

Shifting Codependency Patterns

Resource

Codependency involves tendencies toward unhealthy emotions and behaviors in one's relationships with others.

Often underpinned by maladaptive patterns related to:

- Denial
- Low Self-Esteem
- Compliance
- Avoidance, and
- Control

Contrasting codependency thought and behavior patterns with healthier ones can be a practical way to take action to recover from codependency.

Contrast and Compare

Use this resource as a starting point to consider how certain codependent patterns can impact relationships, and consider how they might be changed to more adaptive behaviors and tendencies instead.

Codependent Patterns: *Denial*

A	B
Denying, playing down, or misrepresenting one's real feelings.	Owning and accepting one's own emotions as valid and relevant.
Lack empathy for the feelings and needs of others.	Feeling compassion for others - their emotions and human needs.
Struggling to identify with/recognize one's own feelings.	Self-awareness of own emotions. Being able to distinguish between thoughts and emotions.

Codependent Patterns: *Low Self-Esteem*

A	B
Difficulty or inability to recognize/ask for things they want or require.	Being self-sufficient where possible, and seeking help, when appropriate, when it is needed.
Struggling to establish adaptive boundaries with others.	Can set and maintain healthy personal boundaries.
Holding other people's approval for one's thoughts, emotions, and actions more highly than one's own.	Self-confident. Respecting the opinions of trusted others without the need to 'win' approval.

Codependent Thought Patterns: *Compliance*

A	B
Neglecting or deprioritizing one's own wants and needs to satisfy others.	Valuing one's own wants and needs when others request something.
Compromising personal beliefs and standards to avoid anger, disagreement, or rejection by others.	Upholding personal values and beliefs, even when they displease others.
Trouble expressing own views, thoughts, and emotions when others' differ.	Respecting and suitably expressing one's own personal beliefs and emotions, even when they differ from other people's.

Codependent Thought Patterns: *Avoidance*

A	B
Critically judging others beliefs or actions.	Being accepting and open to others opinions and beliefs.
Repressing own emotions and wants so that one doesn't feel vulnerable.	Trusting and esteeming one's own emotions and needs, acknowledging and respecting one's own vulnerability.
Difficulty communicating when faced with potential confrontation or disagreement. Being evasive or indirect about conflict.	Expressing oneself clearly and in a straightforward way to resolve disagreements appropriately.

Codependent Thought Patterns: *Control*

A	B
Trying to persuade other people what to believe or do.	Being open and accepting about other people's views, decisions, and feelings, even when they differ from one's own.
Believing that others can't look after themselves.	Appreciating that in most cases, mature adults can navigate their own issues.
Insisting that other people fulfil their needs.	Seeking out resources to fulfil one's own requirements, without asking it of others. Reaching out for help when necessary and appropriate without expecting it.

Adapted from:

- CODA.org. (2011). *Recovery Patterns of Codependence*. Co-Dependents Anonymous International. Retrieved from <https://coda.org/meeting-materials/patterns-of-recovery/>.