



Codependents Anonymous

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“We” Version – Recovery Patterns of Codependence

Denial Patterns	
Codependents often...	In Recovery...
Have difficulty identifying what they are feeling.	We become more aware of our feelings and identify them, often in the moment. We learn the difference between our thoughts and feelings.
Minimize, alter, or deny how they truly feel.	We embrace our feelings; they are valid and important.
Perceive themselves as completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others.	We know the difference between caring and caretaking, recognizing that caretaking others may be motivated by self-interest.
Lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others.	We feel compassion for the feelings and needs of others.
Label others with their negative traits.	We perceive that the negative traits we see in others may also be our own.
Think they can take care of themselves without any help from others.	We acknowledge that asking for help is healthy self-care.
Mask pain in various ways such as anger, humor, or isolation.	We recognize that anger, humor, or isolation may be clues to underlying pain or trauma.
Express negativity or aggression in indirect and passive ways.	We express our feelings and speak our truth openly, directly, and calmly.
Do not recognize the unavailability of those people to whom they are attracted.	We pursue close relationships with emotionally available people.

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Low Self-esteem Patterns	
Codependents often...	In Recovery...
Have difficulty making decisions.	We trust our Higher Power's guidance and our intuition in making effective decisions.
Judge what they think, say, or do harshly, as never good enough.	We accept ourselves as we are, choosing personal progress rather than perfection.
Are embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.	We graciously accept recognition, praise, or gifts.
Value others' approval of their thinking, feelings, and behavior over their own.	We value our own thinking, feelings, and decisions, finding confidence in ourselves.
Do not perceive themselves as lovable or worthwhile persons.	We feel lovable and valuable as we are.
Seek recognition and praise to overcome feeling less than.	We feel equal to others. Recognition and praise from others do not determine our value.
Have difficulty admitting a mistake.	We continue to take our personal inventory, and promptly admit our mistakes.
Need to appear to be right in the eyes of others and may even lie to look good.	We take personal responsibility for our behaviors and motivations. It is more important for us to be authentic than to look good to others.
Are unable to identify or ask for what they need and want.	We meet our own needs and wants, including communicating our needs and wants to others.
Perceive themselves as superior to others.	We see ourselves as equal to others. We release the need to feel better than or less than others.
Look to others to provide their sense of safety.	We look to our Higher Power and ourselves to create safety in our lives.
Have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects.	We willingly take action, starting and completing what needs to be done.
Have trouble setting healthy priorities and boundaries.	We establish and uphold healthy priorities and boundaries.

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Compliance Patterns	
Codependents often...	In Recovery...
Are extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.	We are committed to our personal and emotional safety. We are able to leave situations that feel threatening or unsafe.
Compromise their own values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger.	We are rooted in our personal values and act with integrity, regardless of the reactions of others.
Put aside their own interests in order to do what others want.	We reflect on our feelings and interests before participating in other's plans.
Are hypervigilant regarding the feelings of others and take on those feelings.	We detach from the feelings of others and honor our own boundaries. We know where we stop and where others begin.
Are afraid to express their beliefs, opinions, and feelings when they differ from those of others.	We courageously and openly express our beliefs, opinions, and feelings when we choose.
Accept sexual attention when they want love.	Grounded in self-love, we consciously define our own sexuality and choose our own sexual expression. We refuse unwanted sexual attention.
Make decisions without regard to the consequences.	We ask our Higher Power for guidance and consider possible consequences before making decisions.
Give up their truth to gain the approval of others or to avoid change.	We stand in our own truth, whether others approve or not, even if it means making difficult changes in our lives.

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Control Patterns	
Codependents often...	In Recovery...
Believe people are incapable of taking care of themselves.	We respect the autonomy of others, releasing them to their own Higher Power.
Attempt to convince others what to think, do, or feel.	We accept the thoughts, choices, and feelings of others.
Freely offer advice and direction without being asked.	We share our experience, strength, and hope, only offering advice or direction when requested.
Become resentful when others decline their help or reject their advice.	When others decline our help or reject our advice, we do not take it personally. We let go of the results.
Lavish gifts and favors on those they want to influence.	We reflect on our motives. We give gifts with no expectations.
Use sexual attention to gain approval and acceptance.	We embrace our own sexuality in a healthy manner. We do not use sex to gain approval or to manipulate others.
Have to feel needed in order to have a relationship with others.	We choose new and renewed relationships based on equality and balance.
Demand that their needs be met by others.	We recognize and take responsibility for meeting our own needs. We ask for help when we need it, without the expectation of being rescued.
Use charm and charisma to convince others of their capacity to be caring and compassionate.	We discover our authentic selves and interact honestly and respectfully.
Use blame and shame to exploit others emotionally.	We let go of manipulating with blame and shame. We trust outcomes to our Higher Power.
Refuse to cooperate, compromise, or negotiate.	We negotiate with integrity in all our relationships.
Adopt an attitude of indifference, helplessness, authority, or rage to manipulate outcomes.	We let go of our reactive attitudes and behaviors, treat others with respect and consideration, and leave the outcomes to our Higher Power.
Use recovery jargon in an attempt to control the behavior of others.	We use program language for our own growth, letting go of the desire to change, manipulate, or control others.
Pretend to agree with others to get what they want.	We communicate authentically and truthfully.

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Avoidance Patterns	
Codependents often...	In Recovery...
Act in ways that invite others to reject, shame, or express anger toward them.	We treat ourselves and others with respect and kindness. We recognize that the reactions of others are beyond our control.
Judge harshly what others think, say, or do.	We keep an open heart and mind. We accept others as they are.
Avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy as a way to maintain distance.	We are open to intimacy in our relationships. We create healthy boundaries to keep ourselves safe.
Allow addictions to people, places, and things to distract them from achieving intimacy in relationships.	We release our obsessions to our Higher Power. We practice recovery to create safety, self-respect, and connection.
Use indirect or evasive communication to avoid conflict or confrontation.	We use direct and straightforward communication to resolve conflicts and work through confrontations.
Diminish their capacity to have healthy relationships by declining to use the tools of recovery.	We use the tools of recovery to develop and maintain healthy relationships.
Suppress their feelings or needs to avoid feeling vulnerable.	We allow ourselves to feel and honor our vulnerability, trusting our Higher Power to meet our needs.
Pull people toward them, but when others get close, push them away.	We welcome close, interdependent relationships while creating and respecting healthy boundaries.
Refuse to give up their self-will to avoid surrendering to a power greater than themselves.	We place trust in our Higher Power, surrendering our self-will.
Believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.	We honor our emotions and express them authentically.
Withhold expressions of appreciation.	We freely express appreciation toward ourselves and others.

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