

AM I CO-DEPENDENT?

The following checklist is offered as a tool to aid in self-evaluation. It may be particularly helpful to determine what traits still need attention and improvement.

DENIAL PATTERNS:

Co-dependents

- > have difficulty identifying feelings
- > minimize, alter or deny their feelings
- > perceive themselves as being completely unselfish and dedicated to the well-being of others

LOW SELF-ESTEEM PATTERNS:

Co-dependents.....

- > have difficulty making decisions
- > judge their thoughts, works and actions harshly, as never being good enough
- > are embarrassed to receive recognition, praise or gifts
- > are unable to ask others to meet their needs or wants
- > value other people's approval of their thoughts, feelings and behaviours over self approval

COMPLIANCE PATTERNS:

Co-Dependents.....

- > compromise their values and integrity to avoid rejection and other people's anger
- > are very sensitive to others' feelings and assume the same feelings
- > are extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long
- > place a higher value on others' opinions and feelings and are afraid to express differing viewpoints or feelings
- > put aside personal interests and hobbies to do what others want
- > accepts sex as a substitute for love

CONTROL PATTERNS:

Co-dependents.....

- > believe most others are incapable of caring for themselves
- > attempt to convince others what they should think or feel
- > become resentful when others refuse their offer of help
- > freely offer advice and guidance without being asked
- > lavish gifts and favours on those they care about
- > use sex to gain approval and acceptance
- > have to be needed in order to have a relationship with others

13 TRAITS (CHARACTERISTICS)
OF ADULTS FROM ALCOHOLIC (OR DYSFUNCTIONAL) FAMILIES

1. Guess what normal behaviour is
2. Have difficulty following a project from beginning to end
3. Lie when it would be just as easy to tell the truth
4. Judge themselves without mercy
5. Have difficulty having fun
6. Take themselves very seriously
7. Have difficulty with intimate relationships
8. Overreact to change over which they have no control
9. Constantly seek approval and affirmation (but are uncomfortable when they receive it)
10. Feel that they are different from other people
11. Are super responsible or super irresponsible
12. Are extremely loyal, even in the face of evidence that the loyalty is undeserved
13. Impulsive - tending to lock themselves into a course of action without giving serious consideration to alternate behaviours or possible consequences. This impulsivity leads to confusion, self-loathing, the loss of control over their environment. In addition, they spend an excess amount of time and energy cleaning up the mess.

FIVE CORE ISSUES

1. The issues of Control
2. Distrust - of others as well as of self
3. Avoidance of feelings and the fundamental belief that feelings are wrong, bad and scary
4. Over-responsibility: belief that they are responsible for what is happening (or happened) in the family
5. Tendency to ignore their own needs

TYPICAL FEELINGS: FEAR, ANGER, CONFUSION, GUILT, SHAME, SADNESS