

ADDICTION: THE FAMILY JOURNEY

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Addiction

- A **primary**, progressive biochemical, psychosocial, genetically transmitted disease of relapse; it's hallmarks are denial, loss of control and unmanageability



Addiction is not
a spectator sport;
eventually the
whole family gets
to play.

Family Disease?

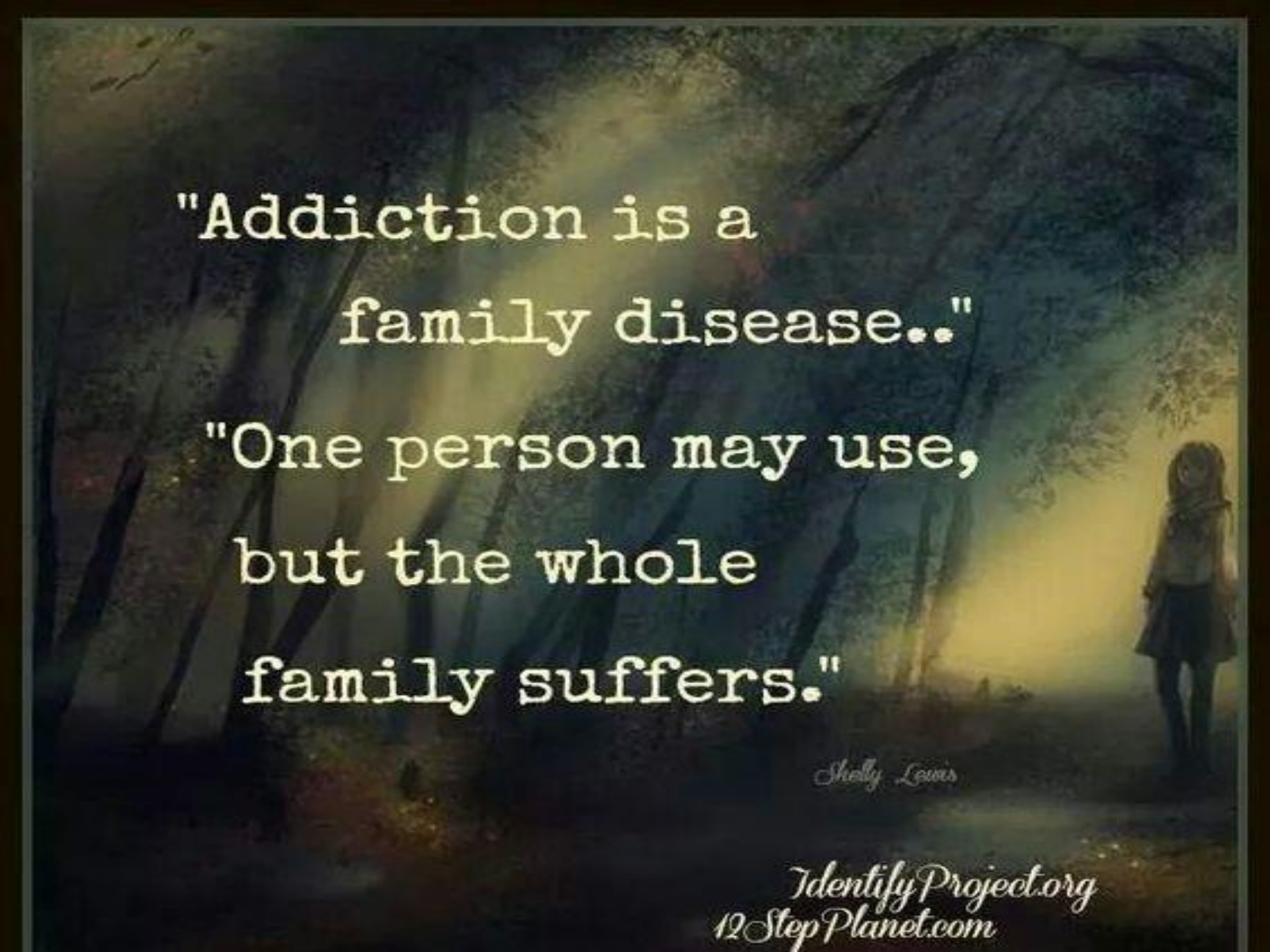
- Progression of addiction
- Dysfunctional patterns develop
- Self-defeating behaviors and interactions
- As the addict suffers, the family suffers
- Damage to the family can heal

Families affected by addiction tend to have...

