

Celebrate Recovery of Allen

Recovery from Codependency

On the surface, codependency sounds like “Christian teaching.” Codependents always put others first before taking care of themselves. (Aren’t Christians to put others first?) Codependents give themselves away. (Shouldn’t Christians do the same?) Codependents martyr themselves. (Christianity honors its martyrs.)

As a codependent, you:

- Assume responsibility for others’ feelings and behaviors
- Feel guilty about others’ feelings and behaviors
- Have difficulty identifying what you are feeling
- Have difficulty expressing feelings
- Are afraid of your own anger, yet sometimes erupt in rage
- Worry about how others may respond to your feelings, opinions, and behavior
- Have difficulty making decisions
- Are afraid of being hurt and/or rejected by others
- Minimize, alter or deny how you truly feel
- Are very sensitive to how others are feeling and feel the same
- Are afraid to express differing opinions or feeling
- Value others opinions and feelings more than your own
- Put other people’s needs and desires before your own
- Embarrassed to receive recognition and praise, or gifts
- Judge everything you think, say, or do harshly, as never “good enough”
- Are a perfectionist
- Are extremely loyal, remaining in harmful situations too long
- Do not ask others to meet your needs or desires
- Do not perceive yourself as lovable and worthwhile
- Compromise your own values and integrity to avoid rejection or others’ anger

In its broadest sense, codependency can be defined as an addiction to people, behaviors or things. Codependency is the fallacy of trying to control interior feelings by controlling people, things, and events on the outside. To the codependent, control or the lack of it is central to every aspect of life.

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The Solution

Jesus taught the value of the individual. He said we are to love others equal to ourselves, not more than ourselves. The love of self forms the basis for loving others. The differences between a life of service and codependency take several forms. Motivation differs. Does the individual give himself and his service freely or because he considers himself to be of no value? Does he seek to “please people?” Does he act out of guilt and fear? Does he act out of a need to be needed (which means he actually uses the other person to meet his own needs; the “helpee” becomes an object to help the helper achieve his own goals).

- Codependents learn to gain self-worth through Jesus Christ
- Christianity (The Bible) teaches that a person has worth simply because they are created by God
- Your self-worth is not based on the work you do or the service you perform
- Service is to be an active choice. Codependents learn to “act” rather than “react”
- Codependents allow healthy Christian service to bring joy
- Christian faith calls for balanced living and taking care of yourself
- Codependents learn to choose balanced behavior rather than addictive behavior and to allow others to be in charge of their own lives
- Codependents learn to live balanced lives; taking responsibility for their own health and well-being
- Codependents learn how to set and hold healthy boundaries and to set limits for themselves, not allowing others to compromise those boundaries
- Codependents learn to help others in appropriate ways, by allowing others to act independently, rather than making others dependent on them
- Codependents learn to be God-directed and be free from compulsiveness, knowing that God brings the ultimate results

Some have arrived at this crossroad. One road, a soft road, lures you on to further despair, illness, ruin, and in some cases, mental institutions, prison, or suicide. The other road, a more challenging road, leads to self-respect, solvency, healing, and personal fulfillment. We urge you to take the first difficult step onto the more solid road now.

Twelve Steps and their Biblical Comparisons

- 1. We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors. That our lives had become unmanageable.** *“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.” (Romans 7:18)*
- 2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.** *“For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.” (Philippians 2:13)*
- 3. We made a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God.** *“Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship.” (Romans 12:1)*
- 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.** *“Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD.” (Lamentations 3:40)*

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- 5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.** *“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)*
- 6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.** *“Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.” (James 4:10)*
- 7. We humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings.** *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*
- 8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.** *“Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)*
- 9. We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.** *“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23-24)*
- 10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.** *“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12)*
- 11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out.** *“Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.” (Colossians 3:16)*
- 12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.** *“Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)*

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