

AM I CODEPENDENT?

A Self-Assessment Checklist

Important Note

This checklist is for self-reflection and educational purposes only. It is not a diagnostic tool. If you recognize significant codependent patterns, consider speaking with a therapist who specializes in codependency, attachment issues, or family systems.

PART 1: Current Codependent Behaviors

Relationship Patterns

Check the statements that apply to you **most of the time**:

- [] I stay in unhealthy or abusive relationships far longer than I should
- [] I feel responsible for other people's feelings, problems, and choices
- [] I find myself attracted to people who need "fixing" or "saving"
- [] I tolerate disrespect, mistreatment, or betrayal to avoid being alone
- [] I invest more energy in relationships than the other person does
- [] My relationships follow a pattern: I give, they take
- [] I feel more secure when taking care of someone than being taken care of
- [] I struggle to leave relationships even when I'm miserable
- [] My sense of self becomes lost in my relationships

Boundaries & People-Pleasing

- [] I have difficulty saying "no" without feeling guilty
- [] I agree to things I don't want to do to avoid conflict or disappointment

- [] I apologize excessively, even when I've done nothing wrong
- [] I suppress my own opinions to keep the peace
- [] I feel responsible for making everyone happy
- [] I struggle to know where I end and another person begins
- [] I let others violate my boundaries repeatedly
- [] I feel selfish when I prioritize my own needs
- [] I give until I'm completely depleted
- [] I can't stand to see anyone upset with me

Control & Over-Functioning

- [] I try to control outcomes and other people's behavior
- [] I offer unsolicited advice or help that isn't wanted
- [] I do things for others that they should do for themselves
- [] I make excuses for other people's bad behavior
- [] I believe I know what's best for others
- [] I feel anxious when I can't fix someone's problem
- [] I take on responsibilities that aren't mine
- [] I manipulate situations to get the outcome I want
- [] I rescue people from consequences of their own actions
- [] I micromanage because I don't trust others to do things right

Self-Worth & Identity

- [] My self-worth depends on what I do for others
- [] I feel empty or lost when I'm not needed
- [] I don't know who I am outside of my relationships or roles

- [] I need constant validation and reassurance from others
- [] I feel unworthy of love unless I earn it
- [] I have difficulty identifying my own feelings and needs
- [] I judge myself harshly but make excuses for others
- [] I feel like an imposter or fraud
- [] I don't believe I deserve to be happy
- [] My mood depends on other people's moods

Emotional Patterns

- [] I absorb other people's emotions as if they were my own
- [] I feel anxious or guilty when I'm not helping someone
- [] I'm terrified of being abandoned or rejected
- [] I feel resentful after saying "yes" when I wanted to say "no"
- [] I suppress my anger until I explode or shut down
- [] I feel panic when someone is upset with me
- [] I use caretaking to avoid dealing with my own problems
- [] I feel exhausted from carrying everyone's emotional burdens
- [] I can't relax or enjoy myself if others are unhappy
- [] I experience depression or anxiety related to my relationships

Communication Patterns

- [] I struggle to express my needs, wants, or feelings directly
- [] I hint, suggest, or manipulate rather than ask directly
- [] I withdraw or give the silent treatment when hurt
- [] I avoid conflict at all costs

- I minimize my own problems or feelings
- I lie or exaggerate to maintain the peace
- I read minds or expect others to read mine
- I communicate through others rather than directly
- I say "I'm fine" when I'm not
- I feel like I can't speak my truth in relationships

PART 2: Family of Origin & Childhood Experiences

Dysfunctional Family Background

Check the experiences that apply to your childhood:

- One or both parents struggled with addiction (alcohol, drugs, gambling, etc.)
- A parent had untreated mental illness (depression, anxiety, personality disorder)
- I experienced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- I experienced emotional or physical neglect
- My parents fought constantly or had a volatile relationship
- There was domestic violence in my home
- Family problems were kept secret ("don't tell anyone")
- Emotions were not allowed or were punished
- Love and approval were conditional on my behavior or achievements
- My family had rigid, harsh rules and high expectations

Parentification & Role Reversal

- I took care of my parent(s) emotionally or physically

- [] I was responsible for younger siblings like a parent
- [] I mediated between fighting parents
- [] I was my parent's confidant or emotional support
- [] I sacrificed my childhood to keep the family functioning
- [] I was the "responsible one" or "hero child"
- [] I felt guilty when I wasn't solving family problems
- [] My parent(s) leaned on me more than age-appropriate
- [] I had to be mature, perfect, or "good" to survive
- [] I wasn't allowed to be a child

Emotional Environment

- [] My feelings were dismissed, minimized, or mocked
- [] I was told I was "too sensitive" or "too emotional"
- [] I learned to hide my true feelings
- [] Showing vulnerability was punished or used against me
- [] Nobody asked how I was feeling or what I needed
- [] My emotional needs were seen as burdensome
- [] I learned that other people's feelings mattered more than mine
- [] There was no safe person to talk to about problems
- [] I was blamed for others' emotions or problems
- [] Comfort and affection were inconsistent or absent

Boundaries & Autonomy

- [] Privacy was not respected in my family
- [] I had little control over my own choices or life

