

**PARENTING
PLAYBOOK:
PEOPLE-PLEASER**

YOUR PASSAGE STRATEGY

LUCAS MERCIER

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CHAPTER 1

THE PEOPLE-PLEASER DETECTION: DIRECTING YOUR ESSENCE

The glitter glue was everywhere, a sticky constellation across the otherwise pristine oak table, and Liam's meticulously constructed volcano—the one whose baking soda reaction had sputtered out into a sad, damp puddle—looked like a monument to failure. Your immediate instinct, that familiar, almost physical tightening in your chest, propelled you forward before your rational mind could catch up. Seeing his lower lip begin to tremble, the sheer devastation on his face acting as an emotional tripwire, bypassed any pretense of detachment. You found yourself reaching for the craft supplies box, not to let him salvage it—because you knew deep down that this was a learning moment in resilience, something he needed to feel the full weight of—but simply because the sight felt too painful to witness unassisted. Your fingers hovered over the glitter glue

again, picturing the little patches of dried, crusty residue near the base, and a wave of desperate protectiveness washed over you. It wasn't just about the volcano; it was about silencing the palpable distress radiating from him, smoothing out the sharp edges of imperfection that seemed to threaten your own sense of stability as a parent. You felt the familiar internal debate waging war: *Let him face this disappointment,* whispered the sensible part of you, while the overwhelming urge screamed louder—*fix it, make it perfect so he stops crying and everything is safe again.* Consequently, your hand moved before your words could form any gentle redirection toward cleanup or a chance to re-engineer the failed magma chamber. You started gathering the straws and maybe even dampening the residue with a napkin, smoothing over the evidence of its collapse because the alternative—the messy, tearful reality—felt too much like failure for everyone involved.

The request had been crystal clear: "Please put your shoes in the hall closet by the door when you come inside from school." You'd repeated it perhaps three times over the span of fifteen minutes, accompanying each reminder with a gentle hand on his shoulder and a reassuring smile meant to signal cooperation rather than confrontation.

Yet, as soon as he crossed the threshold, the task seemed to dissolve into background noise for him. The shoes remained defiantly by the entryway rug, an accidental little barricade against order. You waited, giving yourself time, breathing deeply while simultaneously cataloging your disappointment—the mild exasperation that built because the simple agreement had been so easily discarded. After a full minute of this lingering inefficiency, you found yourself repeating the instruction, but this time the warmth in your tone was noticeably diminished, replaced by a firmer cadence. "Liam," you started, keeping your voice level despite the rising tide of frustration, "I asked you to put your shoes away when you came inside." His response was mumbled something about being tired, an evasion that immediately triggered your ingrained need for harmony and swift resolution. You felt the internal tug-of-war again: *Just pick them up yourself; it'll take two seconds,* versus *If I do it, he learns nothing.* Nevertheless, you found your voice slipping back into the soft coaxing tone, softening the edges of your boundary setting with an apologetic inflection that undermined the very request you were trying to enforce. You ended up kneeling down beside the shoes yourself, picking them up and placing them neatly inside the closet, murmuring, "There we go," as if

admitting defeat rather than establishing a clear expectation for future adherence.

The conversation was flowing beautifully; your friend across the fence had just shared an anecdote about her difficult job promotion, detailing all the nuances of corporate politics with animated gestures and knowing laughter. You were deeply engaged, nodding at the right moments, offering validating affirmations that made you feel utterly competent in the realm of adult emotional support. Then, Liam let out a sudden, piercing wail—a protest because his limited playtime had ended and it was time for dinner preparations. The sound ripped through the easy rhythm of your conversation like shrapnel. Your friend paused mid-sentence, exchanging a look with you that seemed to say, *Oh dear.* A familiar, hot flush spread across your neck, and instantly, all thoughts of maintaining conversational balance took precedence over acknowledging the boundary violation happening right beside you. You immediately pivoted, turning your attention entirely toward Liam, crouching down too quickly, smoothing his hair back from his forehead while simultaneously launching into a detailed narrative about how much fun it would be to stay up late reading picture books with him. Your friend blinked slowly, her story

momentarily suspended in the wake of this sudden redirection. Because maintaining that smooth, agreeable atmosphere—the one where everyone was happy and understood—felt more critical than upholding your own established routine or addressing the immediate reality shift, you let the conversation drift into vague reassurances about "later," subtly dismissing the urgency of dinner prep to keep the peace radiating between yourself and your friend.

The agreement had been set with careful deliberation: two hours of screen time after homework was completed, followed by mandatory reading time in the family room before any electronics were touched again. You'd even helped him stack the game controllers neatly on their designated charging station as a visible reminder of the boundary's structure. Yet, around dinnertime, the negotiation began subtly, escalating into a protracted performance of neediness that chipped away at your resolve. "Just one more episode," he pleaded, his eyes wide and glistening with practiced appeal. You initially held firm, reminding him gently, "We agreed to two hours, sweetie." He pouted dramatically enough to make several nearby neighbors pause their yard work to look over the fence in shared concern for the familial strife.

Confronting that level of sustained emotional gravity felt exhausting; it was easier just to yield. Eventually, after a drawn-out sequence of sighs and dramatic collapses onto the sofa cushions, you found yourself capitulating before your own resolve could fully reassert itself. You walked over to the charging station, picked up one of the controllers, and connected it back to the main unit with a soft *click*. The tension in the room visibly deflated; the immediate crisis passed, replaced by a fragile, temporary peace. Looking at his relieved face, you felt a strange mix of relief and profound disappointment washing over you—the satisfaction of having avoided conflict warring bitterly against the knowledge that you had just surrendered control to maintain superficial calm. You were now acutely aware of how easily your established rules could dissolve when the emotional weight tipped too heavily toward perceived discomfort.

YOU'VE READ CHAPTER 1.

YOU ALREADY KNOW THIS ISN'T GENERIC
ADVICE. THIS IS YOUR MAP — BUILT
SPECIFICALLY FOR PEOPLE-PLEASER ENERGY.
THE PATTERNS YOU JUST READ? THEY'RE
YOURS. NOT ANYONE ELSE'S. YOURS.

THE OTHER FIVE CHAPTERS ARE WHERE IT
GETS PRECISE.

CHAPTER 2 GIVES YOU PERMISSION TO STOP
FIGHTING YOUR OWN NATURE. CHAPTER 3
SHOWS YOU EXACTLY WHERE
PEOPLE-PLEASER ENERGY CONSISTENTLY
WINS IN PARENTING. CHAPTER 4 NAMES THE
STAKES — WHAT YOU LOSE WHEN YOU
IGNORE THIS. CHAPTER 5 IS YOUR FULL
PARENTING PLAN, BROKEN INTO THE CYCLES
THAT ACTUALLY WORK FOR YOU. CHAPTER 6
IS YOUR INTEGRATION — WHERE THIS
BECOMES IDENTITY, NOT STRATEGY.

MOST PEOPLE READ CHAPTER 1 AND THINK
THEY UNDERSTAND. THEY DON'T. THE
ARCHITECTURE ONLY REVEALS ITSELF IN
FULL.

SEARCH FOR "PARENTING PLAYBOOK:
PEOPLE-PLEASER" TO GET THE COMPLETE
GUIDE.

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