
12 Steps to Destruction 01.0

Codependency/Recovery Heresies

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This is our fourth volume on which Dr. Jay Adams has been kind enough to make theological and editorial comments. We appreciate his willingness to help and thank him for his encouragement over the years.

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God created man in his own image, in the image of God created He him: male and female created He them.

Man refers to all humans in Genesis 1:27. The word *man* has been used to refer to humanity and *he* has been the pronoun used to refer to a person (male or female) in the generic sense. Therefore, we use the pronoun *he* throughout this book, even though the people referred to in many places are mainly women.

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01 AND CODEPENDENCY FOR ALL...

Thousands of people are flocking to the bookstores to read about "codependency." Most of them are women. They read books that describe the symptoms, join self-help groups, and seek therapy to find out if they are "codependent." They enter an endless cycle in hopes of curing their newly discovered "disease," and they find they are not alone. In fact, there seems to be an epidemic of self-diagnosed, group-diagnosed, and therapist-diagnosed "codependents." The list of symptoms is so long and the possibilities so wide that everyone in any kind of unsatisfactory relationship may conceivably be labeled "codependent."

The codependency/recovery movement is one of the newest and largest offshoots of the addiction treatment industry and the Alcoholics Anonymous Twelve-Step program. Every week 500,000 self-help meetings are held in this country. The fastest growing of these "free, confessional meetings" is Co-dependents Anonymous.¹ There are over 1800 Co-dependents Anonymous groups in this country, as well as other self-help groups, such as Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA) and Al-Anon.² There are also numerous workshops, conferences, treatment centers and therapists. And it must be admitted that the professionals are glad to have the business. One writer who contends that "the vicious cycle of codependency can only be stopped through intervention and professional care," declared in 1984: "Happily, our profession is on the cutting edge of making co-dependency a national issue, both on the social level and on the health level."³ Indeed, the awareness level has reached new heights of popularity and expanded revenues. And as the world goes, so goes the church in this newest rage of psychoheresy. Not to be outdone, many psychologists, psychiatrists, and treatment centers offer the same theories and therapies under the guise of being biblical. And churches are joining ranks with Twelve-Step addiction and codependency/recovery programs.

The estimated numbers of supposedly afflicted codependents range from tens of thousands⁴ to 40 million⁵ to 100 million⁶ and upwards to 96% of the population.⁷ That last estimate is a bit high when one considers that most of the people who are labeled "codependent" are women. But such numerical inconsistencies do not seem to bother the experts in the field. John Bradshaw, a leading recovery guru, claims that "Codependency is a plague upon the land." He dramatically adds, "The Black Plague doesn't even compare to the ravages of our compulsions caused by codependency."⁸

Considering how many people are attempting to cope with unsatisfactory relationships and difficult situations, the potential market for self-help books and codependency/ recovery treatment is astronomical. The list of books on codependency/recovery swells along with those dealing with addictions. They are popular best-sellers in Christian bookstores as well as in general bookstores. Evidently something is there. Something is wrong. People are looking for answers. Suggested remedies and supposed cures lie hidden in the books. But are those

¹ Elizabeth Taylor, "Taking Care of Herself." *Time*, 10 December 1990, p. 106.

² David Treadway, "Codependency: Disease, Metaphor, or Fad?" *Networker*, January, February 1990, p. 40.

³ Sharon Wegscheider-Cruse, "Co-dependency: The Therapeutic Void." *Codependency: An Emerging Issue*. Hollywood, FL: Health Communications, 1984, p. 3.

⁴ Elizabeth Kristol, "Declarations of Codependence." *The American Spectator*, June 1990, p. 21.

⁵ Melinda Blau, "No Life to Live." *American Health*, May 1990, p. 58.

⁶ Robert Hemfelt, Frank Minirth, and Paul Meier. *Love Is a Choice*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1989, p. 11.

⁷ Lynette Lamb, "Is Everyone Codependent?" *Utne Reader*, May/June 1990, p. 26.

⁸ John Bradshaw quoted by Lynette Lamb, "Is Everyone Codependent?" *Utne Reader*, May/June 1990, p. 26.

remedies the kind that Jesus offers? Are the so-called cures consistent with the Word of God?

Serious Problems with Problem Solutions

01 Discussion Questions

We are currently living through a pandemic – what some people call "plandemic." In light of that...

1. Do you think Tom Bradshaw was the Tony Fauci of his day?
2. Do you think some pushed the recovery movements to make profit over people?
3. Was going to recover the equivalent of getting vaccinated?