

Symptoms of Codependency and Control

Three types of codependents

1. **Caretakers** --relate to others primarily through roles which put the caretaker in a position of the giver, helper, supporter, nurturer, etc. "Everyone's needs are more important than my own."
2. **Romance-relationship addiction** --must be in a "relationship" and be "special" to someone in order to be OK with oneself; may use caretaking and sexuality to gain approval/acceptance; projects his/her pretend personality upon the other person to avoid or diminish the authenticity of the other (husband, wife, child, friend); goes from relationship to relationship with unresolved problems. "You're no one unless someone loves you."
3. **Messiah complex** --savior and rescuer of the family, church, world; over-responsible, doesn't ask for help, tries to make himself indispensable. "If I don't do it won't get done."

Symptoms of codependency

1. **External-referenced**, generally on another person or on other people.
2. **Tries to control behavior of others** through approval-seeking and people-pleasing behavior.
3. **Experiences intimacy** by discounting own feelings, and empathizing with feelings of others.
4. **Loss of healthy boundaries**, generally resulting from doing things for others that violate one's values, and from accepting unacceptable behavior from others.
5. **Frozen feelings**, numbness with regard to one's own feelings. Depression may also result from repressed anger failing control.
6. **Inferiority**. Self is valued according to others' opinions. Uses martyr, victim, and messiah role to bolster confidence.
7. **Generalized anxiety**, related to lack of control of one's life.
8. **Mental preoccupation**. Racing thoughts, inability to enjoy mental silence and serenity.
9. **Lack of assertiveness**. Inability to ask directly for one's true needs. Inability to confront unhealthy behavior in others.
10. **Narcissism**. In the absence of healthy, legitimate boundaries, others are seen as for or against self.

Problems often related to codependency and control

1. **Other addictions**--codependents use drugs, zest for life to escape reality, traveling, shopping, food, dinners, TV to cope with feelings. The majority of addicts--even alcoholics-- are codependents. Recovery from other addictions fails if codependency is ignored or denied. As long as one is codependent, one is in the addictive process.
2. **Neuroses and psychoses**--mental health problems with their own specific symptomology and dynamics may develop out of codependency and control.
3. **Physical health problems**--stress reduces effectiveness of immune system to fight off diseases.
4. **Spiritual disconnection**--Major emphasis on the preservation of natural life limits the fellowship and source of strength from the Holy Spirit.