

The Life of a Co-Dependent
by
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LOG LINE: A reflective documentary discussing the emotional and psychological troubles that arise when women become stuck in a romantically codependent relationship.

Video

Audio

FADE UP ON...

INT. HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - DAY

The MEDICAL WAITING room is bright with open windows. There is hardly any patients except for a row of YOUNG ADULTS who are SEATED against a freshly painted wall.

CAMERA PANS: Revealing a young BUSINESS WOMAN wearing a BRIGHT BLUE DRESS. Her PURSE is tucked under her arm while her LAPTOP is sitting on her knees. (As the word is read, a PINK CHECK MARK is show above her head)

NEXT PAN: A HETEROSEXUAL COUPLE is revealed. The MAN is wearing a GRAY BAND-SHIRT and DENIM JEANS. Next to him sits his GIRLFRIEND with the same GRAY BAND-SHIRT. They are holding hands. While the GIRLFRIEND gets up to leave, the BOYFRIEND gets up to follow. (As the word is read, a red X mark is shown individually above the male and female)

LAST PAN: A HETEROSEXUAL COUPLE is presented. The MAN is UNSHAVED and wearing DIRTY T-SHIRT. The WOMAN is wearing a PROFESSIONAL SUIT JACKET with a PURPLE DRESS. The Man winces out of frustration. He mutters profanity under his breath which triggers the female to slip him a FLASK of LIQUOR. (As the word is read, a RUBBER STAMP is revealed and is pressed above the couples' heads, almost like a bad omen.)

<EASY LISTENING MUSIC>

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.)
THROUGHOUT:

From a young age we learn that we are categorized. As we get older we understand that these classifications can become stereotypes, which trickle into our relationship statuses.

Independent...

Dependent...

These textbook terms represent whether someone will or will not have a successful relationship.... Amongst all three of these terms lays a fundamental word that could change the course of a stagnant relationship if it is brought to light.

Co-Dependent...

Image of a RED TRAFFIC SIGN with the words 'DO NOT ENTER'

The red traffic sign dissolves into a MOVING IMAGE of a DESERT. The desert transforms into a GARDEN.

Image of the RED TRAFFIC SIGN repairs but then dissolves into a DEAD END SIGN.

BLACK SCREEN

EXT. FANTASY GARDEN - DAY

A WOMAN takes the hand of a MALE SILHOUETTE both of them are basking in the moment while walking down a path. CU of the woman frowning as the SILHOUETTE begins to pull her off path onto a forest full of SNAKES and into a SWAMP with LEACHES.

BLACK SCREEN

TEXT Insert:

"A Healthy Relationship Doesn't drag you down. It inspires you to be a better person."

-MANDY HALE

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.) CONT'D:

A 'stop do not pass' option may arrive many times in an unhealthy relationship.

For someone with confidence in themselves, it may seem simple... Do not pass but move on to something better...

For someone with insecurities the 'Do not pass sign' may be changed to 'Don't worry, it will one day get better'.

<SFX of birds chirping and wind blowing>

As soon as someone continues into a relationship after that gut wrenching 'not sure about this guy', the only other option would be to make the best with what you have. In that moment of vulnerability and unsureness, co-dependency might sneak up and become a new way of being reliant on someone that doesn't have the means to support you...

"A Healthy Relationship Doesn't drag you down. It inspires you to be a better person."

-MANDY HALE

INT. HOME COMPUTER - NIGHT

A WOMAN is sitting at her HOME COMPUTER typing into her SEARCH ENGINE the word 'codependency'. XCU: Co-Dependency being TYPED in a SEARCH ENGINE.

COMPUTER MOUSE ICON clicks on a WEBSTER DICTIONARY LINK

Definition is opened and zoomed on...

TEXT INSERT: a psychological condition in which someone is in an unhappy and unhealthy relationship that involves living with and providing care for another person

INT. HOME - NIGHT

Same WOMAN is hard at work with her CHOCOLATE business. PAPER ORDERS are sprawled across the floor and chocolate is in need of being wrapped. XLS reveals that her BOYFRIEND is lazy on the couch and uninterested with helping her the finish the orders.