- [] My parents were enmeshed (overly involved in my life)
- [] I was not allowed to express disagreement or individuality
- [] My boundaries were violated or laughed at
- [] I was told I was selfish for having needs
- [] I was punished for saying "no"
- [] My personal space or belongings were not respected
- [] I learned that boundaries hurt or offend people
- [] Independence was discouraged or punished

PART 3: Birth Order & Family Role

Birth Order

Check your birth position and common associated patterns:

Oldest Child:

- [] I was the responsible, reliable one
- [] I set the example and protected younger siblings
- [] I bore the weight of family expectations
- [] I became a "third parent" in the family
- [] I felt pressure to be perfect or achieve

Middle Child:

- [] I was the peacekeeper or mediator
- [] I felt overlooked or invisible
- [] I adapted to others' needs to get attention
- [] I struggled to find my identity

- [] I learned to be flexible and accommodating

Youngest Child:

- [] I was overprotected or babied
- [] Others did things for me that I should have learned
- [] I felt I never measured up to older siblings
- [] I learned to charm or manipulate to get needs met
- [] I was the mascot who kept things light

Only Child:

- [] I bore all parental expectations alone
- [] I was my parent's confidant or best friend
- [] I learned to entertain or care for adults
- [] I felt intense pressure to succeed or make parents proud
- [] I had difficulty with boundaries between parent and child

Family Role You Played

- [] **The Hero/Responsible One** — held family together, achieved to bring pride
- [] **The Caretaker** — took care of everyone's emotional and physical needs
- [] **The Peacemaker** — prevented or resolved conflict, kept everyone happy
- [] **The Lost Child** — stayed quiet, avoided causing problems, went unnoticed
- [] **The Scapegoat** — blamed for family problems, acted out family dysfunction
- [] **The Mascot** — used humor and charm to distract from family pain

- [] **The Mediator** — translated between family members, managed communication

PART 4: Trauma & Significant Life Experiences

Childhood Trauma

- [] Physical abuse
- [] Sexual abuse
- [] Emotional or verbal abuse
- [] Witnessing domestic violence
- [] Severe bullying
- [] Loss of a parent (death, divorce, abandonment)
- [] Childhood illness or disability (my own or sibling's)
- [] Poverty or homelessness
- [] Frequent moves or instability
- [] Traumatic events (accidents, natural disasters, violence)

Attachment & Abandonment Experiences

- [] Inconsistent or unpredictable parenting
- [] A parent who was emotionally unavailable
- [] Early separation from primary caregiver
- [] Multiple caregivers or foster placements
- [] Parental abandonment or rejection
- [] Never feeling securely loved or safe
- [] Fear of abandonment that started in childhood

- [] Anxious, avoidant, or disorganized attachment patterns

Adult Relationship History

- [] Previous relationships with addicts or alcoholics
- [] Previous relationships with narcissists or emotionally abusive people
- [] Pattern of choosing unavailable or troubled partners
- [] History of being cheated on or betrayed
- [] Abusive romantic relationships
- [] Relationships where I did all the emotional labor
- [] Pattern of attracting people who need to be "saved"
- [] Difficulty maintaining healthy relationships

PART 5: Religious & Cultural Background

Religious Upbringing

- [] I was taught that self-sacrifice is the highest virtue
- [] Setting boundaries was considered selfish or sinful
- [] I was taught to submit without question (especially if female)
- [] Suffering and martyrdom were glorified
- [] I learned that my needs don't matter, only serving others
- [] Forgiveness meant staying in harmful relationships
- [] I was taught that I'm fundamentally flawed or sinful
- [] Questioning authority was forbidden
- [] I was shamed for having needs or being "selfish"
- [] Perfect obedience and compliance were required

- [] My religious community enabled dysfunction in families
- [] Divorce or leaving relationships was heavily stigmatized

Cultural Messages

- [] My culture emphasized collectivism over individual needs
- [] Gender roles dictated that I must be a caretaker
- [] Mental health issues were stigmatized or denied
- [] Family reputation was more important than individual wellbeing
- [] Speaking up or setting boundaries brought shame to the family
- [] I was raised with messages about being "nice" at all costs
- [] My culture had strict expectations about duty and obligation
- [] Individual desires were seen as less important than family/community

PART 6: Personality Traits & Temperament

Natural Tendencies

- [] I am highly sensitive to others' emotions and moods
- [] I have strong empathy and feel others' pain deeply
- [] I am naturally nurturing and caring
- [] I am a perfectionist with high standards for myself
- [] I am anxious and worry about things constantly
- [] I need to feel in control to feel safe
- [] I am conflict-averse and fear confrontation
- [] I am loyal to a fault

- I am intuitive and can read people easily
- I put others at ease and make them feel comfortable
- I am reliable and responsible
- I am organized and like to take charge
- I am more comfortable giving than receiving
- I have difficulty trusting others to do things right

PART 7: Current Life Circumstances

Professional/Vocational

- I work in a helping profession (nursing, teaching, counseling, ministry, social work)
- My work culture rewards self-sacrifice and overtime
- I have difficulty setting boundaries at work
- I take on more than my share of responsibilities at work
- I feel guilty taking time off or asking for what I need
- Coworkers or clients depend on me excessively

