

## Part 1: Understanding the Codependency Maze



### What is codependency?

Before we jump into what codependency means, I want to tell you what it isn't. Codependency isn't about blaming you for the problems you're experiencing in your relationships. Honestly, I don't love the term codependency, but I have yet to figure out a better word to describe these traits and relationship issues. Being labeled codependent is a turn-off for many people and that's understandable. I will be explaining the most common aspects of codependency. You will probably find that some of them describe you and some do not. Please, take what applies to you and feel free to leave the rest. Codependency isn't an all or nothing proposition. I think of codependency on a continuum; we all have codependent traits to varying degrees.

I want to emphasize that you aren't the sole cause of your relationship problems. Both people contribute to the problems. An important part of your healing is to acknowledge your part in these dynamics.

You may be thinking, "Why do I have to change? I'm the victim." You may be the victim as you've truly been hurt, abused, mistreated, and taken advantage of. I want to acknowledge that your pain is real, but continuing to identify as a (powerless) victim will keep you stuck. It's possible to acknowledge that you have been deeply hurt and that you have the power to change and heal. Changing yourself is where your power lies. It allows you to break free from codependency and find your true self.

Codependency is a dysfunctional relationship pattern. It stems from low self-worth and lack of individuation, meaning that your identity is dependent on who you are relative to others. Codependency goes beyond a tremendous desire to help others. It's called co-dependency