- Poor communication
- Poor problem solving skills
- Significant stress
- Family arguments and violence
- Debt/other financial difficulties
- Toxic shame
- Parentification of children

Families affected by addiction tend to have...

- Higher incidence of physical, social, and psychological consequences
- Psychological and other disorders in children
- Interference with ability of children to function as independent individuals



"Addiction is a
family disease."

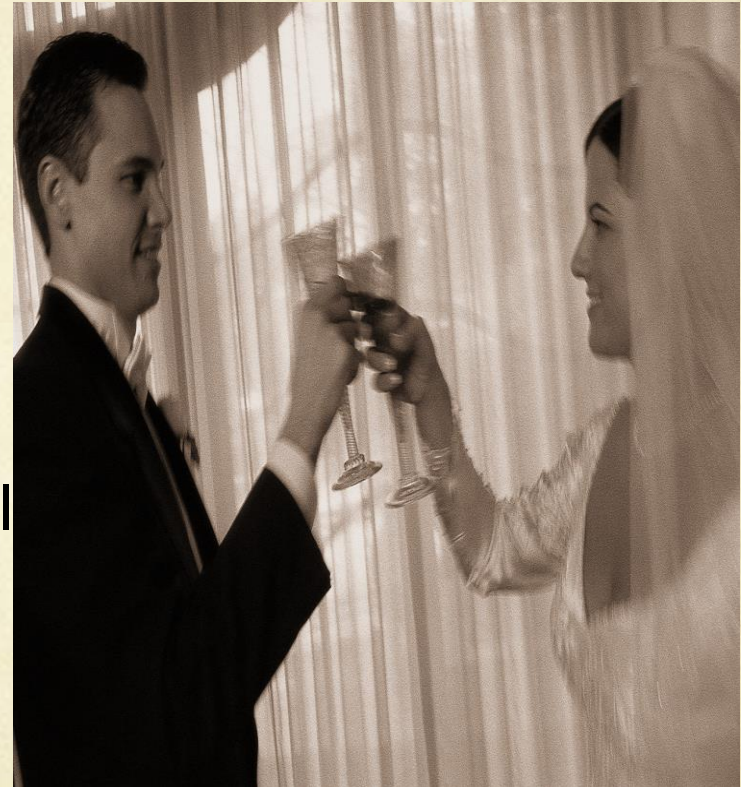
"One person may use,
but the whole
family suffers."

Shelly Lewis

*IdentifyProject.org
12StepPlanet.com*

How Does The Spouse Present?

