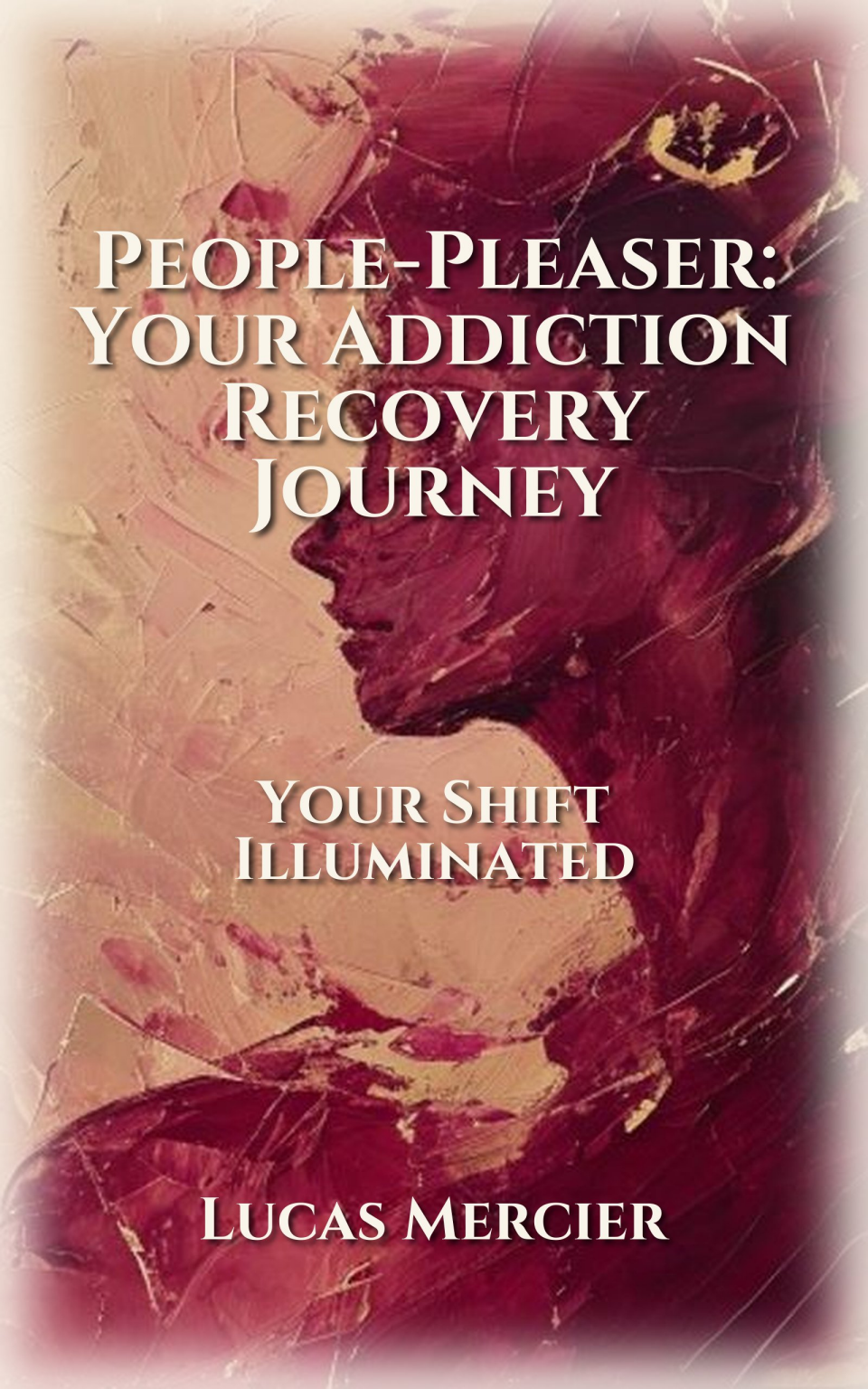




PEOPLE-PLEASER: YOUR ADDICTION RECOVERY JOURNEY

YOUR SHIFT
ILLUMINATED

LUCAS MERCIER

PEOPLE-PLEASER:
YOUR ADDICTION
RECOVERY JOURNEY

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CHAPTER 1

THE PEOPLE-PLEASER NATURE: ILLUMINATING YOUR DESIGN

The crisp scent of stale coffee and nervous energy hung heavy in the air of the recovery house common room. You were curled on the worn armchair, having finally managed to get through a week of sobriety that had left your reserves dangerously depleted. The program coordinator approached your chair, her smile radiating that warm but subtly expectant look you knew too well. "Listen, honey," she began, leaning in conspiratorially, "I've got an emergency situation with the afternoon group circle; Sarah completely bailed last minute, and honestly, I'm swamped until tomorrow morning. Would you be willing to just cover the check-in portion for me? It would really save my skin today." Your stomach immediately tightened in a familiar clench of obligation. You glanced at your wrist, noting the carefully scheduled appointment time with your sponsor—a meeting you absolutely could not reschedule because it was dedicated

recovery time, solidifying your commitment to rest and routine after a rough patch. Yet, the thought of disappointing her, of letting this seemingly small request derail an already fragile sense of stability, felt like a physical ache in your chest. Saying no felt less like setting a boundary and more like actively rejecting the warmth of her approval. You rehearsed excuses in your head: *I'm tired,* or *My sponsor appointment is firm.* But the words caught, dissolving into a weak murmur that sounded suspiciously close to agreement. How could you possibly prioritize the sanctity of your own rest when someone else needed a momentary lifeline? The immediate fear wasn't of exhaustion; it was the piercing certainty of her visible disappointment, the subtle shift in her welcoming demeanor that would confirm, once again, that your needs always came secondary to maintaining the peace around you. You nodded too quickly, already mentally calculating how many hours of necessary sleep this extra commitment would steal from you.

