

Wants and Needs (Self Care)

What are they?

From ***Facing Codependence*** by Pia Mellody, Andrea Miller, & J. Keith Miller

- Needs are defined as the basic needs that are required to survive
 - All people have dependency needs
 - Adults are responsible for knowing how to address each need
 - Some needs like physical nurturing or emotional nurturing can only be met through interaction with another person
- Wants are the preferences, items or goals we look to include in our life
 - Some wants are large and shape many life choices and direction
 - "I want to be married to this person"
 - "I want to have a child"
 - "I want to be a doctor"
 - Some wants are small and make up a few choices and express our preference
 - "I want Mexican food tonight"
 - "I want to sit down"
- Wants and needs become apparent as we bring our Reality and Boundaries into Relationships

What is the issue?

- Codependents have difficulty meeting their own wants and needs
- This can become evident in some different ways
 - Too Dependent
 - I am aware of my needs and wants, but I expect other people to take care of them for me.
 - Anti Dependent
 - I am aware of my needs and wants, but I am unwilling to accept help meeting them from anyone else.
 - Wantless and Needless
 - I am not aware of my needs and wants
 - I get my wants and needs confused

What does it look like?

- Sharing our Reality and Boundaries in a relationship allows us to connect with the other person, which is a innate need we all have
- There are three ways that sharing of our Reality and Boundaries can look

- Interdependent

- Two overlapping circles
 - Each circle has portions that are separate
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- Allows both people to have their own sense of self (Reality)
- Allows both people to understand they are separate from the other (Boundaries)
- Allows both people to share their chosen wants and needs with another (Connection)

- Anti-Dependent

- Two separate circles
 - Each circle is completely separate
- Allows both people to have their own sense of self (Reality)
- Allows both people to understand they are separate from the other (Boundaries)
- Does not allow both people to share their chosen wants and needs with another (Connection)

- Enmeshed

- One oval
 - There is no clear definition of where one circle stops and another begins
- Does not allow both people to have their own sense of self (Reality)
- Does not allow both people to understand they are separate from the other (Boundaries)
- Does not allow both people to share their chosen wants and needs with another (Connection)

Skills for developing our Wants and Needs

- Work on your vulnerability
 - Decide if the person is safe
 - Decide what wants and needs you are willing to share with them
 - Be willing to feel the fear when sharing those wants and needs you choose to share
 - Work on trusting yourself to handle what the other person does with your shared reality

- Work on independence
 - Decide what wants and needs you feel you are responsible for meeting
 - Ask for help identifying what items you can meet yourself
 - Start taking steps to meet those wants and needs yourself

- Work on understanding your wants and needs
 - Work on developing your Reality and Boundaries
 - This will naturally start to develop your sense of your own wants and needs
 - Practice deciding what your wants are in low pressure situations
 - Begin to express the wants and needs you are willing to share
 - Understand the other person may not be used to hearing your wants and needs