

Author and Advocate Annie Henderson Says the Secret to a Happier Life Begins With One Simple Word: "No"

As interest grows in the hidden cost of chronic people-pleasing, [The Liberation Year](#) encourages women to set boundaries and choose themselves

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, July 20, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For decades, [Annie Henderson](#) measured her life by how happy she could make everyone else. She said yes when she wanted to say no. She avoided conflict. She put other people's comfort ahead of her own. Then she made a decision that changed everything: she stopped living for approval and started living authentically.

"Years of swallowing your needs, smiling through resentment, and pretending you're okay when you're not takes a toll. People-pleasing doesn't just steal your voice—it slowly steals your sense of self," says Henderson.

Following a recent [Everyday Health](#) article examining the viral claim that chronic people-pleasing may contribute to autoimmune disease, author and advocate Annie Henderson believes the real takeaway isn't about a diagnosis—it's about recognizing the emotional toll of constantly living for everyone else's approval instead of embracing authenticity.

Today, the author, advocate, and coach believes breaking free from people-pleasing is one of the most powerful steps toward lasting happiness, healthier relationships, and greater peace of mind—the message at the heart of her book, [The Liberation Year](#).

"People think saying 'yes' all the time makes them kind," she says. "What it often does is leave them exhausted, resentful, and disconnected from themselves. The happiest people I know aren't the ones who please everyone—they're the ones who know their worth and aren't afraid to protect it."



Henderson has spent over a decade working with women on this exact pattern — and says the same story comes up again and again: a client finally says "no" out loud, then waits for the fallout that never comes.

Her perspective comes from lived experience. After coming out as a lesbian later in life, she realized that years spent trying to meet other people's expectations had slowly disconnected her from herself. Learning to establish boundaries wasn't about becoming selfish or difficult—it was about becoming honest.

In *The Liberation Year*, Henderson guides readers through 365 daily reflections that challenge long-held beliefs about sacrifice, approval, and self-worth while encouraging lasting emotional freedom.

"The body holds what the mind has not yet processed. The tightness in your chest before a conversation you are dreading. The heaviness that settles into your shoulders when you walk into certain rooms... These are not random physical sensations. They are your body's record of everything you have experienced," Henderson writes.

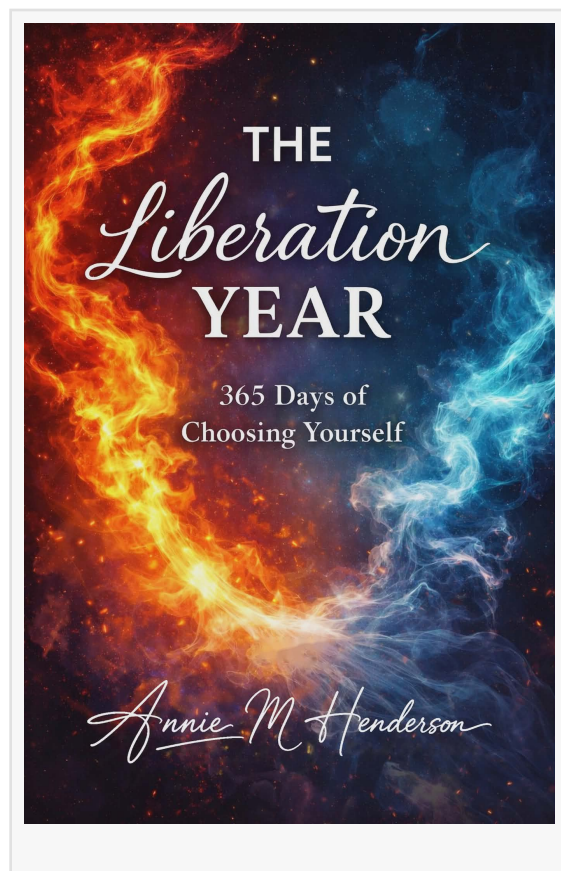
"Nobody wants to hear that years of putting everyone else first may be costing them something," she says. "The internet loves a slogan like, 'Be a bitch or get sick.' It's catchy, but it's wrong. What's true underneath it is quieter and far more important: chronic stress from never saying 'no' has to be acknowledged. The goal isn't to become someone else. It's to stop performing okay when you're not."

Alongside *The Liberation Year*, Henderson offers a free online quiz to help women identify people-pleasing patterns and one-on-one coaching for those ready to create lasting change.

"There is incredible freedom on the other side of people-pleasing," Henderson says. "When you stop living according to everyone else's expectations, you finally have the chance to discover who you really are. That's where real happiness begins."

About Annie M. Henderson

Annie M. Henderson is a life coach, five-time author, and podcast host who helps women break free from people-pleasing, rebuild self-trust, and set boundaries that hold. An Expert Facilitator in RIM (Regenerating Images in Memory) with over a decade of counseling and coaching experience, she reaches more than 114,000 followers on TikTok and shares her work through



private coaching and the Liberated Lesbian Membership. Her books include The Liberation Year and Later in Life Lesbian.

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