A list of countless online resources related to co-dependency. A COMPUTER MOUSE ICON clicks on one of the likes listed. The name of the site MHA MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA.

The page scrolls down half way until it reaches a the specific text

Text ON COMPUTER SCREEN: The problem is that these repeated rescue attempts allow the needy individual to continue on a destructive course and to become even more dependent on the unhealthy care-taking of the

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.) CONT'D:

At this point you may be wondering what a Co-Dependent looks like and whether or not it may be something that you are experience now or may have gone through in your past.

According to the Mariam Webster Dictionary.. Co-Dependency is:

a psychological condition in which someone is in an unhappy and unhealthy relationship that involves living with and providing care for another person

This definition brings up important guidelines when looking at a romantic relationship. First it presents that the person who behaving in a co-dependent stance, is not happy in the relationship. Secondly.. the Co-dependent partner is providing care for their significant other who does not live a life of complete independence.

There are countless resources online that explain and sometimes over explain the complexities of a Co-Dependent. Sometimes the information shown will inspire or uplift a individual who faces Co-Dependency. Awareness is key when learning how to grow apart from a Co-Dependency...

Pause.

The problem is that these repeated rescue attempts allow the needy individual to continue on a destructive course and to become even more dependent on the unhealthy care-taking of the

TEXT ON COMPUTER SCREEN CONT'D:

"benefactor." As this reliance increases, the co-dependent develops a sense of reward and satisfaction from "being needed." When the care-taking becomes compulsive, the co-dependent feels choice-less and helpless in the relationship, but is unable to break away from the cycle of behavior that causes it. Co-dependents view themselves as victims and are attracted to that same weakness in the love and friendship relationships.

COMPUTER MOUSE continues to SCROLL down the page on the MHA MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA WEBSITE for CO-DEPENDENCY. The SCROLLING is completed once the page has landed on *Characteristics of Co-dependent People* LIST.

The entire list is shown but only significant characteristics are shown and read.

TEXT COMPUTER SCREEN:

- A tendency to confuse love and pity, with the tendency to "love" people they can pity and rescue
- A tendency to do more than their share, all of the time
- A tendency to become hurt when people don't recognize their efforts
- An extreme need for approval and recognition
- Lack of trust in self and/or others
- Problems with intimacy/boundaries
- Difficulty making decisions

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.) CONT'D:

"benefactor." As this reliance increases, the co-dependent develops a sense of reward and satisfaction from "being needed." When the care-taking becomes compulsive, the co-dependent feels choice-less and helpless in the relationship, but is unable to break away from the cycle of behavior that causes it. Co-dependents view themselves as victims and are attracted to that same weakness in the love and friendship relationships.

What has been presented are the Fundamental behaviors that portray a Co-Dependent person.

Amongst these specific definitions lay significant characteristics that speak volumes when determining if Co-Dependency is something that you may be experiencing.

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INT. APRIL'S OFFICE ROOM - DAY

APRIL, 35, is sitting in her OFFICE CHAIR with a CUP of COFFEE and LAPTOP in front of her. she speaks directly to her OFF CAMERA interviewer almost as if she's speaking to a client in need of support.

MS OF TALKING APRIL FAASEN:
TEXT ON BOTTOM RIGHT CORNER:
April Faasen
Relationship Therapist

EXT. PARK - AFTERNOON

woman sitting hunched over on a PARK BENCH crying with her face in her hands.

MALE SILHOUETTE stands next the woman and holds his hand out.

The woman hesitates at first but gradually reaches out her hand to begin a journey with him.

INT. OFFICE SPACE - DAY

JOYCE, 38, sits relaxed on her OFFICE CHAIR which has been repositioned from behind her DESK to SIT comfortably next to her personalized LIVING ROOM. She speaks to the CAMERA as if peering into the eyes of one of her clients.

