

6 signs that you're trying too hard to be liked

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Picture credit: THINKSTOCK

Trying too hard often results in less success. Authenticity is key, particularly in the workplace

In a heartening speech to a graduating class at a college in Massachusetts, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, author of *Americanah*, said that all over the world, girls are raised to be make themselves likeable, to twist themselves into shapes that suit other people.

“Please do not twist yourself into shapes to please,” she said. “Don’t do it. If someone likes that version of you, that version of you that is false and holds back, then they actually just like that twisted shape, and not you. And the world is such a gloriously multifaceted, diverse place that there are people in the world who will like you, the real you, as you are,” she said.

Executive coach **Penny Holburn** says everyone wants to be liked but sometimes the desire to be held in high regard goes too far. “This is a symptom of low self-esteem. It happens when someone feels they are not adequate as they are and need to say and do things in order to be liked, accepted or get ahead.”

She says these signs indicate that you're trying too hard to be liked:

Constantly agreeing with what everyone says

This will make you seem fake as it indicates a willingness to change depending on the people you are with.

Nervousness and stress around people

When you have high self-esteem. You are comfortable within yourself. Those with a desperate need to be liked are anxious and it shows. They have to be on guard to make sure they say the right thing in order to be liked.

Over complimenting

Compliments are great as they show kindness, but over complimenting often indicates an intense need to be liked.

Saying sorry all the time

Only say sorry if you truly have something to be sorry for.

Not standing up for yourself

Don't go along with something that you really hate or you don't agree with for fear of being disliked or disapproved of.

Name dropping

Talking about all the important and famous people you spend time with and know, can also be a form of trying to please people and it often comes across as narcissistic.

How to be more genuine

Firstly, you have to like yourself. Really like yourself, says Holburn. "If you don't like yourself you won't show your real self to the world. This doesn't mean you have to like all your past and present behaviours, or that you don't want to improve. It means that at a basic level you like yourself."

Secondly, it's important to know yourself. "Know what you like, who you are, and your needs and goals so that you can express them. Ultimately you have no control over what people think of you. You can only control what you say and do. As long as you are happy and can live with what you have said and done, that is what matters," says Holburn.