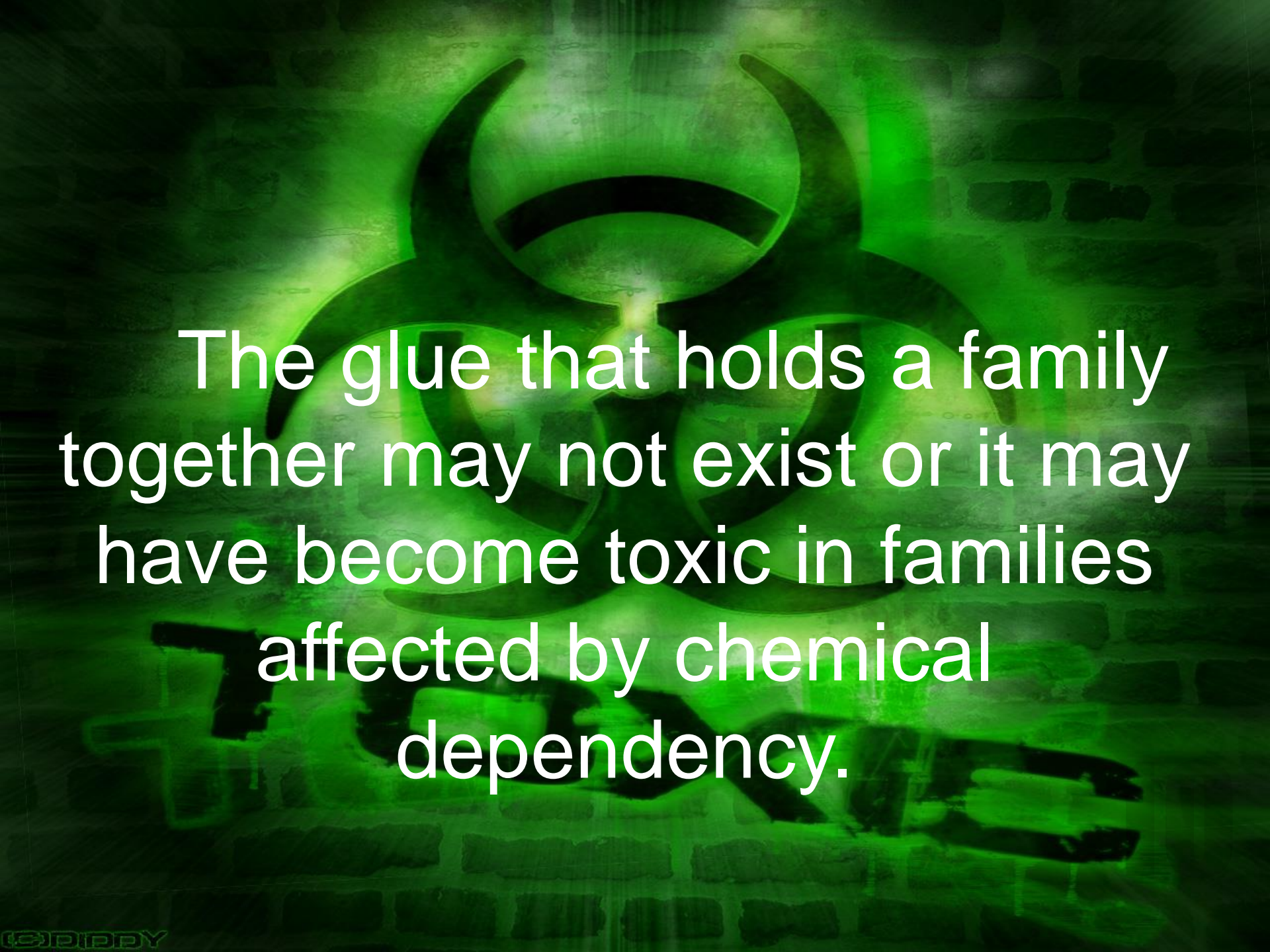
- Multiple Somatic Complaints
- Dysthymia/Depression
- Anxiety/Panic
- Dependent/Co-Dependent
- Symptoms refractory or quickly replaced by something else
- Asking For Help



What About The Kids?

- Delayed development
- Accidents from poor supervision
- Neglect/Abuse
- Withdrawn
- Conduct Disorder
- Depression
- Anxiety Disorders
- Somatic Complaints





The glue that holds a family together may not exist or it may have become toxic in families affected by chemical dependency.

Factors Mediating Impact on Family

- Severity/Duration
- Specific behaviors witnessed
- Presence of violence/suicidality
- Support within & outside family
- Personality of family members
- Access to treatment
- Utilization of self-help

Healthy Family

- Task-oriented
- Promotes health and welfare
- Roles defined and mutually agreed on

Addicted Family

- Crisis oriented
- Deals with/cope with the addict
- Roles reflect pathology
- Manipulation; not compromise

Healthy Family

Addicted Family

- Healthy boundaries
 - Homeostasis
 - Communication of feelings
 - Problem solving
- Boundary problems
 - Dysfunctional patterns of interaction
 - Don't talk, trust, feel
 - Denial; "looking good"; blame

Violating Boundaries

- Physical Boundaries: violence, incest, neglect
- Intellectual Boundaries: tight control, encourage dependency, deny right to think
- Emotional Boundaries: uncontrolled rage, role reversal, shaming, enmeshment
- Spiritual boundaries: God as punishment, parent on a pedestal

When children focus on their parents and neglect themselves, they never develop the inner resources that help them to know how to feel, think, or behave in a given situation. This is the essence of codependency and a damaged boundary system.

-Lerner

CHILDREN OF ADDICTS

- 1 in 5 adult Americans lived with an addict
- Greater risk for emotional problems
- Addiction runs in families; 4 times more likely than others to become addicts.

CHILDREN OF ADDICTS

- Most have experienced some form of neglect or abuse
- First-degree relatives *3-4 times* more likely to become addicted
- Approximately 20-25% of sons and brothers of addicts become addicts
- Approximately 5% of the daughters and sisters of addicts become addicts

To Help Children

Model effective psychological independence by directly asking for what you want, expressing your own feelings effectively, setting appropriate limits, and negotiating directly to meet your needs, rather than using power plays and games. Research indicates that young children learn appropriate behaviors by modeling the behaviors of others around them.

-Weinhold

Developmental Model of Recovery for Addicted Family

(Brown, S.)

