

project you

JUST SAY NO

CURE YOURSELF FROM

THE disease to PLEASE

Constantly putting everybody else first? Sounds like you could be a people-pleaser...

Y

ou're standing in the canteen line and the most popular girl in your year taps you on the shoulder. She asks, "Can I push in here?"

"I'll love you forever!". "Sure," you say – even though you've been waiting 10 minutes! Your friends at the back of the line have noticed that you're nearly at the window. They run over and give you their orders and money. You get to the window, order, then – once you've given all the food away – you realise you didn't even order *your* lunch! Congratulations – you're a people-pleaser.

As Project YOU ambassador Dr Michael Carr-Gregg puts it, there is absolutely nothing wrong with being nice to people and helping out a friend – especially in times of need, but it's when their needs come before yours every time that it starts to venture into dangerous territory.

WHAT ARE THE DANGERS?

"People-pleasers are often motivated by an overwhelming desire for approval. They camouflage their true feelings behind the 'happy mask'," says Dr Michael. Aside from the fact that what you're doing is unsustainable, Dr Michael says you're also in danger of becoming a permanent pushover. "[A people-pleaser's] inability to say 'no' will mean they will be taken advantage of by ambitious people who will use them to achieve their own goals."

WHAT CAN I DO?

Dealing with the guilt of saying no doesn't happen overnight – you'll need some patience to work through it. To help the process, Dr Michael

TAKE THIS MONTH'S CHALLENGE AND TWEET US @GIRLFRIENDMAG WITH YOUR PROGRESS AND #PROJECTYOU FOR YOUR CHANCE TO WIN ONE OF FIVE AMAZING PRIZE PACKS FROM THE BODY SHOP.



Being there for yourself is just as important as being there for your friends.

suggests doing the following tasks:

- * Write a list of yours and others' rights.
- * Write a list of things you want to achieve.
- * When dealing with the person you said no to, discuss your needs and feelings clearly, openly and honestly. It might also be helpful to negotiate and make compromises with them, if need be.

Remember, you don't have to please everybody to be a good person.

THE CHALLENGE

When trying to overcome people-pleasing behaviour, your focus needs to remain on the most important person in your life: You! Dr Michael recommends learning to self-nurture. "Each day, set aside time to do something just for you," he says. It could be anything from relaxing in a spa to reading a chapter of that book you've been dying to get to but haven't had time because, well, you've been doing things for everybody else. Clear your mind and tick some things off your to-do list.