my romance novels for a complete and utter pleasure spending time, loving on John, spending time planning vacations to Austin, destinations in the world with my family.

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If I say yes to the things that ignite me and excite me and make me want to get out of bed in the morning, and I say no to the things that are not a fuck yes, I want to do this, then I'm showing up to everything that I want to participate in as my favorite version of me. And she is a hell of a lot more fun, a hell of a lot more caring, a hell of a lot more generous than the person who used to say yes to the things that I didn't really want to.

Most of us were raised to think that being selfless and doing for others was more important than doing for ourselves, and I don't think that's necessarily wrong as long as you're putting yourself on the list and doing for you what you want. So, for me, unless something is a hell yes, when I'm asked to do it, my answer is either no thank you, or fuck no, depending on who I'm talking to.

And of course, in the moment that's still uncomfortable because I don't like the idea of letting other people down. But my favorite version of me never lets me down. Let me repeat that. My favorite version of me never lets myself down. That is more important to me because when I say yes in the moment or something I don't really want to do, I end up presenting the time that I'm spending doing what I don't want to do. I end up presenting myself for saying yes when I really wanted to say no.

So, for me, the little bit of discomfort that I feel when I say no to something in the moment, I'm willing to feel that short period of discomfort in order to avoid the eventual and prolonged discomfort of letting myself down and doing something against my will.

Let's think about it from a different angle. Do you want a friend, or a spouse, or a mom, or your grown children to do things with you, or for you out of obligation? Or do you want someone who is doing things with you and for you because she truly wants to do those things with you? I know who I want to be, and I know who I want to spend my time with.

It's an amazing way to live. I get this argument from people who have "no time," or who are doing things against their will, or judgment, or are afraid to tell other people no, because they don't want anyone else to think that they're selfish.

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If you add things to your calendar that you love and that you truly want to do, and taking off the things that you don't, if that makes you a selfish bitch, that no one wants to be around, and that is truly how you start caring for yourself as a selfish bitch who doesn't care about anyone but you.

You may have already been a selfish bitch that nobody wanted to be around. Stopping people-pleasing does not change the core of who you are as a person. It simply allows you to prioritize yourself on your way to learning about your favorite you and becoming her. This is nuanced because there will be times where your favorite, you does things for other people that you aren't necessarily chomping at the bit to do.

For example, do I want to fold the laundry or go to the pharmacy to pick up John's meds on my morning off? Not necessarily, but I want all of us to have clothes that aren't a wrinkled mess, and I want my hubs to stay healthy, so I fold the clothes and I run the errands. Now for me, I do these things with love and joy in my heart, not with resentment and thinking no one else does this shit but me.

And I make it fun for myself. I usually watch mindless TV as I fold, or I phone a friend while I'm folding. And I definitely blare music to and from the pharmacy, and that makes me love the errand all the more.

One thought that has helped me to overcome my people-pleasing tendencies was offered again by one of my favorite authors who I had the chance meeting with and hugged when I was in Miraval in Tucson last year.

Glennon Doyle, who is the author of several books, my favorite of which is named Untamed. She and her sister, Amanda and Glennon's wife, Abby Wombach, have an amazing podcast that you should take a listen to if you're not already a loyal listener. It's called We Can Do Hard Things.

Anyway, Glennon said something to the effect of, I'm quoting her, "Anyone, or anything I could lose by telling the truth was never mine."

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Let me read that again ... “Anyone or anything I could lose by telling the truth was never mine.”

Anyway, when you think about it, and this was a harsh realization for me when I first heard it, so sorry, but not sorry if this hurts you to hear this, but people-pleasing is essentially lying. It used to be that I wanted and lived my life to be liked, and this is what led to my people-pleasing.

Now my value is to live in integrity. This means no more lying, no more people-pleasing. It leads me to putting my head on the pillow each night knowing that I'm doing exactly what I'm meant to be doing each and every day. I said at the beginning of the podcast that people-pleasing shows up in big ways and in tiny ways.

Some of the huge ways that it showed up for me are things that I'm not proud to. But I'm going to share them here with you because they might help you recognize this in yourself. So, for me, the huge things used to be not speaking up and out when people I was hanging out with shared a racist or a homophobic statement couched as a joke.

