

# Asian Woman focus

INSPIRING ASIAN WOMEN EVERYWHERE TO LEAD  
EMPOWERED, PASSIONATE AND FULFILLED LIVES

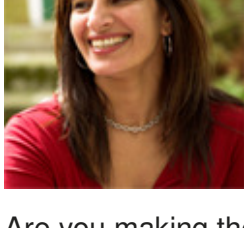
Newsletter packed with ideas, latest research, tools & techniques  
specially geared to supporting Asian women excel in their career,  
relationships, family and in celebrating their own individuality.

## In this issue:

August 2010 ISSUE 6

- ◆ Editor's message
- ◆ Feature article: Are you a people pleaser?
- ◆ Exciting opportunity to join our Virtual Group Coaching Programme

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Please forward this newsletter to anyone you think may find it valuable.

## Editor's message

Are you making the most of the summer months? Having fun days out with the people you care about? Doing the things you really enjoy? Making the most of the long warm evenings?

I'm a member of the National Trust and I love walking around grand houses and gardens. It felt so good to be able to go for my first walk in 5 months yesterday even though my leg is still in a big heavy boot and I got charged at by a herd of mean, angry looking bulls! Just as I narrowly escaped their evil clutches, the big black clouds in the sky burst open and I was caught in a downpour of torrential rain, thunderbolts and lightning. Yes, I can look back at it now and laugh.

These months are the perfect opportunity to be creating the kind of memories you can look back on and smile, make sure you don't let them slip by!

## Are you a people pleaser?

There was a time when I spent a lot of time being what other people wanted me to be. It was hard for me to speak my mind for I was afraid of rocking the boat. It was easier to go along with what they wanted and it was difficult for me to say no. It was easier to be nice than to express how I really felt for I wanted to be liked and for everyone to get along.

*I was a chronic people pleaser but I soon learnt that if I carried on like this I would end up thoroughly miserable and absolutely exhausted.*

And I also learnt that in a business environment, it doesn't always pay to be nice. Not everyone wants a pushover and being nice, can also be seen as being unprofessional.



### Do you ever get tired of trying to please everyone?

### Do you ever find yourself saying yes when really you want to say no?

It wouldn't surprise me if you did. In the Asian culture a lot of us were brought up to be overly concerned with what other people might think. Did your parents ever say to you, "what will so and so say" I know mine did *all the time*. So I grew up always overly concerned about what other people might think about what I said or did that I became scared to speak my honest truth in fear of upsetting or offending anyone. I deeply respect my parents and the lessons they taught me but this was one I had to change. I had to learn to be "independent of the good opinion of others" (Wayne Dyer) if I ever wanted to be more effective and happier in my personal and professional life.

Jay Earley, PhD, author of "The People Pleaser Pattern" contends that one reason people become people pleasers as adults is that when they were children, their parents only showed them love on what he terms a "conditional" basis. Specifically, such parents only demonstrate kind, loving behaviour when their children behave in a compliant, submissive manner. When their children misbehave, such parents react in a manner that could best be characterised as **excessively** displeased, unloving and even unkind.

Experts report that many of us have been trained from an early age to become approval-seeking "people pleasers."

Whilst elements of people pleasing can support you to build good relationships, it can also be very damaging and self-effacing to our emotional well-being. Being goody-two shoes might make you a dependable manager and a nice friend. However, you will never truly be able to perform at your best if you are always overly concerned with what other people might think. If you really want to get ahead in your career then you have to be the kind of woman who makes her own rules, takes big chances, blows her own trumpet and doesn't worry if everyone will like her.

**"You're dooming yourself to the ranks of middle management forever if you don't stop trying to please everyone," Harriet Braiker, Ph.D**

The problem with approval-seeking and people pleasing is that we expend so much energy in trying to please others that we suppress and neglect our own feelings which over time will often lead to us becoming resentful and emotionally drained.



As Jay Earley would say people pleasing is really an extreme version of cooperation.

When you are cooperative...

- You can work with others smoothly without giving up your way of doing things.
- You like to be part of a group, but only if you can truly be yourself.
- You are interested in other people's thoughts and feelings, and you can assert your own.
- You like to empower others but not at your own expense.
- You want to resolve conflict, not avoid it.
- You like to make other people feel good, but you don't ignore your own needs, thoughts, or desires in the process.

In short, you can cooperate without automatically complying.

This is because your motivation for cooperating comes from a desire for connection or accomplishment, not from a need to please.

There is a big difference between someone being a cooperative and nice person who now and again goes out of their way to make others happy and being that chronic good girl who is subconsciously addicted to wanting the approval of others.

**"Many executive women today are notorious under-delegators because they are hooked on people-pleasing. So many women take on the tasks they should assign to subordinates, because they think it will be appreciated and they want to avoid conflict. Once you give up trying to be a good girl, life becomes easier and you won't feel as overwhelmed." Braiker**

It's a heavy load to bear to try and make everyone happy. In the end you end up pleasing no-one but you can make yourself physically and emotionally ill.

### So how can we change this behaviour?

- The first step is to recognise it. Do you have people pleasing tendencies, if so where, how and with whom do they show up?
- Make a commitment to recognise this behaviour and then to change it – what is people pleasing costing you?
- Think of the last time when you did or said something that did not truly reflect your wants and needs, in order to please someone else. Write it down. Imagine how you would have handled it differently - to please yourself!

Remember that it is perfectly ok to disagree with other people. In fact, people will respect you more when you start expressing your honest, heartfelt feelings and opinions, whether or not others agree with you. However, we are responsible for the impact we are having so do be aware of it so you can manage it as you see fit.

When you do start to change be prepared for some conflict for not everyone will like the new you because they can no longer take advantage of you – but are you overly concerned? No because that is more important? Yes, Your emotional well-being, your self-respect and your success!

**Here are some additional resources** if you are interested in learning more about this subject

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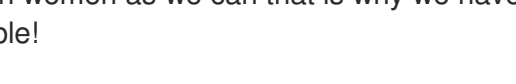
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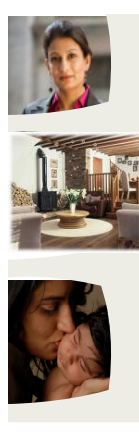
Author: Sukhy Bains  
[www.asianwomanfocus.com](http://www.asianwomanfocus.com)  
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