

The 4 Types of Nice Guy



There are 4 main strategies or approaches to being a Nice Guy.

We all dabble in each of them – you will probably identify with more than one of these types, possibly even all of them. Use this guide to answer these 2 questions:

1. Which of these types am I *most* of the time?
2. What type was I being in this week, in different social situations (e.g. date, team meeting, party with friends)?

This guide will help you identify which one you are being right now. Each type comes with:

- A core belief, that decides the social strategies you use
- Frequent feelings that you're likely to experience when being this type
- Common problems that the type faces in everyday life
- The Nice Guy Syndrome actions - behaviors you'll regularly engage in to live by your strategy.

Tick the boxes next to any of the beliefs, feelings, problems and actions you identify most with right now, and you'll quickly see which type you are most strongly.

The Performer

The show-off who highlights their strengths to gain approval, while hiding their weaknesses.



Core Belief:

“I must be impressive, interesting or positive, to be seen as a good person”

Frequent Feelings

- Pressure to achieve, succeed, win and perform.
- Anxiety when you're not being noticed or recognised.
- Needy for attention and approval.
- Stress and exhaustion from the effort of entertaining.

Common Problems

- Burn out
- Over-committing yourself (not saying No enough)
- Shiny Object Syndrome – always starting but never finishing projects
- Friendzone / false connections with people – lots of friends but no intimate connections

Nice Guy Actions

- Showing off with things you're good at (e.g. performing on stage)
- Helping and giving advice without being asked
- Making people laugh, or telling exaggerated stories to sound more interesting
- Pushing yourself to exhaustion to succeed or achieve highly, especially compared to other people (e.g. getting straight-A's in school, or promotions at work)
- Hiding pain behind false positivity, or pretending to be unaffected by painful events (e.g. poker-faced at a funeral)

The Controller

The manipulator who uses psychological techniques to adapt to what people like.



Core Belief:

“I must react differently to each person, giving them what they want to make them like me”

Frequent Feelings

- Hypersensitive to how people react to you.
- Resentment and sense of unfairness (especially after rejection).
- Fear of your reputation being ruined.
- Needy for love and sex but scared of people getting too close.
- Vulnerable and unsafe when not in control socially.

Common Problems

- Having people unexpectedly lose interest in you over time (e.g. not texting back).
- Fluctuating motivation to socialize – cycles of giving up because it’s too much effort.
- Being disrespected or distrusted (e.g. passed over for a promotion)
- Sex addiction

Nice Guy Actions

- Pick Up - using strategies to make you appear more attractive; sleeping around
- Indirect displays of emotion (e.g. complimenting someone’s dress instead of telling them you feel attraction)
- Changing who you are depending on who’s around
- Imitating the person you’re with - vocab, body language - to fit in with them
- Passive-aggressive techniques to influence people (e.g. sulking)
- Occasional tantrums and anger explosions that seem to come out of nowhere

The Observer

The shy wallflower who flies under the radar so that he doesn't get disapproval.



Core Belief:

"I must avoid being noticed, and not be controversial, so that I don't get humiliated, abandoned or hated"

Frequent Feelings

- Chronic anxiety and tendency toward introversion.
- Loneliness, even in groups of people.
- Frustrated at not being able to express yourself clearly, or not being listened to.
- Depression.
- Constantly worrying about being "caught out" or put in the spotlight.

Common Problems

- Stuck following people who approve of you, e.g. bad-fit social circle, toxic friends
- Overthinking and constantly worrying what other people are thinking/feeling.
- Unable to speak up and share ideas, the conversation moves on without you.

Nice Guy Actions

- Passive "green light syndrome" - waiting to be asked before you contribute
- Watching and observing from the sidelines, even when you got stuff to say; listening MUCH more than you talk
- Distracting yourself during social events (e.g. scrolling through social media)
- Attending social events just to fit in, but barely participating
- Backing down in disagreements, or preventing disagreements (e.g. talking yourself out of confrontation)

The Critic

The judgmental introvert who beats themselves up for any social failures.



Core Belief:

“There’s something wrong with me; I’m incomplete and probably unlovable”

Frequent Feelings

- Self-loathing and constant “not good enough” thinking.
- Confusion about why it’s so hard.
- Hopelessness and powerlessness.
- Loneliness when alone.
- Deep sadness and a sense of unfairness, like you’ve been dealt a shit hand.

Common Problems

- Suicidal or chronically anxious/depressed.
- No social life, having to invite yourself to social events, being left alone if you don’t.
- Unable to take compliments or believe that others could like you.
- Trapped inside your head – obsessive/compulsive negative thought patterns.

Nice Guy Actions

- Avoiding social situations - excusing yourself from invitations and opportunities
- Compulsive video games, porn and other isolated distractions becoming addictions
- Struggling to be present in social situations, too much overthinking and mind-reading (guessing/assuming what others are thinking)
- Judgmental of others, constantly assessing everyone as either better or worse than you
- Brooding and getting lost in your thoughts, daydreaming and fantasizing

Which Type Are You?

Go through each of the types, ticking the boxes that apply to you. Then identify your main type (if many are equal, choose whichever one feels the most “you”):

I am the

type of Nice Guy

Whichever type you most identify with, that’s the starting point for designing a focused recovery plan.

It’s Going to Be OK!

This exercise may have been a bit depressing – a bitter pill to swallow. I understand!

This is just the beginning. Before we can deal with Nice Guy Syndrome, we must first be honest with ourselves, and acknowledge what we are.

Then we can change what we are.

Much love,
Dan and the Brojo team
(a.k.a. recovering Nice Guys)

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