It also showed up by giving in when a parent brought their child in thinking that they needed antibiotics for what I thought to be a viral infection. I'm proud to say that this happened fewer and fewer times as I got more comfortable in my role as a pediatrician. Another way this showed up for me was saying yes to people who were not my patients when they asked me to treat them for something or their kids for something.

Luckily, I drew this line early for myself too, and stopped doing it very early in my career. I literally could have lost my license to practice medicine for this, and this became my reason when somebody would ask me and I said, No. It turns out some of the people that we're asking didn't care if I lost my license or not. They just expected me to help them.

And when I realized that they didn't care if I kept my license or not, it became much easier to think in my head, fuck no, and say no to them. It also showed up for me by saying yes to my boys when my intuition told me

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to say no. It leads us to trying to be friends with our kiddos instead of being their parent.

Some of the tiny ways that it shows up for me ... eating foods that I don't like or that I'm not hungry for because I don't want to hurt anyone else's feelings. Another tiny way is answering my phone when I'm busy doing other things. Another one is watching a movie or a show that I have no interest in watching.

You get the idea, and sometimes these tiny ways if done over and over become huge ways of letting ourselves down over and over again. I think of it like a death by a thousand tiny cuts. One consequence of people-pleasing that you can shed once you stop people-pleasing is being many different versions of yourself to many different people. My sweet dad was notorious for this, and to think about it now hurts my heart.

He would almost always agree with whomever he was hanging out with at the time. Now that I'm an adult with significantly more emotional intelligence and the benefit of doing this amazing work on myself to stop being all things to all people, I can totally see why he did it. He simply wanted to fit in with whatever group of people he was hanging out with.

This led to some interesting situations to say the least. All of this to say that now that I know who I am, what I stand for and don't stand for now, my favorite version of me shows up in different situations. My sense of belonging to myself, the thought of I belong to me, that sense is quite strong. I no longer have to change like a chameleon to fit in. I can be just me.

One version of me is more than anyone can handle anyway, just ask the people who are close to me. If you find yourself struggling to fit in, may I suggest that what you need to do, is work out figuring how to belong to yourself first. When you belong to yourself, it takes away the need to fit in.

Of course, if you already know how to do this, perhaps you would not be listening to this podcast. It would be my honor to help you recognize this tendency in yourself and to help you figure out how to problem solve for it.

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Please reach out to me if you're interested in one-on-one coaching with me. You probably already know how to do this by now, but you should go to www.melissaparsonskoaching.com/contact to set up a consult to see if we are a good fit to work together.

Do it now, people. What on earth are you waiting for? There is so much more to say on this topic, and I just happen to be coaching besties with an incredible woman, a fellow coach, an amazing friend of mine. Her name is Sarah Bybee Fisk, and she is an expert on all things people-pleasing. I have already voluntold her that she's going to be on *Your Favorite You* with me discussing all the different ways that people-pleasing shows up in our life and what to do about. Since she is an expert on stopping people-pleasing, know that if she actually shows up on my podcast, she wants to be here. So, you have that to look forward to in a future episode. I hope you all have an amazing week.

See you next week.

If you like what you're hearing so far, and you think others would benefit from *Your Favorite You*, it would be epic if you could take a couple of minutes to rate and review the podcast. Ratings and reviews are the best way to make a podcast discoverable. I'd love it if you'd give me your honest opinion, especially if you adore me, and of course, a five-star review would be fantastic.

To give you a little incentive so we can blow this podcast launch out of the water, I'll be giving away five, \$100 Amazon gift cards over the next few weeks. For all the details about how to win, you can go to melissaparsonskoaching.com/podcastlaunch

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Thank you for listening to this week's episode of *Your Favorite You*.

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If you like what you're hearing and want to learn more, head over to melissaparsonskoaching.com if you want to work with me to find your favorite you, to become your own best friend so that you can create the life you want with intention, please go to melissaparsonskoaching.com/contact to set up a consult to work with me one-on-one.

I, so look forward to meeting you.