- Stages of recovery
- Traumatic/harmful environment; continues into recovery
- Restrictive, rigid, and closed family system
- Unhealthy system must collapse
- Healthy individual development is focus
- Close attention must be given to children
- Dynamic process of difficult change over time

Families Can Stop the Cycle

- Detachment
- Personal responsibility
- When feeling desire to “help”, look at self first
- Previous solutions haven’t worked so seek outside help to find solutions
- Disease concept
- Willingness to seek more loving and healthy ways to cope
- Equal energy goes into working on self as has been focused on others
- Seek support (counseling, 12-step groups, etc...)

Family in Recovery

- Abstinence from alcohol/drugs
- Family as a whole or in parts
- Actively engaged in process of growth and change
- Recovery organizes identity of family

-Brown

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The Dysfunctional Family

Shame-based systems characterized by chaos, inconsistency, and unpredictability. Such a system does not nurture a child in his or her tasks of developing trust, individuality, and self-esteem.



-Matthews

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2/9/2016

Types of Dysfunctional Families

- Addicted/chemically dependent
- Emotionally or psychologically disturbed
- Physically abusive or sexually abusive
- Fundamentalist or rigidly dogmatic

Codependency

Original Concept

developed to acknowledge

responses and behaviors
people

develop from living with an
addict

Expanded Definition

describes a dysfunctional
pattern

of living and problem solving

developed during childhood by

family rules.

Definition

- Maladaptive, compulsive behaviors learned by family members to survive in a family experiencing great emotional pain and stress
- Maladaptive - inability for a person to develop behaviors which get needs met
- Compulsive - psychological state where person acts against their own will or conscious desires to behave
- Sources of great emotional pain and stress: chemical dependency; chronic mental illness; chronic physical illness; physical abuse; sexual abuse; emotional abuse; divorce; hypercritical or non-loving environment... and many others

Hallmarks

- Greater tendency toward "toxic relationships" with people who are unreliable; emotionally unavailable, destructive and/or abusive; needy, one-sided
- Tries to provide, control everything within relationship without addressing own needs or desires; set themselves up for continued unfulfillment
- Even when encounters someone with healthy boundaries, still operates in their own system
- Not likely to get too involved with people who have healthy boundaries
- Problems recycle; can't get involved with people with healthy behaviors & coping skills, problems continue into each new relationship

How do I know if I'm codependent?

- Feeling unfulfilled consistently in relationships
- Tend to be indirect
- Don't assert yourself when you have a need
- Able to recognize you don't play as much as others, or others point out you could be more playful

Symptoms

- Controlling behavior
- Distrust
- Perfectionism
- Avoidance of feelings
- Intimacy problems
- Caretaking behavior
- Hypervigilance (heightened awareness for potential threat/danger)
- Physical illness related to stress

Characteristics

- Exaggerated sense of responsibility for others
- Tendency to confuse love and pity, with “love” for people they can pity and rescue
- Tendency to do more than their share, always
- Tendency to become hurt when people don't recognize their efforts
- Unhealthy dependence on relationships
- Will do anything to hold on to a relationship; to avoid the feeling of abandonment
- Extreme need for approval and recognition

Characteristics

- Sense of guilt when asserting themselves
- Compelling need to control others
- Lack of trust in self and/or others
- Fear of being abandoned or alone
- Difficulty identifying feelings
- Rigidity/difficulty adjusting to change
- Problems with intimacy/boundaries
- Chronic anger
- Lying/dishonesty
- Poor communications
- Difficulty making decisions

- *Romeo and Juliet – relationship more important than life*
- *Wives of Henry the Eighth - marriage to the self-absorbed king lead to misery (or worse) if they didn't produce the son he craved*
- *Most codependent relationships don't end in tragedy.*
- *They do keep people from living enjoying full, rewarding lives*

- *“Codependency, by definition, means making the relationship more important to you than you are to yourself,” she tells WebMD. “It’s kind of a weird phrase, and it doesn’t sound like it means a one-sided relationship. But that’s what it is. It means you’re trying to make the relationship work with someone else who’s not,”*

Tina Tessina, PhD, a marriage and family therapist in Long Beach, Calif.

General rules set-up within families that may cause codependency may include:

- Don't talk about problems
- Don't express feelings openly
- Communication is best if indirect
- Triangulation
- Be strong, good, right, perfect
- Make us proud beyond realistic expectations
- Don't be selfish
- Do as I say not as I do
- Don't play or be playful
- Don't rock the boat

Effects of the Rules

- Many families have one or more of these rules in place
- These rules can constrict and strain the free and healthy development of self-esteem and coping
- As a result, children can develop non-helpful behavior characteristics, problem solving techniques, and reactions to situations in adult life

How can counseling help?