The pattern repeated itself with alarming frequency over the next few weeks, turning small favors into an exhausting choreography of self-erasure. Another weekend arrived, and another urgent plea echoed

through your phone, always relating to covering shifts or assisting someone whose schedule had unexpectedly dissolved. This time, the request came from a fellow resident who needed you to fill in for an open group session on relapse prevention—a topic you felt acutely knowledgeable about right now, but which demanded mental energy you simply did not possess. You were already committed to two hours of deep rest, necessary after having navigated a particularly triggering conversation with your family. Hesitation built in your throat, tasting like ash. *I can't,* was the honest internal dialogue screaming. But then you heard the tone—a blend of desperation mixed with that subtle implication that saying no would somehow make you difficult, unsupportive, or worse, selfishly self-involved. Slowly, painstakingly, you began to practice the refusal in your head, visualizing the firm, steady articulation. "I appreciate you asking," you practiced whispering to the empty room, "but I really need this time to rest and solidify what I learned yesterday." When you finally spoke it aloud to them, the words felt heavy, like lifting a physical weight that had been anchored inside you for years. A slight recoil crossed their face; not anger, but something closer to surprise mixed with a visible inconvenience. Nevertheless, the air didn't immediately

turn hostile. You held your ground, feeling the strange, almost electric sensation of having protected something internal—your scheduled recovery time—and realized that while it was uncomfortable, you hadn't dissolved into apology or retreat.

The tension built until it finally manifested during a session with your primary therapist. You had been doing so well; the boundaries you were setting felt solid, like newly poured concrete around your personal space. However, life, particularly in recovery, is messy and unpredictable, and last Tuesday arrived when an unexpected surge of intense cravings hit you right before your appointment. You ended up canceling the session with only a vague apology about "feeling overwhelmed," knowing deep down that it was more complex than mere overwhelm—it was the sheer exhaustion of maintaining boundaries that had depleted your emotional reserves. When your therapist messaged later, concerned but understanding, she followed up by saying, "It's okay; we can reschedule for next week." The immediate internal reaction wasn't relief at rescheduling; it was a sickening plunge into guilt. You imagined her face—the slight disappointment in her eyes when you initially canceled. *I shouldn't have wasted the slot,* your inner critic hissed

relentlessly. *You know how much this appointment cost, time and money.* Every subsequent interaction felt colored by that perceived failure to adhere to structure. Whenever she suggested a new date, even if it was weeks away, you preemptively started apologizing for the inevitable future disruptions: "I'm so sorry, I really hope next week works because I know how much of your limited schedule this is." You found yourself preemptively minimizing the gravity of your own struggle, believing that by constantly apologizing for needing space or time, you could somehow pay back the perceived imposition on her professional kindness. This cycle taught you that holding a boundary felt almost as emotionally costly as crossing one, because the guilt attachment was so potent.

The shift in your self-perception began to ripple outward, and it was most noticeable during a quiet dinner with your partner. You had spent the better part of the previous month establishing firmer boundaries regarding household responsibilities—saying no to extra favors, enforcing designated "quiet time" for journaling, and resisting the urge to immediately jump into problem-solving mode for their minor stresses. These small acts of self-preservation felt monumental, like

scaling a difficult peak you thought you'd never reach. Yet, when things settled down enough for conversation, the air grew thick with an unstated critique. Midway through discussing your recent struggles—the sheer emotional labor of navigating detox sobriety while simultaneously learning to say 'no' to everyone—your partner waved a dismissive hand. "Honestly," she said, her tone patronizingly breezy, "you were just having some really dramatic moods last month. You always get so intense when you're feeling things." The words struck with the force of physical rejection, hitting right where your core fear resided: that your internal reality was fundamentally flawed and exaggerative. Suddenly, all those hard-won moments—the canceled shifts, the rescheduled therapy, the necessity of solitude—felt like they could be dismissed as mere emotional volatility, easily invalidated by a casual remark. You felt a desperate urge to shrink, to agree immediately, to apologize for having **felt** so intensely in the first place. But something shifted beneath that wave of panic; you recognized the dismissal not as care, but as minimizing your hard-won survival process.

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 ADDICTION RECOVERY. CHAPTER 4
NAMES THE STAKES — WHAT YOU LOSE WHEN
YOU IGNORE THIS. CHAPTER 5 IS YOUR FULL
ADDICTION RECOVERY 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 "PEOPLE-PLEASER: YOUR
ADDICTION RECOVERY JOURNEY" TO GET
THE COMPLETE GUIDE.

ALSO BUILT FOR PEOPLE-PLEASER:
PEOPLE-PLEASER GUIDE TO WORKPLACE.

THE SAME DEPTH. THE SAME PRECISION.
APPLIED TO A DIFFERENT ARENA OF YOUR
LIFE.

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YOU WERE DRAWN TO THIS GUIDE FOR A
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