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF JOYCE THROUGHOUT:

TEXT ON BOTTOM RIGHT CORNER:
Joyce Davidson
College Counselor

<SOFT MUSIC OF - BACH CELLO SUITE NO.1 in G>

April FAASEN (O.S.): What if men and women want to be in a relationship because there is something in themselves that they don't want to face... In this case, entering into a romantic relationship might enhance insecurities. Which is why finding someone with insecurities themselves helps to form a common ground or bond, whether it's healthy or not.

JOYCE DAVIDSON (O.S.): It is very important for both women and men to know the signs of a co-dependent relationship. Now days... young people tend to want to reach out and help someone that they love. . . Family members and friends are different because you are able to distance yourself from them.

A bond is created when a dependent partner recognizes that they will be taken care of... the bond will pull both individuals closer...

If substance abuse is the underlining factor that brings two people together there is a possibility that one romantic partner will fall into a co-dependent role.

Huge problems can arise when someone has become addicted to needing someone else. In this case a man and/or woman in a relationship will do whatever it takes to keep their addicted partner happy.

Joyce ON SCREEN CONT'D:

BLACK SCREEN

TEXT: Enabling Poor Health Choices

BLACK SCREEN

INT. APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

AMY, 27, is sitting on CHAIR close to her BEDROOM WINDOW. She is wearing BLACK SLACKS with a BUSINESS CASUAL WORK-SHIRT. Her posture is not slouched but still realized. She speaks with a hint of inspiration.

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF AMY THROUGHOUT:

JOYCE DAVIDSON (O.S.) CONT'D:
it takes to make sure that they support their dependent partner, to avoid dealing with their own insecurities.

Pause.

AMY: I was an enabler... I helped to keep my alcoholic boyfriend dependent on me to support his habits. It took me two years before I released that I was the reason for continuing into a relationships with a man that could not support me in the way that I needed.

Everything that I had aspired to be and had hoped for were put aside just so that I could be there for a man that needed more help than I could offer.

(saddened voice)

My self esteem was false. It was built up solely on the fact that I felt important in my boyfriend's life. I continued to take him back no matter how badly he treated me. He verbally abused me, he physically abused me... I would go to work with bruises on my arms and sometimes had a black eye. All of my down moments outweighed my up moments with him. I was unhappy... but I continued to live this life that I had created... I started to believe the lies that he fed me. . how I would never meet anyone better. How he needed me and if I left then he would kill himself. So I stayed... I was unhappy but I stayed... I took him back. Even though I could have been happier without him.

BLACK SCREEN

TEXT: Enabling Financial
Codependency

BLACK SCREEN

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY

KIMBERLY, 30, sits relaxed on a COUCH inside of her LIVING ROOM. She is dressed comfortably in a PURPLE T-SHIRT with BLACK WORK OUT PANTS. Her HAIR is pulled back in a PONY TAIL.

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF
KIMBERLY THROUGHOUT:

Pause.

KIMBERLY: I was in a two year financially codependent relationship... It didn't start of that way. When my boyfriend and I were still dating, he was financial dependent, so I thought. He would take me out to dinner, spoil me with gifts, drive me to places that I had never been before. It wasn't until I started dating him that I realized he wasn't as financially stable as I had thought.

He didn't have his own bank account. I didn't think much about it... we both were in our early twenties... So i just felt that it was something that wouldn't be a huge thing to fix.

But then he lost his job. . . and after time I had become the one that offered to pay for dates and even his gas. His lack of financial responsibility had become my little project. I actually enjoyed being their for him financially. I offered to pay for his gas, I bought him a significant amount of clothing to help out his wardrobe, and I continued to offer to pay for any dates that we went on. In my mind, I was being a blessing and felt that anything positive that I helped him with would just come back towards me in the end.

Well I was wrong... It took two years for me to realize that his financial goal and habits were opposite of mine and that if I wished to be with someone to lift me up, I would have to learn to not crave the desire to help my romantic partner.

