



# Impossible to Please: How to Deal with Perfectionist Coworkers, Controlling Spouses, and Other Incredibly Critical People

By Neil Lavender PhD, Alan A. Cavaiola PhD

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**Impossible to Please: How to Deal with Perfectionist Coworkers, Controlling Spouses, and Other Incredibly Critical People** By Neil Lavender PhD, Alan A. Cavaiola PhD

Everyone knows someone who is impossible to please, critical, judgmental, picky, and stubbornly closed-minded. These are symptoms of a disorder called obsessive-compulsive personality disorder (OCPD), but it's common for people to have subclinical levels of some or all of these qualities. Most of the time, it's best to avoid the difficult to please person, but what happens when he or she is a close family member, coworker, or even a spouse? It's still possible to maintain a positive relationship with the right tools. *Impossible to Please*, written by the authors of *Toxic Coworkers*, is a manual for dealing with these difficult people without sitting through stressful arguments, vicious insults and attacks, and passive-aggressive behavior. It empowers readers to take charge of the relationship and regain their dignity and confidence in interactions with these individuals.

This book features specific strategies that are immediately effective when conversing with critical people and explains how readers can respond to unfair blame without becoming angry or overly defensive. By setting boundaries, improving communication, and asserting themselves, readers learn to deal with the impossible to please in romantic relationships, friendships, family, and work relationships.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Review

"Cavaiola and Lavender have done it again! They have given us another perfect combination of psychological science and real-life applications to provide a highly readable guide to living and working with people who drive us crazy. Alive with examples and suggestions, this book is not only perfect for counselors and therapists, but also for anyone who deals with controlling perfectionists at home or on the job."

—Richard Ponton, PhD, associate professor at Georgian Court University in Lakewood, New Jersey

"*Impossible to Please* is a candid, informative, and thought-provoking study of the controlling perfectionist. Lavender and Cavaiola illuminate our understanding of obsessive-compulsive personality disorder while providing suggested actions for dealing effectively with these individuals at home, at work, and in the community."

—Suzanne D. Mudge, PhD, associate professor and program coordinator of counseling and guidance at Texas A&M University

"After being in managerial and leadership positions for over 40 years, I wish I could say that I never had to deal with a perfectionist personality. Unfortunately, that is not the case. I have had experiences with toxic coworkers and, to say the least, they were indeed troublesome. Drs. Lavender and Cavaiola's first book, *Toxic Coworkers*, was of great help during these trying times. Like their other books, *Impossible to Please* is filled with wisdom and insights into this challenging area. I strongly recommend this most practical and applicable book."

—Louis A. Scheidt, PE, PP, president and CEO of Innovative Engineering, Inc.

### About the Author

**Neil J. Lavender, PhD**, is professor of psychology at Ocean County College in New Jersey where he also maintains a private practice. He is coauthor of *Toxic Coworkers*. Neil, who is also an avid blogger, resides in Beachwood, NJ.

**Alan A. Cavaiola, PhD**, is a professor and member of the graduate faculty in the department of psychological counseling at Monmouth University. He is also a licensed psychologist and clinical alcohol and drug counselor. He is also the coauthor of *Toxic Coworkers*.

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