

Patterns and Characteristics of Codependence and Hope in Recovery

	In Codependency I/we may...	In Recovery I/we may learn to...
Denial Patterns	have difficulty identifying feelings.	become more aware of feelings and identify them, often in the moment, discerning the difference between thoughts and feelings.
	minimize, alter, or deny true feelings.	embrace feelings; they become valid and important.
	perceive personal behavior as completely unselfish and dedicated to the wellbeing of others.	know the difference between caring and care taking, recognizing that care taking may have self-interest.
	lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others.	feel compassion for another's feelings and needs.
	label others with our negative traits.	acknowledge that the negative traits seen in others may also be seen as one's own.
	deny the possibility of asking for help.	acknowledge that it is OK to ask for help.
	mask pain in various ways such as anger, humor, or isolation.	become aware of painful feelings and express them in ways that support growth.
	express negativity or aggression in indirect and passive ways.	become able to express feelings openly, directly, and calmly.
	not recognize the unavailability of others.	pursue relationships with emotionally available people.
Low Self-esteem Patterns	In Codependency I/we may...	In Recovery I/we may learn to...
	have difficulty making decisions.	trust Higher Power's guidance in making effective decisions.
	judge the self harshly, as never good enough.	accept personal progress over perfection.
	be embarrassed to receive recognition, praise, or gifts.	feel worthy to accept recognition, praise, or gifts.
	derive too much value from others' approval of personal thoughts, feelings, and behavior.	value the opinions of those who are trustworthy, without needing to gain their approval.
	not feel lovable or worthwhile.	experience being lovable and valuable without an external cause.
	seek recognition and praise to overcome feeling less than.	accept recognition and praise without emotional attachment.
	have difficulty admitting a mistake.	continue to take personal inventory, and when wrong, promptly admit it.
	need to appear to be right in the eyes of others and may even lie to look good.	become honest about behaviors and motivations.
	be unable to identify or request that needs or wants be met.	recognize and understand personal needs and wants, making requests when needed.
	perceive the personal self as superior to others.	release the perceived need to put others down in order to feel OK.
	look to others to provide a sense of safety.	look to Higher Power to create a sense of personal safety.
	have difficulty getting started, meeting deadlines, and completing projects.	avoid procrastination by meeting responsibilities in a timely manner.
have trouble setting healthy priorities and boundaries.	become able to establish and uphold healthy priorities and boundaries.	
Compliance Patterns	In Codependency I/we may...	In Recovery I/we may learn to...
	be extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long.	commit to personal safety and become able to leave situations that feel unsafe.
	compromise personal values and integrity to avoid rejection or anger.	honor personal values, even if others don't agree or become angry.
	put aside personal interests in order to do what others want.	balance self-interest and feelings when asked to participate in another's plans.
	be hypervigilant regarding the feelings of others and take on those feelings.	detach from the feelings of others.
	be afraid to express beliefs, opinions, and feelings when they differ from those of others.	express beliefs, opinions, and feelings courageously, when desired.
	accept sexual attention as a substitute love.	understand the difference between sexual attention and genuine love.
	make decisions without regard to the consequences.	ask Higher Power for guidance and consider various consequences before making decisions.
	give up personal truth to gain the approval of others or to avoid change.	stand in personal integrity, whether others approve or not, even if it means making difficult changes.

	In Codependency I/we may...	In Recovery I/we may learn to...
Control Patterns	believe people are incapable of taking care of themselves.	realize that, with rare exceptions, adults are capable of managing their own lives.
	attempt to convince others what to think, do, or feel.	accept the thoughts, choices, and feelings of others, even though it may feel uncomfortable.
	freely offer advice and direction without being asked.	give advice only when asked.
	become resentful when others decline help or reject advice.	be content to see others take care of themselves.
	lavish gifts and favors to gain influence.	carefully and honestly contemplate motivations when preparing to give a gift.
	use sexual attention to gain approval and acceptance.	embrace and celebrate my sexuality without seeking approval or attempting to control.
	have to feel needed in order to have a relationship with others.	release neediness and instead choose relationships based on equality, intimacy, and balance.
	demand that personal needs be met by others.	seek support when needed, without demands or manipulation.
	use charm and charisma to convince others of being caring and compassionate.	behave authentically with others.
	use blame and shame to exploit others emotionally.	make requests directly, refraining from attempts to manipulate, trusting outcomes to a Higher Power.
	refuse to cooperate, compromise, or negotiate.	negotiate with integrity and honor the group conscience.
	adopt an attitude of indifference, helplessness, authority, or rage to manipulate outcomes.	let go of reactive posturing and treat others with respect and consideration.
	use recovery jargon in an attempt to control the behavior of others.	appreciate recovery as a path to personal growth, not as a means of comparison to others.
	pretend to agree with others to fulfill personal wants.	communicate authentically and truthfully.
Avoidance Patterns	In Codependency I/we may...	In Recovery I/we may learn to...
	act in ways that invite others to reject, shame, or express anger.	encourage loving and healthy interactions.
	judge harshly what others think, say, or do.	keep an open and accepting mind towards others.
	avoid emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy as a way to maintain distance.	become open to relationships with emotional, physical, or sexual intimacy.
	allow addictions to people, places, and things to distract from achieving intimacy in relationships.	practice recovery behaviors to develop healthy and fulfilling relationships.
	use indirect or evasive communication to avoid conflict or confrontation.	use direct and straightforward communication to resolve conflicts and deal with confrontations.
	diminish the capacity to have healthy relationships by declining to use the tools of recovery.	use the tools of recovery for conflict resolution and deepening connections.
	suppress feelings or needs to avoid feeling vulnerable.	embrace vulnerability by trusting and honoring feelings and needs.
	pull people in, but when others get close, push them away.	welcome close, interdependent relationships while negotiating healthy boundaries.
	refuse to give up self-will to avoid surrendering to a power greater than themselves.	place trust in a Higher Power, surrendering self-will.
	believe displays of emotion are a sign of weakness.	honor spontaneous emotions and express them in ways that feel safe, helpful, or supportive.
	withhold expressions of appreciation.	express appreciation toward others.