



Happiness of others no key to self-fulfilment

IS your door always open to the point where you've become a doormat?

Are you such a conversational chameleon that you've forgotten your natural colouration?

Do you get a sickening feeling saying "no" even when deep down you know you want to?

You might just be a pathological people pleaser ... and like so many of us, may not have even realised it.

Sure, you're quite possibly the life of the party and great at small talk, because you love making connections and ensuring everyone is comfortable.

You're easy to get along with (of course), and are often incredibly personable and fun (naturally).

You work hard, listen well and are more adaptable than most but you're not doing it for yourself. You want to make others happy.

All. The. Time.

You've gone along and got along so often you're like a brilliant but insecure actor who doesn't know who they are once the scene ends. You're a composite of quips, quotes, anecdotes and other social lubricants from the scheming head, rather than the unguarded heart.

EVE FISHER & CARL DICKENS

“ SAYING NO IS INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT. YOU'RE CONSTANTLY SEEKING VALIDATION AND APPROVAL. OTHERS' HAPPINESS IS KEY TO YOUR HAPPINESS. YOU'RE ALWAYS APOLOGISING. YOU CAN'T GIVE YOURSELF PRAISE EASILY. NOR DO YOU VALUE YOURSELF AS MUCH AS OTHERS.”

People pleasers believe themselves responsible for others' happiness at the cost of their own integrity, because ... well, why?

Have you asked yourself? Do you dare?

It's a confronting notion to look at a neat little list and realise you tick more boxes than you care to admit.

Allowing people to think you agree with them even when you

don't agree in the slightest is classic People Pleasing 101. You don't just stay quiet, you literally foist your inauthentic assent upon them.

You're a great pretender. And usually you don't know it.

The other traits are equally confronting. Not all will resonate but for many of us, plenty of them do.

Saying no is incredibly difficult. You're constantly seeking validation and approval. Others' happiness is key to your happiness. You're always apologising. You can't give yourself praise easily. Nor do you value yourself as much as others. You easily become co-dependent with lovers and friends.

You will avoid conflict at all costs, even if it hurts you personally.

Why on earth do so many of us do this to ourselves?

Perhaps it's simply because we have poor self-esteem or feel unworthy. Maybe it's just how we were trained. Or it's how we are used to behaving.

Perhaps it's a successful survival strategy from childhood that we can't — or won't — outgrow, because it still diffuses potential boundary conflict with your

friends, colleagues and family.

Some accommodate the world, and its demands, beyond their limits, stretching until they snap, forced to crawl back to their cave where they'll hardly take guests at all, unless and until they can heal.

This healing may include developing firmer boundaries, practising saying and hearing "no", and other authentic survival strategies that are mutually beneficial.

There is certainly no quick fix for a lifetime of behaviours that have seemed innocuous and supportive — of other people.

Taking a long, hard look at yourself is tough at the best of times, but even more so when you literally have no idea your accommodating nature has put others at the forefront of your life.

Perhaps we people pleasers can start by asking: "Who am I when no-one else is around?"

The answer could come in the form of tears, denial or a complete shutdown of the question, but just keep asking — and listening.

Even if you have no idea of the answer, with patience you may finally hear that quiet voice inside your head thanking you for at least asking the question.

LETTERS & TEXTS

AUTHORITIES MUST KEEP VIRUS OUT OF COUNTRY

I HAVE been very fortunate, in that I have had the opportunity to work on large international projects in a dozen different countries over the past 20 years.

During this time, I have met people from all walks of life from literally all over the world, with whom I stay in irregular contact.

The recurring theme in recent communiques is that COVID-19 is getting worse and not better.

It is definitely no longer "an old person's virus" with many countries now seeing an increasing number of infections and deaths in people in their 30s and 40s.

The worst-affected countries, from which we in Australia receive little or no useful news reporting, have a genuine crisis on their hands.

They have stopped naming the variants — as there are seemingly too many to keep track of. Seemingly each worse than the previously identified.

Trying not to be alarmist is challenging as our government continues to invite this virus (and its ever-increasing number of variants) into our country on a daily basis. The same government and its subsidiaries are now quite well-versed at apologising and

making excuses as to how breaches in their hotel quarantine occur on a weekly basis.

