

# Personality Masks

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<https://psychcentral.com/health/the-masks-we-wear>

Masking a personality means taking steps to cover up who they really are around other people in social, work, or personal interactions. A personality can be masked with words, facial expressions, body language, and actions.

## The Martyr or Victim Mask

The martyr or victim mask does not accept blame to protect their self-esteem. Instead, the person using this mask may blame things in the outside world for their own problems and failures to protect their self-esteem.

## The Bully Mask

A person feeling self-doubt or having been abused may turn to bullying to keep people away. This may take the form of acting out physically, picking fun of others, or coercing others to accept their opinion to overcompensate for their poor self-esteem.

## The Humor Mask

People may use humor to prevent getting laughed at by others or hide feelings of sadness. After all, no one can laugh at them if they are already laughing at themselves. And others also won't know how they really feel if they hide their pain with attempts at humor.

## The Calm Mask

Some people wear a calm mask in nearly every situation. They might bottle up their emotional responses and show only a calm, even composure. When this happens, the emotions have no place to go. A person wearing the calm mask may eventually explode or become emotionally dysregulated.

## The Overachieving Mask

A person wearing the overachieving mask may strive for perfection. Anyone using this mask might hope to gain acceptance and praise for doing things perfectly. In this case, self-esteem relies too heavily on being perfect, which means they might internalize any mistake. The need for perfection can also cause a constant state of anxiety.

## The Self-Bashing Mask

A person who talks down about themselves, even in jest or jokes around about the self-self-put downs, does it as a defense mechanism meant to shield them from being made fun of or hurt. Self-bashing can also be a defensive method against low self-esteem. It may also be used as a protective mechanism to put themselves down before someone else does.

## The Avoidant Mask

The avoidant mask involves withdrawing into themselves for fear of rejection and judgment of their mistakes. They may avoid saying much to others or being around others. Withdrawing can cause them to be socially isolated.

## The Controlling Mask

The controlling mask wearer strives for a different type of perfection. A person using this mask will try to control everything around them so they can achieve a sense of security. They may plan every detail of an outing, demand their plans get used, and keep a very neat and tidy room, house, or workspace.

## The People-Pleasing Mask

If a person wears a people-pleasing mask, their self-esteem depends on the acceptance from others. They may often go out of their way to make sure other people around them are happy. Making others happy gives them a sense of self-worth. They may live with extra anxiety related to making sure they're making others around them happy.

## The Socializer Mask

If a person wears the socializer mask, they will use their ability to talk with anyone to mask insecurity. Though they may have many acquaintances, they may not have many meaningful friends because they keep conversations from going too deep.

## The Conformist Mask

If a person wears the conformist mask, they seek to follow what everyone else around them is doing. They're desperate for acceptance and will follow cues from others in social groups they want to belong to.

## What causes people to wear a personality mask?

Personality masking may occur as a response to:

- social pressures
- bullying
- abuse
- fear

No matter the direct cause or motivation, masking typically helps protect your true self from further emotional harm and lower self-esteem. After all, people can't reject you for who you truly are if they never knew you in the first place.

It can lead to exhaustion since it takes so much extra energy to hide your true self. You might also experience depression or feelings of loneliness or have anxiety that someone may find out who you really are.

## Neurodivergent vs. neurotypical

Neurodivergent people, like those on the autism spectrum, may wear masks to help them fit into society. According to a 2017 qualitative study, those who are neurodivergent tend to engage in more social camouflaging.

This type of masking involves attempting to replicate what others around them are doing for work, school, socially, and to find love interests.

Both neurodivergent and neurotypical people may develop personality masks in response to bullying or abuse. They may find that masking their thoughts or feelings may help prevent further abuse or bullying.

## Next steps

One of the first steps you can take is to determine what causes you to wear a mask around others. You may be able to use this new self-awareness to start dropping your mask and discover your true self.

This may help others become closer to you, but you should be prepared for rejection. Change isn't always easy, and the reality is not everyone will like you for who you are.

But this is OK. You don't need everyone to like you. Eventually, you'll find the people who truly like you, not the mask you were wearing.

If you find you need help addressing your underlying reason for wearing a mask or letting your mask go, you may want to consider talking with a counselor or a loved one. They can help you develop new coping strategies for your fears or anxieties.