

What Is Codependency?

Codependency is a disorder of selflessness, passivity, and personal powerlessness.

Codependency can be defined as the over focus on others and under focus on one's self.

Codependents suffer from a sense of helplessness over their own emotions and wellbeing.

They attach their happiness and worth to other people.

Because of that belief, they become on someone else, wanting them to behave in certain ways: “If they do “X”, then I can be okay/happy.”

To get someone to change, codependents use caretaking. Behind this caretaking is a belief that “If I did enough, the other person will love me and change for me.”

However, despite their best efforts, codependents end up feeling unappreciated and resentful.

They are also convinced that they will never find someone who will love them for who they are.

Their low self-esteem manifests itself into a form of learned helplessness that keeps them stuck with their emotional manipulator partner.

As a codependent, you may struggle with the following issues:

1. Perfectionism,
2. People-pleasing,

3. Enmeshment in relationships,
4. Love addiction,
5. Shame,
6. Emotional abuse,
7. Trauma,
8. Anxiety
9. Depression,
10. Low self-esteem,
11. Poor communication,
12. Over-controlling,
13. Victim mentality or external locus of control,
14. Inability to tolerate being alone
15. Chronic feelings of emptiness,
16. Denial and lack of self-awareness.

Are You Codependent?

You might be struggling with codependency if you:

- Try to control events and how other people should behave through coercion, advice-giving, manipulation, or domination.
- Find no satisfaction or happiness in life outside of doing things for another person.
- Live too much by other people's standards.
- Feel that in order to get along and be liked, you need to be what people want you to be, even if that includes ignoring your own morals or conscience.
- Believe that it is selfish to put your own needs before the needs of others.
- Find it easier to take care of others than to take care of yourself.
- Allow feelings to build up that you do not express.
- Have been raised by a narcissist, an addict, or a non-nurturing caregiver.

Notes

Codependency vs. Caring

The following prompts will help you reflect on the difference between codependency and caring and challenge your limiting beliefs:

1. Do you feel compelled to help or fix someone?

2. Are you helping or enabling?

3. Are you helping in a way that encourages independence or dependence?

4. Do you feel empty or purposeless when you're not helping someone?

5. Do you give unsolicited advice or try to help in ways that aren't wanted or appreciated?

6. Do you end up feeling guilty when you don't exhaust every possible way to help someone?

7. Do you give or help in ways that negatively affect you?

8. Are your relationships unbalanced because you give but don't receive?

9. Are you helping because you want to or do you feel like you have to?

Codependency Journal Prompts

1. What problems does codependency cause for you?

2. Is codependency helpful in any way?

3. How do you feel about giving up the unhealthy aspect of codependency? What are you afraid will happen if you remove your codependency shield?

4. How will your life be better if you can be less codependent?

5. Was codependency encouraged in your family or culture? How so?

6. How can you connect with yourself more?

7. How can you start taking better care of your physical and mental health?

8. What interests and hobbies have you been neglecting that you'd like to pursue?

9. What self-care activities would make your life more enjoyable and less stressful?

10. Is there a relationship where you're tired of helping? Can you stay silent instead of volunteering?

11. What boundaries do you need to start setting in your relationships?

12. Is there a situation where you feel excessive need of control? If so, how can you detach and let go?

13. Do you find yourself often obsessively worrying about what others think of you? If so, what can you do to feel less obsessed?

14. How can you start practicing gentleness and compassion toward yourself?

15. How can you let go of the need to be perfect and forgive yourself for making mistakes? What unrealistic expectations of yourself do you need to let go of?

16. How can you embrace your imperfections and accept yourself more?

17. Where can you ask for emotional support or help?

18. Do you believe self-care is selfish? If so, think about what you would tell a friend who has the same belief. Say it to yourself!

19. What can you do to assert and stand up for yourself more?

20. Take some time to write about your values and what is most important to you.

21. What interests and hobbies do you enjoy? How can you pursue these more?

Self-Care

1. How is codependency impacting your ability to take care of yourself?

2. How is not taking care of yourself impacting you in relationships?

3. How can you begin to do more for yourself?

4. What self-care activities do you think will help you prioritize yourself more? Choose from the following list and add some of your own:

- Allow yourself to cry
- Empower yourself through learning and psychoeducation
- Find things that make you laugh
- Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- Make a playlist of upbeat songs
- Make time for self-reflection
- Practice receiving from others
- Reward yourself for completing small tasks
- See a therapist regularly or during times of high stress
- Seek out peer support
- Start a gratitude journal
- Take a moment to express gratitude
- Try some adult coloring as a form of anxiety and/or stress release
- Try some mindfulness exercises to help bring you into the present moment
- Turn off electronic devices for an hour (e.g. computer, phone, TV)
- Write things you like about yourself
- Hobbies (stamp collect, model build, etc.)
- Listen to a podcast
- Listen to an audiobook
- Listen to classical music
- Make a 'To-Do' list of tasks
- Read fiction
- Read non-fiction
- Research a topic of interest
- Soak in the bathtub
- Write in your journal
- Do some stretching exercises
- Do yoga, tai chi, or Pilates, or take classes to learn
- Get a massage
- Go borrow a friend's dog and take it to the park
- Go dancing

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- Go hiking, camping, or backpacking and spend some time in nature
- Ask for help
- Call a trusted friend or family member
- Choose who you spend your time with today
- Donate old clothes or items to charity
- Give your pet a bath
- Go online to chat
- Go out and visit a friend
- Intentionally reconnect with someone you've lost touch with
- Take children places
- Talk to or introduce myself to my neighbors
- Advocate for others. Find ways to make changes for the betterment of society
- Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- Do 5 minutes of calm deep breath
- Do a 10-minute body scan technique to check in with each part of your body
- Do something nice for someone in secret
- Donate money to a charity of your choosing
- Give positive feedback about something
- Go to your church, mosque, synagogue, temple, or other place of worship
- Identify what is meaningful to you
- Make time for meditation in your day
- Volunteer at an animal shelter
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Find more worksheets to help you practice self-care by clicking [HERE](https://payhip.com/b/NePlo) or visiting: <https://payhip.com/b/NePlo>

Setting Boundaries

1. What are your physical boundaries in relationships?

Examples of physical boundaries may sound like:

- "I am not a big hugger. I am a handshake person."
- "No. I don't want to be touched like that."
- "I am tired. I need to sit down now."
- "I am hungry. I am going to get something to eat."
- "Don't go into my room without asking first."
- "I am allergic to [.....], so we can't have that in our home."
- _____
- _____
- _____

2. What emotional boundaries in relationships do you need to set to feel safe?

Examples of emotional boundaries include:

- Saying No
- Refusing to Take Blame
- Expecting Respect
- Finding Your Identity Outside of the Relationship
- Accepting Help
- Asking for Space
- Communicating Discomfort
- Your Right to Privacy
- Your right to Change Your Mind
- Your Right to Your Own Time

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Remaining True to Your Principles

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Healthy boundaries beliefs to help you find the courage to set boundaries:

3. I will let go of any guilt by remembering that

- It is my responsibility to make myself happy and figure out what brings me joy
- It is not my responsibility to make sure everyone is happy
- It is not my job to rescue people
- I do not have to anticipate other people's needs
- It is okay to say No
- It is okay if other people get angry
- It is okay to spend time alone without having to explain myself
- It is okay if the other person didn't agree with me
- It is okay to be myself and not what others want me to be
- No one has the right to abuse me or disrespect me in anyway, including my family, friends, partner, coworkers, or employer
- _____
- _____

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