

Enabling Worksheet

1. Recognizing Denial

- Describe instances where you may have rationalized or minimized problematic behaviors of your loved one.

- List reasons you believe may have contributed to your denial.

2. Identifying Enabling Behaviors

- List specific actions or patterns of behavior that may be enabling. The following are some common examples. Check off the ones you often engage in or add more to the list:

- Making Excuses:** Defending the individual's problematic behavior to others.
- Minimizing the Issue:** Downplaying the seriousness of the behavior or its consequences.
- Denial:** Refusing to acknowledge there is a problem.
- Avoiding Confrontation:** Choosing not to address the issue to keep peace.
- Blaming Others:** Attributing the person's behavior to outside factors or other people.
- Covering Up:** Lying or covering up evidence of the person's behavior.
- Financial Support:** Providing money that allows continuation of the behavior.
- Taking Over Responsibilities:** Performing tasks the individual should be managing themselves.
- Ignoring Negative Behavior:** Turning a blind eye when the individual behaves inappropriately.
- Rescuing:** Saving the person from crises or legal trouble.
- Failing to Enforce Boundaries:** Not sticking to set limits or consequences.
- Prioritizing Their Needs:** Consistently putting the individual's needs above your own.
- Tolerating Abuse:** Accepting verbal, emotional, or physical abuse from the individual.
- Neglecting Self-Care:** Focusing so much on the individual that you ignore your own health and well-being.
- Suppressing Emotions:** Keeping your emotions in check to avoid upsetting the individual.

- Maintaining Secrecy:** Keeping the individual's behavior a secret from others who may be able to help.
- Offering "One More Chance":** Repeatedly giving the individual another chance without any change in behavior.
- Misguided Love:** Believing that protecting the individual from hardship is an act of love, when it may hinder their growth.
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- _____
- _____

- Reflect on how these behaviors might be preventing your loved one from facing the consequences of their actions.

3. Confronting the Impact

- Explore how enabling behaviors have impacted your life and your loved one's life.

4. Breaking the Cycle

- Identify specific moments in the enabling cycle where you have an opportunity to make a different choice.

- Brainstorm alternative actions you can take at these critical points. Include both preventative measures for triggers and healthy responses to the urge to enable.
