When demands feel *like threats.*

PDA — often called Pathological Demand Avoidance, or a "Persistent Drive for Autonomy" — describes a nervous system that reads everyday demands as threats. That can make things hard even when you *want* to do them. The name is debated, and it isn't a standalone diagnosis in every system.

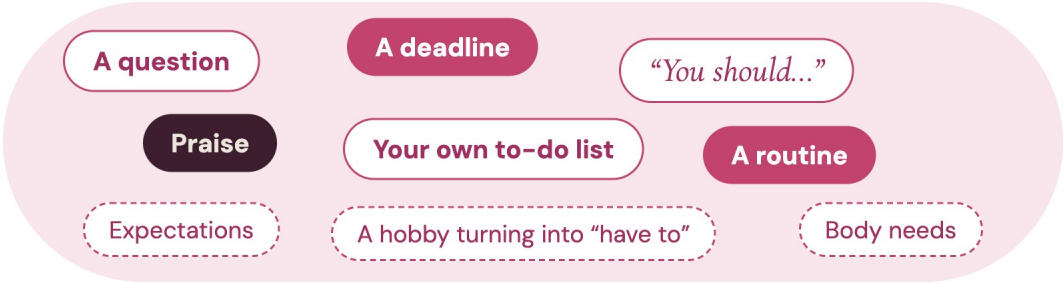
WHAT HAPPENS INSIDE — *in a split second, often before you notice*



This is a protective response, not laziness or defiance. Your system is trying to keep you safe.

DEMANDS CAN BE HIDDEN

Many PDAers describe the alarm firing at things that don't look like demands at all.



WHAT HELPS — *lower the demand, keep the doing*

1. **Declarative language**
   Share or wonder instead of asking.
2. **Offer choices**
   Which one, when, or how — you pick.
3. **Humor & novelty**
   Make it a game, a challenge, a story.
4. **Reduce pressure**
   Drop deadlines, audiences and "musts" where you can.
5. **Build autonomy**
   More say over your own day and body.
6. **Collaborate, don't command**
   "Let's figure it out" beats "Do it."

TRY IT: DECLARATIVE

INSTEAD OF
~~"Go do the dishes."~~

TRY
"I wonder if the dishes could happen before the show."

SELF-TALK TOO
"The laptop's open, if I feel like starting."

Continued on back: go deeper →

Go *deeper.*

These are invitations, not assignments — answer any, in any order, on your own, in session, or with someone you trust. Skipping is allowed.

1 *Which demands set off my alarm — even the hidden ones?*

2 *What does my avoidance look like? Delaying, negotiating, going blank?*

3 *What happens in my body when a demand lands?*

4 *What helps me get started without pressure — a choice, a game, company?*

5 *How could I talk to myself more declaratively? Rewrite one "I have to..."*

TRY THIS WEEK *Turn one task into an "I wonder if..." and notice how your body responds.*