

ARE YOU IN A CO-DEPENDANT RELATIONSHIP?



Co-dependancy characteristics

Mel Youngman

A co-dependant person plans the majority of their life around another person, sacrificing their own needs and prioritising the needs of the other over their own. In fact, over time, their 'needs' become needing to be needed by the other person. This person sometimes becomes an enabler of the other which is in turn reinforced by the reliance of the other person to meet their needs.

A co-dependant relationship is much more complex and extreme than simply being in a relationship with someone who could commonly be described as "needy".

The difficulty for both parties involved is the cyclical nature of the co-dependancy. In its simplest form: one person's desire to be needed and the others reliance/belief that their purpose is to meet those needs.



It is a relationship dynamic which is severely imbalanced with both parties (to a greater or lesser degree) believing they need the other to feel 'whole'. In a dependant relationship there is a mutual reliance on each other for love and support whilst maintaining interests/relationships outside of this. In a co-dependant relationship, the co-dependant only feels valued/worthiness if they feel needed by the other.

It is a relationship based on fear and avoidance. Fear of not having the internal resources to be able to cope with day to day life and avoidance of facing intrinsic personal issues around lack of value and low self-worth.

The good news is that it is possible to begin to make changes and to recognise and value the 'whole' person you already are and to begin to connect with the infinite number of inner-resources you already possess (and can add to) in order to grow and thrive.

Co-dependancy usually occurs as a result of believing that our needs are secondary to others - I believe that by acknowledging and valuing ourselves as individuals whilst offering ourselves compassion and kindness we can begin to take steps towards learning to truly love who we are.