



CoDA Service Conference 2011

Motion Form

Committee: CoDA Literature Committee Date: May 7, 2011

Motion Number: (data entry purpose only): #1

Result (data entry purpose only):

Motion:

To endorse a revised version of the Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence which removes the "I" statements and uses a format of "Codependents often...." that precedes each pattern of codependence as shown on the attached revised version.

Intent:

Some members of the CoDA Fellowship have voiced their concern and resistance to the reading of the current Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence revised in 2010, because of the use of "I" statements in this service item. The CLC proposes a revision of the service item to respond to this valid concern and to assist members of CoDA in the use of positive affirmations to enhance their recovery. Use of "I" statements in identifying characteristics of codependency can be experienced as negative affirmations which many members of CoDA believe can actually hinder personal recovery and growth. Additionally, the proposed revised version restates the Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence in a format currently used in *The CoDA Book, Peeling the Onion*, and in other CoDA Conference endorsed literature. A second motion to be presented, if passed, will also enable the continued use of the 2010 Patterns and Characteristics for those members who would like to keep the current format of the Patterns and Characteristics on the official CoDA website as an alternative to the revised version submitted with this motion.

Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence

The following checklist is offered as a tool to aid in self-evaluation. It may be particularly helpful to newcomers as they begin to understand codependency. It may aid those who have been in recovery a while to determine what traits still need attention and transformation.

Denial Patterns:

Codependents often. . .

- have difficulty identifying what they are feeling.
- minimize, alter, or deny how they truly feel.
- perceive themselves as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others.
- lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others.
- label others with their negative traits.
- think they can take care of themselves without any help from others.
- mask pain in various ways such as anger, humor, or isolation.
- express negativity or aggression in indirect and passive ways.
- do not recognize the unavailability of those people to whom they are attracted.

Low Self-esteem Patterns:

Codependents often. . .

- have difficulty making decisions.
- judge what they think, say, or do harshly, as never good enough.
- are embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.
- value others' approval of their thinking, feelings, and behavior over their own.
- do not perceive themselves as lovable or worthwhile persons.
- seek recognition and praise to overcome feeling less than.
- have difficulty admitting a mistake.
- need to appear to be right in the eyes of others and may even lie to look good.
- are unable to identify or ask for what they need and want.
- perceive themselves as superior to others.
- look to others to provide their sense of safety.
- have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects.
- have trouble setting healthy priorities and boundaries.

Compliance Patterns:

Codependents often. . .

- are extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.
- compromise their own values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger.
- put aside their own interests in order to do what others want.
- are hypervigilant regarding the feelings of others and take on those feelings.

- are afraid to express their beliefs, opinions, and feelings when they differ from those of others.
- accept sexual attention when they want love.
- make decisions without regard to the consequences.
- give up their truth to gain the approval of others or to avoid change.

Control Patterns:

Codependents often. . .

- believe people are incapable of taking care of themselves.
- attempt to convince others what to think, do, or feel.
- freely offer advice and direction without being asked.
- become resentful when others decline their help or reject their advice.
- lavish gifts and favors on those they want to influence.
- use sexual attention to gain approval and acceptance.
- have to feel needed in order to have a relationship with others.
- demand that their needs be met by others.
- use charm and charisma to convince others of their capacity to be caring and compassionate.
- use blame and shame to exploit others emotionally.
- refuse to cooperate, compromise, or negotiate.
- adopt an attitude of indifference, helplessness, authority, or rage to manipulate outcomes.
- use recovery jargon in an attempt to control the behavior of others.
- pretend to agree with others to get what they want.

Avoidance Patterns:

Codependents often. . .

- act in ways that invite others to reject, shame, or express anger toward them.
- judge harshly what others think, say, or do.
- avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy as a way to maintain distance.
- allow addictions to people, places, and things to distract them from achieving intimacy in relationships.
- use indirect or evasive communication to avoid conflict or confrontation.
- diminish their capacity to have healthy relationships by declining to use the tools of recovery.
- suppress their feelings or needs to avoid feeling vulnerable.
- pull people toward them, but when others get close, push them away.
- refuse to give up their self-will to avoid surrendering to a power greater than themselves.
- believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.
- withhold expressions of appreciation.