Current Stressors

- I'm in a relationship with someone with addiction or mental health issues
- I'm dealing with a major loss (death, divorce, job loss)
- I'm experiencing financial stress
- I'm going through a major life transition
- I'm caring for aging parents or sick family members
- I'm isolated and lack healthy support systems

- [] I'm experiencing health problems related to stress

SCORING & INTERPRETATION

Part 1: Current Codependent Behaviors (60 items)

Count your checked items:

- **0-10 items:** You have minimal codependent tendencies. You may have healthy boundaries and balanced relationships.
- **11-25 items:** You have moderate codependent patterns. Consider examining which areas need attention.
- **26-40 items:** You have significant codependent patterns affecting your relationships and wellbeing.
- **41+ items:** You have severe codependent patterns. Professional support is strongly recommended.

Parts 2-7: Contributing Factors

These sections help you understand **why** you developed codependent patterns. High scores here explain vulnerability but don't define your worth.

Key insight: The more risk factors you have from Parts 2-7, the more understandable your codependency is. You developed these patterns for survival and protection.

What Your Results Mean

If You Scored High on Current Behaviors (Part 1):

You're likely experiencing significant distress in relationships. Codependency is affecting your wellbeing, self-worth, and ability to have healthy connections.

Common feelings include:

- Exhaustion from giving so much
- Resentment toward people you help
- Loss of self and identity
- Anxiety about relationships
- Depression or emptiness
- Physical symptoms (headaches, digestive issues, fatigue)

If You Scored High on Contributing Factors (Parts 2-7):

You developed codependent patterns as a **survival mechanism**. These behaviors once protected you, helped you cope, or were your best attempt to get love and safety in difficult circumstances.

This is important: Codependency wasn't a choice. It was an adaptation to circumstances beyond your control.

Red Flags: Seek Professional Help If:

- [] You're in an abusive relationship but feel unable to leave
- [] You're having thoughts of self-harm or suicide
- [] You're experiencing severe anxiety or depression
- [] You've lost your sense of identity completely
- [] You're using substances to cope
- [] Your physical health is suffering
- [] You feel hopeless about change
- [] You're isolated from friends and family
- [] You're enabling someone's addiction or destructive behavior
- [] Your children are affected by your relationship patterns

The Path to Recovery

Understanding Your Patterns

Codependency recovery involves:

1. **Recognizing the patterns** — awareness is the first step
2. **Understanding the origins** — having compassion for why you developed these patterns
3. **Grieving your losses** — the childhood, safety, or love you deserved but didn't receive
4. **Learning about healthy relationships** — what normal, reciprocal relationships look like
5. **Developing boundaries** — protecting your time, energy, feelings, and identity
6. **Building self-worth** — learning you have value beyond what you do for others
7. **Practicing self-care** — prioritizing your own needs without guilt
8. **Healing trauma** — working through past wounds with professional support
9. **Choosing healthier relationships** — surrounding yourself with reciprocal, respectful people
10. **Finding your authentic self** — discovering who you are outside of your roles

Resources for Recovery

Therapy approaches that help:

- Individual therapy with a codependency specialist
- Group therapy or support groups (CoDA - Codependents Anonymous)

- Attachment-based therapy
- Trauma therapy (EMDR, IFS, Somatic Experiencing)
- Family systems therapy
- Cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT)

Books to explore:

- "Codependent No More" by Melody Beattie
- "Boundaries" by Henry Cloud and John Townsend
- "The New Codependency" by Melody Beattie
- "Facing Codependence" by Pia Mellody
- "Women Who Love Too Much" by Robin Norwood

Support groups:

- CoDA (Codependents Anonymous)
- Al-Anon (for families of alcoholics)
- Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACA)
- Online support communities

Words of Hope

Your codependency does not define you.

The traits that made you vulnerable—your empathy, sensitivity, loyalty, caring nature, and desire to help—are not flaws. They are beautiful qualities that were exploited or misdirected.

Recovery doesn't mean becoming:

- Selfish or uncaring
- Cold or disconnected

- Unwilling to help others
- Independent to the point of isolation

Recovery means learning to:

- Care for yourself as much as you care for others
- Give from a full cup, not an empty one
- Choose relationships where love flows both ways
- Know the difference between helping and enabling
- Set boundaries without guilt
- Say "no" without feeling like a bad person
- Be valued for who you are, not just what you do

You deserve:

- To be loved for who you are, not what you provide
- Relationships where you can be yourself
- To have needs and have them matter
- To rest without guilt
- To be imperfect and still be worthy
- To receive as much as you give
- To take up space in your own life

Remember: Recognizing codependency isn't a judgment—it's an invitation. An invitation to reclaim yourself, to heal, and to discover what it feels like to live authentically, with healthy boundaries and genuine connection.

You are worthy of love, just as you are.

If you recognized yourself in this checklist, please be gentle with yourself. Change takes time, and you don't have to do it alone. Consider reaching out to a therapist, joining a support group, or confiding in a trusted friend. Recovery is possible, and you deserve to live free from these patterns.