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**People Pleasing: Having Trouble Saying No?**

**By Kali Munro, M.Ed., Psychotherapist**

**People Pleasing: Having Trouble Saying No? by Kali Munro, M.Ed., Psychotherapist**

Do you have trouble saying NO? Do you do things for other people but almost never ask anybody to do things for you? You may be a people pleaser.

People pleasers think of other people's needs before their own. They worry about what other people want, think, or need, and spend a lot of time doing things for others. They rarely do things for themselves, and feel guilty when they do. It's hard being a people pleaser.

People pleasers hold back from saying what they really think or from asking for what they want if they think someone will be upset with them for it. Yet they often spend time with people who don't consider their needs at all. In fact, people pleasers often feel driven to make insensitive or unhappy people feel better – even at the detriment to themselves.

Constantly trying to please other people is draining and many people pleasers feel anxious, worried, unhappy, and tired a lot of the time. They may not understand why no one does anything for them, when they do so much for others – but they often won't ask for what they need.

A people pleaser may believe that if they ask someone for help and that person agrees, that person would be giving out of obligation, not because they really wanted to. The thinking goes – if they really wanted to help, they would have offered without my asking. This line of thinking happens because people pleasers themselves feel obliged to help, and do not always do things because they want to. Sadly, people pleasers have been taught that their worth depends on doing things for other people.

It's painful being a people pleaser. People pleasers are not only very sensitive to other people's feelings, and often take things personally, but they also rarely focus on themselves. When they do take a moment for themselves, they feel selfish, indulgent, and guilty which is why they are often on the go, rushing to get things done. Because people pleasers accomplish so much and are easy to get along with, they are often the first to be asked to do things – they are vulnerable to being taken advantage of.

## People Pleasing: Having Trouble Saying No?

People pleasers were raised in homes where their needs and feelings were not valued, respected, or considered important. They were often expected as children to respond to or to take care of other people's needs. Or they may have been silenced, neglected, or otherwise abused, thus learning that their feelings and needs were not important. In many cultures, girls are raised to be people pleasers – to think of others' needs first, and to neglect their own. Many women have at least some degree of people pleasing in them. Men who identified with their mothers often do as well.

People pleasers' focus is mostly on others and away from themselves. They often feel empty, or don't know how they feel, what they think, or what they want for themselves. But it's possible to change this pattern and to feel better about yourself.

There are many ways to reduce your tendency to please others. Here are some suggestions:

Practice saying NO. This is a very important word! Say it as often as you can, just to hear the word come out of your mouth. Say it out loud when you are alone. Practice phrases with NO in them, such as, "No, I can't do that" or "No, I don't want to go there". Try it for simple things first, then build your way up to harder situations.

Stop saying YES. Try to pause or take a breath before responding to someone's request. You may want to answer requests with "I need to think about it first, I'll get back to you" or "Let me check my schedule and call you back". Use any phrase that you feel comfortable with that gives you time before you automatically respond with YES.

Take small breaks, even if you feel guilty. You won't always feel guilty, but most likely in the beginning you will.

Walk slowly; it's part of slowing down your pace.

Discover what gives you pleasure, for example, reading magazines, watching videos, going to a park, and listening to music, and then give yourself permission to do those things.

Ask someone to help you with something. I know this is a hard one but you can do it!

Check in with how you feel and what you are thinking. It's important to be aware of these things; they're part of who you are. And then try saying what you feel and think more often. Many people pleasers believe that nobody will like them if they stop doing things for other people. If someone stops liking you because you don't do what they ask, then you're being used by them and probably don't want them as a friend anyway. People will like you for who you are and not simply for what you do. You deserve to take time to yourself, to say NO, and to take care of yourself without feeling guilty. It's within your reach to change – one small step at a time!

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## **Learning Spanish Grammar and the verb "Gustar"**

**By Patrick Jackson**

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Learning Spanish Grammar and the  
Verb "Gustar"

If there's one verb that gave me a lot of trouble when I first started learning Spanish grammar that verb was

"gustar." Many of the Spanish lessons and Spanish classes that I took in order to learn Spanish only confused me even more about the use of "gustar." "Gustar" means "to be pleasing to" or "to find pleasant." But in many instances, Spanish speakers use it the same way that we use the verb "to like."

For example, in Spanish you don't literally say: "I like the dog."

In Spanish you would say:

"Me gusta el perro".

That literally means "the dog is pleasing to me."

Actually, it means "it pleases me the dog."

It may sound strange to your English–hearing ears.

But you will get used to it. Let's try it.

I like the house.

Me gusta la casa.

I don't like the car.

No me gusta el carro.

You like the table.

Te gusta la mesa.

## People Pleasing: Having Trouble Saying No?

He likes the screen/monitor.  
Le gusta la pantalla.

We like the bridge.  
Nos gusta el puente.

They like to lie.  
Les gusta mentir.

If you want to say "I like the dogs," a couple of changes have to take place. Can you guess what those changes are? Of course dog ("perro") must now become plural ("perros"). But the article ("el") must also become plural ("los"). And the verb must change from third person singular ("gusta") to third person plural ("gustan").

Let's try it:

I like the dogs.  
Me gustan los perros.

You like the lakes  
Te gustan los lagos.

She likes the streams  
Le gustan los arroyos.

We like the rivers.  
Nos gustan los ríos.

They like the waterfalls.  
Les gustan las cataratas.

The following is the manner that we add clarity or emphasis, or mention the name of the person or persons that the object is pleasing to.

A Carlos le gusta nadar.  
Carlos likes to swim.

A mí me gusta la playa.  
I like the beach.

A ti te gusta la orilla del mar.

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You like the seashore.

The boys like the forest.

A los chicos les gusta el bosque.

They like the pool.

A ellos les gusta la piscina.

There are quite a few verbs in Spanish that follow the same construction as the verb "gustar."

Here are just a few.

Importar (to be important to)

Interesar (to be interesting to)

Faltar (to be lacking to)

Molestar (to bother or to annoy – note that this word does not mean to "molest")

Encantar (to like)

I have also been confused about when to use "gustar."

Despite what the textbooks say, you can use "gustar"

to indicate that you like someone as

in "being physically attracted to someone."

For example,

Tú me gustas.

I like you.

Me gusta Carmen.

I like Carmen.

But if you want to say that you like someone as in "I get along well with (name)," there's a different way to say it.

Me cae bien Carmen.

I like Carmen or I get along well with Carmen. Literally, it means "Carmen falls well on me."

No me cae bien María.

I don't like María or I don't get along well with María.

No me caes bien tú, Or, Tú no me caes bien.

I don't get along well with you.

## People Pleasing: Having Trouble Saying No?

Let's do a few exercises with "gustar." Translate the following sentences adding emphasis on the person or persons that the object is pleasing to. The answers appear below.

1. I like the cats.
2. You like the wedding. (Add emphasis to "you" using the familiar form of "you.")
3. Joseph likes the building.
4. We like the shirts.
5. All of you like the insects. (Add emphasis to "all of you")

Answers:

1. A mí me gustan los gatos.
2. A ti te gusta la boda.
3. A José le gusta el edificio.
4. A nosotros nos gustan las camisas.
5. A ustedes les gustan los insectos.

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