Welcome brochure

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Welcome to the Agnostic, Humanist, and Atheist Codependency Support Group! We are glad you’ve found us! We are a group of people gathered together to support one another in our efforts to cope with and overcome codependency. We share with each other our experiences and learnings as we grow in online meetings and in online support forums. We are an all volunteer organization funded by the members. As our name states, we are focused on building a community and resources for people who seek an alternative to traditional codependency recovery. While we have this mission in mind, we also promote tolerance. We do not want to replicate the exclusivity of traditional groups and their narrow view of recovery from codependency that requires members to hold particular beliefs. We seek to empower the individual to find the path and set of beliefs that works best for them and do not seek to promote a single required belief, rather embracing all the ways there are to look at the world in general and codependency in particular.

What is Codependency?

Codependency has never been adopted by the psychology community as a formal condition with criteria for diagnosis and a set of proposed remedies. Rather, the global community of codependents has, over the last half a century, developed our own criteria, descriptions, and solutions built from the countless hours of sharing our experiences. In the beginning, researches and recovery experts noticed that partners of alcoholics and addicts developed a condition that they described as being co-dependent on alcohol, as though they also exhibits characteristics similar to their partners who were literally dependent on alcohol. Many people mistakenly believe that codependency means being overly dependent on a partner, and while that may be true in some cases, it is not the original meaning of the term. While many codependents have experienced the development of the condition as a result of a relationship with a person struggling with alcohol or drugs, we have learned over the years that many other circumstances can cause a person to develop codependency; a partner with unattended mental health issues, patterns of abuse, or plain immaturity can also give rise to codependency. Many codependents have found that adverse experiences in their childhood caused them to develop coping behaviors that are the basis for codependency in adulthood. In their relationships, codependents often find themselves relying on others for approval, for their identity, and for their sense of self-worth. They will often sacrifice their own needs and well-being to meet the needs of others. Codependents often lose their own identity as their thoughts become consumed with others and their behavior, forgetting to care for themselves, losing track of their own interests and friendships, spending increasing amounts of time worrying about and attending the needs of the others. Quite often, codependents suffer increasing amounts of distress as their own needs go unmet and the demands or unpredictability of others grows. Codependents often feel an intense need to control others and their environment in attempts to improve their sense of wellbeing which they have centered in others. They may have difficulty setting boundaries, or may have very few boundaries with others at all. Codependents in the later stages of suffering may have dreadfully low self-esteem and often struggle with overwhelming negative self-talk. These are not the only characteristics of codependency but are a baseline set of conditions that most codependents have found in their lives at some point.

Codependency is a characteristic of an individual, not a relationship. A person need not be in a relationship to be codependent. A single person can be a codependent; codependency needs no object. A person can still be centered in others without dating or marriage; they may develop codependency as a result of a friendship, a family member, or even with a stranger. The root of codependency is within; pain from losses in our childhood pervades all our relationships until we begin to recover and heal from the trauma.