

Families and Addiction

An addiction destroys the families as much as it destroys individuals. Living with an addict is both heartbreaking and exhausting. Family members are torn between how to help the addict and how to avoid being sucked into the addict's world. It is important for the family members to be aware of their role in the addiction process.



The 3 C's of Dealing with an Addict:

- You didn't **cause** the addiction.
- You can't **control** the addiction.
- You can't **cure** the addiction

Codependency

Codependent relationships are a type of dysfunctional helping relationship where one person supports or enables another person's addiction, poor mental health, immaturity, irresponsibility, or under-achievement.

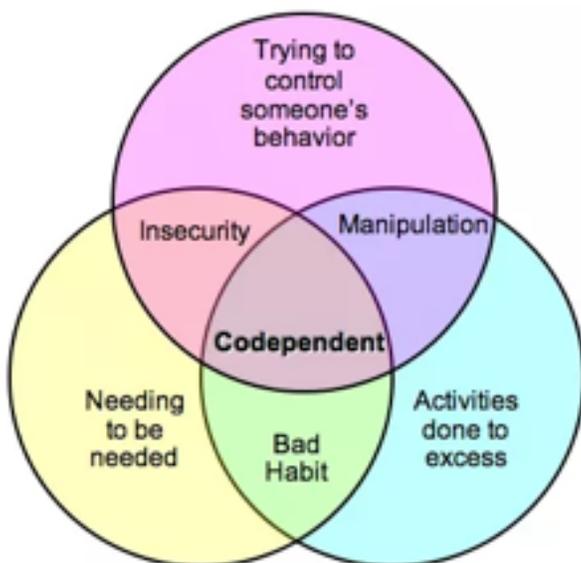
How to avoid codependency:

- Set firm boundaries
- Do not enable
- Spend time with family and friends.

Resources for Families:

- al-anon.org (for family members of alcoholics)
- nar-anon.org (for family members of addicts)
- gam-anon.org (for family members of gamblers)
- coda.org (for codependent individuals)
- adultchildren.org (for adult children of alcoholics)

Facets of Codependency



Someone else's happiness being your happiness is not love, it's dependency. Too often we confuse codependency with love. Be your own person and find your own happy.

SUPPORT THE RECOVERY PROCESS

Resources for treatment centers:

Gateway Foundation: (800) 971-4673

Rosecrance: (888) 928-5278

Timberline Knolls: (855) 855-7265

New Hope Recovery Center: (808) 707-4673

Hazeldon Treatment Center: (312) 943-3534

Alexian Brothers: (847) 882-1600



Things you can do for yourself:

- Take care of yourself. Living with an addict is exhausting. You also need time to recover.
- Avoid self-blame. You can't control another person's decisions and you can't force them to change.
- Do not work harder than the person you are trying to help.
- Being a caretaker is not good for you or the addict. Understand that there is only so much you can do to change another person.
- Ask for help, talk to a professional, or join a support group.
- Do not argue with the addict when they are under the influence

Things you can do for the addict:

- Behave exactly as you would if your loved one had a serious medical illness. What would you do if they were diagnosed with heart disease or cancer?
- Educate yourself on addiction and recovery.
- Try not to accuse or judge. Avoid name-calling. This is a difficult time for both of you.
- Provide a sober environment that reduces triggers for using.
- Allow the addict time to go to meetings.
- Understand that your lives will change. Be supportive by creating a new life together where it is easier to not use drugs or alcohol.
- Encourage the addict to find alternative ways to relax and escape given that people use drugs and alcohol for these reasons.
- Do not enable. Do not find excuses or cover up for the addict.
- Remember that your loved one may have to try many times to quit
- Practice the paradox of "loving disengagement" (refer to al-anon.org for more information)

addictionsandrecovery.org

Book Resources:

- "It Will Never Happen To Me" by Claudia Black
- "Codependent No More" by Melody Beattie
- "Getting them Sober" by Toby Rice Drews