

Important points to remember ...

Codependency is defined as a **shame-based illness** that occurs due to early childhood trauma. This trauma can come from our families or anywhere else, for example, sometimes we take on shame ourselves by comparing ourselves negatively to others. Once we take on shame and decide we aren't good enough, we change who we are because we can no longer be ourselves, because our "self" is not good enough. The result is that our bodies grow but we remain immature emotionally. Our relationship to self and others becomes impaired. We cannot be relational in a healthy way.

Being relational is: "Being capable of having a mature transmitter/receiver, two-way relationship with another person." This is accessed only through the **functional adult** part of the personality. A healthy communication between two adults involves calmness, a willingness to deliver the message from a calm, respectful place, and the partner receives the message from the same state of calmness and respect, both keeping walls down. The first step is to say, "May I ask if you are willing to listen to what I have to say right now? If the answer is yes, then proceed. From this point the transmitter – you – must stay on your side of the street in the conversation. This means speak from your point-of-view, your feelings your observations, your thoughts. 1. What I saw or heard, 2. What my hypothesis is about it, 3. How I feel when this happens. 4. What I would like to request that you change. Then wait for your partner's response. Throughout this communication keep in mind you are talking to the one you love.

Five Core Issues of Codependency – The different areas of emotional disabilities that occur when we take on shame.

Codependents notoriously lack moderation, and many are very intense in how they express themselves. On any given spectrum of the five core issues, they are typically 0 or 1000 – all or nothing. The Five Core Issues we struggle with in codependence are:

1. **Self esteem.** **Shame** on one end of the spectrum = Contempt for self; **Grandiosity** on the other = Contempt for others. Anytime you are either one, you are in your codependent disease and falling into immaturity resulting in an inability to be relational. Pull yourself out of it and into healthy self-esteem, where you speak adult to adult.
2. **Boundaries.** Our protection system. We protect ourselves from others, and we restrain ourselves so as not to offend others. There are two kinds: physical (external), and psychological (internal), the latter involves what we think, feel, and do. We must honor what other adults think, feel and do, even if we don't like it.
3. **Realism.** This is our reality. What we experience and how we interpret it. It is our perception and the meaning we make from what we see. Codependents are notoriously misguided on making accurate meanings, and how they view their own reality. We put people on pedestals, or demonize them. We make up meanings about actions that have no evidence to back it up. We think we hear things that were not said.
4. **Dependency.** Though humans are wired to pair up, once we're adult, we should be able to be fully functional on our own psychologically, emotionally, and financially. On the dependency scale we have adults who cannot function on their own, and adults who only function on their own. Dependent vs. anti-dependent. The anti-dependent is needless and want-less, which is not relational.
5. **Spontaneity.** This is about control of self and/or others. The healthy stance for an adult is to be flexible and go-with-the-flow with self and others and able to control one's self in moderation, ie. "I will eat the cake, but only half a piece." One end of the spectrum is out of control – no self-control vs. out of control with being in control. Think: glutton vs. anorexic; Shopaholic w. masses of credit card debt vs. Tightwad.

Please join Becky on her private **FaceBook** group dedicated to answering questions and discussing issues that occur in codependency – **Doctor Becky's Codependency Class – Learn, grow, change.** Simply request to be let into the group, and once in, tell us your life issues, ask for advice, offer support to others.
Contact: "Doctor Becky" Whetstone, Ph.D ... www.doctorbecky.com ... www.marriagecrisismanager.com ... 501-590-9200 (call or text) becky@doctorbecky.com