INT. LIVING ROOM - DAY CONT'D

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD
THROUGHOUT:

KIMBERLY CONT'D: It took me a time long time to realize that I had entered into a unhealthy relationship... I wasn't happy, yet I continued to convince myself that I was happy by feeding into an idea that helping my boyfriend was that thing that gave me happiness. However my truth was quite different, helping my boyfriend only hid my discouragement about my relationship.

The reason why I stayed was because I was insecure. I didn't need the relationship but somehow I convinced myself that it was beneficial to me and that helping others was my calling. Little did I realize that I was causing harm more than I was supporting him.

INT. APRIL'S OFFICE ROOM --DAY

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD
THROUGHOUT:

APRIL FAASEN: When we attempt to help another person financially, we are denying them the opportunity to grow from their own financial situations. We enable them to rely on us financially. Unless the pattern of financial codependency stops, it becomes a financial enmeshment that is difficult to change...

The co-dependent must identify and embrace his or her feelings and needs. This may include learning to say "no," to be loving yet tough, and learning to be self-reliant.

It's important to recognize codependent behavior in yourself. You have what it takes to not only get the help and support that you need but to also grow and move on from any negative experience.

Knowledge is power. Knowledge is the first step to take when deciding a better life for yourself.

INT. JOYCE'S OFFICE SPACE - DAY

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF
JOYCE THROUGHOUT:

JOYCE DAVIDSON: Even though it may seem that supporting someone else's behavior is what makes you a stronger or better person.. that is far from the truth.

You are a strong person even absent from the situation you are in.

The best that you can do for yourself is to recognize that strength and begin to walk towards a future that embraces it.

Don't loose heart of the person that you want to be... move towards that because if you continue to let go then it might taken even longer to break free from the toxic relationship that never ceased to hold you back.

INT. AMY'S APARTMENT BEDROOM - DAY

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF
AMY THROUGHOUT:

Amy: It took a while for me to accept my situation and forgive myself. Forgiving myself was the first step I had to take to gain confidence in my self again.

I believe that if any codependent person recognizes that the void in their life and forgives themselves for filling it with negativity, then healing can take place...

INT. KIMBERLY'S HOME - DAY

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF
KIMBERLY THROUGHOUT:

KIMBERLY: Healing from a codependent relationship takes time. The best thing that a codependent can do for themselves, is to take special time to take care of themselves before reentering into a romantic relationship. Because I learned to be comfortable saving and doing the things I loved I was able to recreate myself. I learned that it was okay to be a successful and powerful woman.

INT. KIMBERLY'S ROOM - DAY CONT'D

MS (ON SCREEN) TALKING HEAD OF
KIMBERLY THROUGHOUT CONT'D:

KIMBERLY CONT'D: I didn't need to hear selfish words affirmation from my romantic parter confirm my success anymore... I had to first recognize that I wasn't happy. And then I was able to realize that I needed to separate myself from the one person that was holding me back.

Now I'm at peace. And now I can aspire for something more.

EXT. FANTASY GARDEN - EVENING

Woman stuck in the same SWAMP that the MALE SILHOUETTE pulled her into. She is sinking deeper into the MUD with nothing to grab on to. Fear is spilled across her face until she looks up to see a TREE BRANCH hanging down. She grabs a hold of it and pulls herself up. The sun begins to shine as she pulls herself to the side of the Swamp. She has made it to a pillow of grass. Her face becomes joyful once again.

BLACK SCREEN

TEXT INSERT:

"A Healthy relationship will never require you to sacrifice your friends, your dreams, or your dignity."

-Mandy Hale

FEMALE NARRATOR (V.O.):

Even though codependency in a relationship that deals with substance abuse is very different than a relationship that has financially reliant relationship, there are similarities which bring these codependent terms under the same roof; Enabling.

If you, as a romantic partner, continue to enable these behaviors, then they will continue to exist. If

"A Healthy relationship will never require you to sacrifice your friends, your dreams, or your dignity."

-Mandy Hale

FADE OUT:

FADE OUT: