

# Personalization

(Blaming yourself for things that are not your fault)

## 1. What It Is (Simple Definition)

Personalization is a thinking pattern where you **take responsibility for events you didn't cause**, or assume that everything is about you—even when it isn't.

You blame yourself automatically, even without evidence.

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## 2. Common Signs

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Feeling guilty for things outside your control

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Assuming others' reactions are because of you

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Overthinking what you “did wrong”

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Taking responsibility for other people's emotions

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Feeling like you must fix everything

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Apologizing too often

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Feeling at fault even when no one blames you

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### 3. Everyday Examples

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A friend is quiet → “I must have upset them.”

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A group project goes badly → “It’s all my fault.”

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Someone doesn’t reply to your message → “I must have said something wrong.”

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A family member is stressed → “It’s because of me.”

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A random bad event happens → “Maybe I caused this somehow.”

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## 4. Why It Happens

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Low self-esteem

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Childhood criticism or pressure

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Fear of conflict

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People-pleasing habits

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Over-responsibility

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Anxiety or perfectionism

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Desire to stay in control by blaming yourself

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## 5. How It Affects You

- Unnecessary guilt
  - Stress and anxiety
  - Feeling responsible for everyone's problems
  - Difficulty setting boundaries
  - Emotional exhaustion
  - Negative self-image
  - Always expecting yourself to be "perfect"
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## 6. What Helps

- **Check the facts:**

□ “Is this really my responsibility?”

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**Ask:** “Would I blame someone else for this?”

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Identify what is in your control vs. not in your control

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Practice saying “This is not about me.”

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Stop excessive apologizing

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Challenge guilt-based thoughts

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Allow others to feel their own emotions

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Therapy (CBT helps reduce self-blame)

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## 7. When to Seek Help

If personalization leads to:

- Constant guilt
- Overthinking everything
- Stress in relationships
- Feeling responsible for everyone's happiness
- Difficulty functioning or relaxing

A mental health professional can help shift these thinking patterns.