

## PATTERNS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF CODEPENDENCE

Check the traits that apply to you to complete this self-evaluation.

### DENIAL PATTERNS Codependents often. . .

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have difficulties identifying their feelings</li> <li>• Minimize, alter, or deny how they truly feel</li> <li>• Perceive themselves as completely unselfish</li> <li>• Lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Label others with our own negative traits</li> <li>• Think that they can take care of themselves alone</li> <li>• Mask pain through anger, humor, or isolation</li> <li>• Express negativity passively</li> <li>• Do not recognize the unavailability of those to whom they are attracted</li> </ul>
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### LOW ESTEEM PATTERNS Codependents often. . .

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Struggle with decision-making</li> <li>• Judge harshly what they think, say or do</li> <li>• Are embarrassed by recognition, praise or gifts</li> <li>• Value others' approval above their own</li> <li>• Perceive themselves as unlovable or unworthwhile</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek external recognition and praise to not feel "less than"</li> <li>• Have difficulty admitting mistakes</li> <li>• Must appear right to others</li> <li>• Struggle to identify what they need and want</li> <li>• Have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects</li> </ul>
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### COMPLIANCE PATTERNS Codependents often. . .

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compromise their own values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger</li> <li>• Put aside their own interests to do what others want</li> <li>• Take on others' feelings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fear expressing their beliefs, opinions and feelings</li> <li>• Accept sexual attention when what they most want is love and intimacy</li> <li>• Make decisions without regard to consequences</li> </ul>
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### CONTROL PATTERNS Codependents often. . .

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe people cannot take care of themselves</li> <li>• Try to convince others what to think, do or feel</li> <li>• Freely offer advice and guidance without being asked</li> <li>• Resent when others decline their help or advice</li> <li>• Lavish gifts and favors to gain influence</li> <li>• Use sex to gain approval and acceptance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Must feel needed to have a relationship with others</li> <li>• Demand that their needs be met by others</li> <li>• Use charm and charisma to prove that they are caring and compassionate</li> <li>• Use blame and shaming to exploit others emotionally</li> <li>• Struggle with cooperation, compromise or negotiation</li> <li>• Pretend to agree with others to get what they want</li> </ul>
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### AVOIDANCE PATTERNS Codependents often. . .

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Act in ways so that others reject, shame or show anger towards them</li> <li>• Judge harshly what others think, say, or do</li> <li>• Avoid emotional, physical or sexual intimacy</li> <li>• Use ambiguous communication to avoid conflict or confrontation</li> <li>• Ineffectively use the tools of recovery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suppress their needs and wants to avoid feeling vulnerable</li> <li>• Pull people toward them, then push them away when they get too close (love addict/love avoidant)</li> <li>• Refuse to give up their self-will</li> <li>• Believe displays of emotion are signs of weakness</li> <li>• Withhold expressions of true appreciation</li> </ul>
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Pick one of the five characteristics where you feel you have the greatest need for improvement. Once you make progress in this area, consider moving on to another. You can treat work as similar to what you did when you worked on your defects of character in Step 4. Name them and, as you have done in your Step 5 work, give them away, first to your Higher Power, then to yourself, and finally to another person with whom you feel safe. [From *CoDA 2011 as modified by Sam L*]