

## Are you being Coached or Controlled?

You may already suspect that something's not right. You try harder, replay conversations, second-guess your instincts—and still walk away feeling drained, confused, or unsure of yourself.

This audit helps you name the pattern for what it is: **a control-based relationship** with a manager, that may be undermining your confidence, clarity, and professional wellbeing.

Toxic managers don't always manipulate with shouting, criticism, or commands. More often, they rely on subtle pressure and inconsistency that keeps you over-performing, second-guessing, or self-silencing. One of the most reliable indicators of a control-based pattern is your own emotional and behavioural response over time.

### Instructions

- Think of the manager who most influences your experience at work.
- Read each statement and rate how much it reflects your current reality.
- Be honest. This assessment is for your own use, not your performance review.
- If you're concerned about privacy, don't complete this on a work device.

### Scale:

5 = Strongly Agree

4 = Agree

3 = Slightly Agree

2 = Disagree

1 = Strongly Disagree

### Emotional Experience

1. I often feel like I can't figure out what will make them satisfied.
2. I regularly feel confused or unclear about what they expect.
3. Their needs and priorities seem to dominate everything.
4. I usually feel more responsible for problems than they do.
5. They show little curiosity or concern about my needs or wellbeing.
6. I feel frustrated, anxious, or resentful—sometimes all at once.
7. I rarely express how I *actually* feel to them.

### Mental Load

8. I spend a lot of mental energy anticipating their reactions.
9. I get the sense they're using my reliability or empathy against me.
10. I feel like no matter what I do, it's never enough.
11. I often hold back opinions or feedback to avoid conflict.
12. I find myself carefully crafting how I speak or write to avoid upsetting them.
13. I feel like I've lost some confidence or spark I once had.
14. I work hard to keep the relationship stable, even when the expectations aren't clear.

### Behavioural Pattern

15. I monitor their moods and adjust how I act accordingly.
16. I hesitate to make decisions without checking with them first.
17. I often feel that their approval is a form of safety.
18. I avoid disagreeing, even when I have a valid concern.
19. I fear that pushing back might backfire or lead to punishment.
20. I worry something bad will happen if I don't deliver what they want.
21. I often second-guess my judgement or defer to theirs.

### Power Imbalance

22. I feel like I need them more than they need me.
23. I feel stuck in this situation with no clear options.
24. They have a strong influence over how I feel about myself and my work.
25. Even when I meet expectations, the "good moment" doesn't last.
26. I no longer feel like I can fully be myself around them.
27. I don't believe they truly have my best interests in mind.
28. I am working harder and harder—but feeling less secure.
29. I've started blaming myself for not "handling this better."
30. I feel like I'm the one holding this relationship together.

### Scoring

**Total Score:** \_\_\_ / 150

### Now interpret your result:

#### ● 120–150: High Coercive Control Management Pattern

You are likely in a coercive control management pattern with a toxic manager. Your emotional energy, self-trust, and professional freedom are being actively drained. You may be walking on eggshells or working harder than ever with diminishing confidence. You're not imagining it—this is a serious control-based pattern, and your wellbeing is at risk.

#### ● 100–119: Escalating Coercive Control

There are clear signs of pressure, emotional reactivity, and compliance. While you may still function well externally, inside you're carrying a growing burden of self-doubt and stress. If nothing changes, the pattern will deepen and your autonomy will erode. This is the window to step back, reset, and reclaim clarity.

#### ● 75–99: Early Control

Some coercive control management patterns are present, or you are over-performing, especially under stress. You may still be over-relying on "compliance habits" like approval-seeking, conflict avoidance, or pleasing behaviour. With some support and internal adjustments, you can shift back to personal protection.

#### ● Below 75: Low Risk

Your boundaries, agency, and inner authority are mostly intact. If conflict or stress arises, it likely stems from normal workplace interactions, rather than coercive control patterns from the manager. Stay clear and keep strengthening your internal mindset, and be sure to avoid denial.

### **Your Next Step**

**Circle 3–5 statements that hit hardest.** These are your pressure points, and where control is most likely creeping in. They're also your entry points for change.

As you circle them, notice which *habits* they map to (Approval, Conflict Avoidance, Auto-Yes, Over-Adapting, Deferring, Over-reliance, Compliance). These habits will be discussed in future videos.

Start with the pressure point that costs you the most energy each week.

And remember: **Toxic Management is used because it works for them—until it doesn't.**

The most powerful disruption doesn't come from changing *them*. It comes from changing your responses.

In the course, you'll learn:

- How to build self-protective habits that neutralise their toxic styles
- How to spot and name their coercive control patterns before they escalate, and what to do about it
- How to reclaim your wellbeing—even in high-pressure environments

**IMPORTANT: This is an educational self-check. It doesn't diagnose anyone or replace HR/legal advice.**