

## The Problem

We are codependent because we allow the behavior of another person to affect our behavior so that we become consumed with that person and their problems. This obsession with the issues and problems of others becomes debilitating to us as we exhaust inordinate and inappropriate amounts of mental and emotional energy over them, leaving little, if any, energy for ourselves. Control is also a major symptom. To the codependent, control or the lack of it is central to every aspect of life. We seek to control our emotions, other people & circumstances.

Often our childhood was so chaotic and our environments were so out of control, we learned ways to escape to try to find serenity. As we grew into adulthood, we worked hard at trying to control our external environment, believing it was the key to our happiness and inner peace. Our family of origin was frequently dysfunctional. Sometimes we even blamed ourselves for our parent's problems. If we were terrorized by a volatile alcoholic parent, anger became an unacceptable and unwelcomed guest in our lives. Anger was to be avoided at all costs. As a result, we learned to appease; we learned to rescue. We learned to be aware of others' feelings in order to protect ourselves and began to lose touch with our own feelings. We made ourselves responsible for the happiness of others, and when they weren't happy, neither were we.

We are extremely loyal but also extremely insecure. Self-doubt and/or self-hatred are our constant companions. Being unacceptable to ourselves, we hide our true selves, convinced that if anyone truly knew us, they would abandon us. This fear of abandonment often fuels our codependent behavior as we seek to do everything in our power to become so valuable that others would not want to leave us. By choice, our lives are not our own and our emotions are the property of those closest to us giving others control over us.

### Symptoms / Compliance Patterns:

- Assume responsibility for other people's feelings and choices.
- Feel guilty about others' feelings and behaviors.
- Have difficulty identifying what we are feeling & expressing our feelings.
- Are afraid of our own anger, yet sometimes erupt in rage.
- Worry how others may respond to our feelings, opinions & actions.
- Have difficulty making decisions without approval or permission of others.
- Intense fear of being hurt and/or rejected by others.
- Minimize, alter or deny how we truly feel.
- Over-sensitive to how others feel & often take on their feelings.
- Are afraid to express differing /opposing opinions or feelings.

- Value other people's opinions and feelings more than our own.
- Put other people's needs and desires before our own.
- Overly embarrassed to receive recognition and praise or gifts.
- Critically judge what we think, say, or do, as never "*good enough*."
- Tend to be perfectionists.
- Are extremely loyal, even to our own hurt.
- Do not / cannot ask others to meet our needs or desires.
- Do not perceive ourselves as lovable and worthwhile.
- Compromise our own values & integrity to avoid rejection & anger.

## The Solution

- Codependents learn to gain their identity and self-worth through Jesus Christ and the truth in His Word; to be God-pleasers vs Man-pleasers.
- We learn self-worth is not based on work or service performed. Healthy service is an active choice that brings joy vs. mental exhaustion, resentment &/or fear.
- We learn to "act" rather than "react."
- We learn Christian marriages, relationships and service must be a balance of giving and receiving.
- We learn to allow others to be in charge of their own lives including their own choices and consequences.
- We learn to take responsibility for our own health and well-being.
- We learn to let go of the "need to know," and choose to live our own lives.
- We learn how to set and hold healthy boundaries, not allowing others to compromise or violate those boundaries.
- We learn to help others in appropriate ways, by allowing others to act independently. We allow others to do for themselves what they are capable of doing for themselves.
- We learn to be free from the compulsion to fix others.

## A Definition of Codependent Sobriety

Codependent sobriety is somewhat different in nature in that our addiction is relational in nature. Therefore, we define codependent sobriety as a faithful commitment to establishing and maintaining healthy boundaries, not actively controlling or manipulating others, not giving unsolicited advice, rescuing others from the natural consequences of their actions, not losing ourselves in the lives or crises of others and more importantly not basing our concept of well-being or self-worth on the opinions and approval of others.

## Small Group Guidelines:

1. Please keep your sharing focused on your own thoughts and feelings. Limit your sharing to 3 to 5 minutes.
2. No cross talk please. Cross talk is when two individuals engage in conversation, excluding all others. Each person is free to express his or her feelings without interruptions.
3. We are here to support one another, not 'fix' one another.
4. Anonymity and confidentiality are basic requirements. What is shared in the group stays in the group. The only exception is when someone threatens to injure themselves or others.
5. Offensive language has no place in a Christ-centered recovery group.

*~ There is Always HOPE for Healing from  
all of life's Hurts, Habits & Hang-ups ~*

### We Meet Every Monday

5:30-6:15 pm	Dinner in Hillside Café
6:30-7:30 pm	Large Group Meeting (Worship, Lesson or Personal testimony)
7:30-8:20 pm	Open Share Small Groups
8:30-9:00 pm	Cross Talk Café (Fellowship, coffee, dessert)

# CODEPENDENCY

## The Problem and Solution



# CELEBRATE RECOVERY

EVERY MONDAY NIGHT  
HENDERSON HILLS BAPTIST CHURCH  
1100 E. I-35 Frontage Rd., Edmond  
405.513.7472  
[www.moj.com/recovery](http://www.moj.com/recovery)