The reality is it is only a matter of time until we lose control of this situation and re-enter lockdown. Or worse, people both young and old start dying again.

Australia is fortunate, as we are an island and as such, maintain a high level of control over our border. The powers that be, tasked with the responsibility of securing this border, must take a harder line and keep this insidious virus out.

Name and address supplied

ENFORCE MASK RULES ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT

THE mask mandate on public transport is a joke.

Travelling home on Friday, April 30, on the 11.50am train from Melbourne to South Geelong, most of the 25 persons in my

carriage had their masks down under their chins or were not wearing a mask at all and one was coughing almost all the way.

The one coughing should have never travelled on Friday at all.

What's the use of having a mask policy unless its policed?

The conductor was only seen between Southern Cross and Footscray. Why?

I have several health conditions that would almost kill me if I got COVID.

Not good enough everyone, these rules are in place so all of us stay well and have a chance to live full and long lives.

Come on PTV and V/Line, it is about time you enforced the rule and fine passengers who will not do the right thing.

Wear your mask on public transport.
PD, Lethbridge

ADDY ONLINE POLL

Should Geelong get an official motocross training track?

YES **64%** | NO **36%**

Register your vote at geelongadvertiser.com.au

TIME FOR A DECENT COACH TO GET GEELONG SCORING

IF GEELONG Football Club had a decent goalkicking coach as well as a quality head coach, we might score goals from the easy misses.

When you spend so much time in your own forward zone, you need to score much more than GFC did against Sydney.

There is no need for anyone to blame the umpires for their mistakes. Chris Scott's inept coaching display during the game, as well as poor kicking, is what cost GFC the game, not a poor umpiring decision.

It is time Scott resigned his position. Also a goalkicking coach might help. Until that happens, GFC will never win a premiership.

If you want mediocrity, then maintain the status quo.
Ray Butters, Ex GFC lifelong supporter, Altona North

RATEPAYERS' MONEY UP THE CREEK

GREAT news the city is preparing to spend \$50m of ratepayers' money on facilities for Armstrong Creek residents.

One question remains. Why isn't the land developer picking up the tab? Hasn't he made enough money?
Kevin V Russell, Geelong

Geelong Advertiser GYMNASTS LET DOWN

A USTRALIAN gymnastics champion Trudy McIntosh lifted the lid on the industry's toxic culture and her traumatic experiences as a teen sporting superstar in a revealing interview with the Geelong Advertiser last year.

Twenty years after the Sydney Olympics, where she was one of several Geelong athletes to compete, McIntosh spoke of regular abuse, threats and intimidation of young gymnasts by top level coaches. She described crying almost every day in the years leading up to the Sydney Games and how the experience had affected her well into her adult years.

This week, the Australian Human Rights Commission released a damning report on the sport, finding that young female gymnasts across Australia had suffered sexual, physical and emotional abuse because of the sport's "archaic and authoritarian coaching practices". The report addressed significant abuse over many decades and detailed long-term impacts including suicide attempts, self harm, eating disorders and psychosis.

It is difficult to comprehend that the practices detailed in the report could be accepted at the highest level of any sport in Australia. That the victims of this fundamental mistreatment were mostly children only exacerbates the horror.

Equally it is confronting for the rest of us to learn that the performances we cheered on so patriotically were gleaned at the expense of fragile young minds and bodies.

While Gymnastics Australia spared no time in unreservedly apologising, these practices should never have been allowed to continue for so many decades under its watch.

ON THIS DAY

1865 Police shoot dead bushranger Ben Hall, 27, once a successful grazier, in an ambush near Forbes, NSW.

1945 A balloon bomb, launched from Japan, explodes in Oregon, killing a pregnant schoolteacher and five children.

1961 Alan Shepard, 37, becomes the first US astronaut to travel in space, with a 15-minute suborbital flight in his Mercury 3 capsule.

1990 Comedian Paul Hogan, 49, marries his second wife, US actor Linda Kozlowski, 31, at Byron Bay.



2011 Claude Stanley Choules, the last surviving combatant from World War I, dies in Perth, aged 110. British-born Choules served in Britain's Royal Navy in what came to be known as the Great War before moving to Australia and serving in the navy for 40 years, including through World War II.

2020 Britain overtakes Italy as having the highest official death toll in the world during the COVID-19 pandemic.

WRITE TO US

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