

CO-DEPENDENCY IS

Co-dependency is a relatively new term frequently used to describe the overall condition of a person who has allowed another person's behavior to affect him or her, and who is obsessed with controlling other people's behavior. Co-dependency is a learned behavior that results in a self-destructive habit of thinking, feeling, and behaving toward self and others in a way that causes misunderstandings and pain.

Co-dependents are caretakers. Co-dependents think and feel responsible for other people - for other people's feelings, thoughts, actions, and ultimately their destiny. Co-dependents feel safest when giving. Co-dependents try to please others instead of themselves. Co-dependents feel sad because they spend their time and energy giving to others and nobody gives to them.

Co-dependents have low self-esteem. Co-dependents blame themselves for everything. They think that they are not quite good enough, take things personally, feel like victims, and fear rejection. Co-dependents are afraid of making mistakes, and expect perfection from themselves and others. Co-dependents feel ashamed of who they are, think that their lives are not worth living, and then find themselves living other people's lives instead.

Co-dependents are obsessive people. They think and talk a lot about other people. They spend their energy worrying, losing sleep, and checking on other people. They abandon their routine because they allow themselves to become upset about someone or something that they are trying to control.

Co-dependents are master controllers. Co-dependents are afraid to let other people be themselves and let events happen naturally. Co-dependents think that they know what is best. Co-dependents try to control people and events through helplessness, guilt, coercion, threats, advice-giving, manipulation, or domination. They don't see or deal with their fear of loss of control. They get frustrated and angry, provoke other people's anger, and eventually fail in their efforts.

Co-dependents wear the blinders of denial. They tend to ignore problems or pretend that they are not happening. Co-dependents spend money compulsively, overeat, or stay busy to avoid confronting problems. They believe lies, lie to themselves, and feel like they are going crazy as they see the problems get worse.

Co-dependents depend on other people to validate their lives. Co-dependents look to others for the fulfillment of their happiness, and feel threatened by the loss of anything

or anyone that they think provides their happiness. They are uncomfortable with themselves, and often look outside of themselves for peace and contentment. Co-dependents don't take the time to see if other people are good for them or if they really love or like other people that they get involved with. They center their lives around the lives of other people, and lose interest in their own lives when they love. Co-dependents constantly search out love and approval, often times, from people incapable of loving. Co-dependents equate love with pain.

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