- Counseling teaches assertiveness, listening, communication
- Counseling promotes awareness of non-helpful actions/behaviors and developing new, healthier coping skills
- Counselor must be aware of their own tendency towards codependence
- Counselor must have some understanding about addiction in our society

How can counseling help?

- Counselors must present good boundary setting and healthy living themselves during sessions with clients
- If counselor develops relationship with client that has codependent qualities pattern is repeated, therapy won't help
- Statistics show 50-80% of counselors have not addressed their own codependency issues
- CODA groups; Al Anon; ACOA (adult children of alcoholics)

Results

- Vulnerability
- Denial
- Shame
- No trust in self
- Walls
- No sense of self

Strategies for Healing

- Family systems approach
- Challenging thought distortion
- The interpersonal bridge
- Importance of therapeutic relationship
- The self-affirming identity
- Support systems

Treatment Considerations

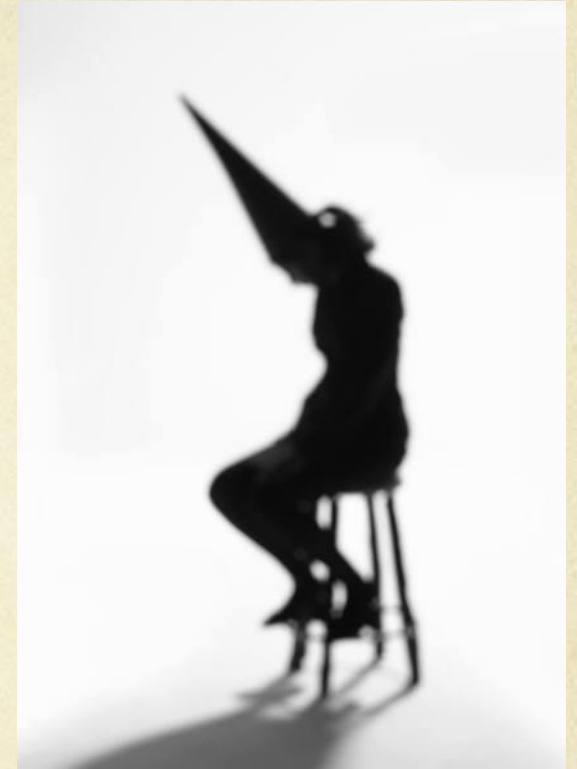
- Exploration into early childhood issues and relationship to current destructive behavior patterns
- Education, experiential groups, and individual and group therapy
- Rediscover themselves, sense of self, identify self-defeating behavior patterns.
- Focus on helping to get in touch with feelings that have been buried during childhood and on reconstructing family dynamics; goal is to experience full range of feelings again
- Identify, Understand unhealthy behavior

Treatment Considerations, cont...

- Education about course and cycle of addiction and how it extends into relationships
- A lot of change and growth necessary for co-dependent and his or her family
- Recognize and stop any caretaking behavior that allows or enables abuse to continue in family
- Co-dependent must identify and embrace his or her feelings and needs
- Learning to say “no,” to be loving yet tough, and learning to be self-reliant
- People find freedom, love, hope, and serenity in their recovery

Shame is
without parallel
a sickness of
the Soul.

-Silvan Tomkins



Resolving Shame from the Family of Origin (Potter-Efron)

- Learn the difference between investigating the past and getting stuck in it.
- Locate the most important deficiency messages received from family.
- Allow for grieving losses that resulted from these messages.
- Challenge the old deficiency messages with new messages reflecting self-worth.

Resolving Shame from the Family of Origin (Potter-Efron)

- Change behavior so it is consistent with the new and healthier messages.
- Release “borrowed shame”.
- Consider developing forgiveness for the family members who were shaming to further release the person from shame.
- Confronting family members???

Healing Shame Requires...

(Potter-Efron)

- Developing full awareness of shame
- Noticing defenses against shame
- Acceptance of some shame as part of being human
- Challenging shame
- Setting positive goals for replacing shame with self-worth

Changing Internal Self Talk with Positive Affirmations

- Positive Brain-Washing!
- Replace Old, Negative, Judgmental, Critical Messages with Realistic, Positive Affirmations
- Suggested format: Choose one statement, write it 15-20 times daily and be aware of your responses

- (Bradshaw))

Externalizing Thought Distortions

- Describe the shame-producing situation or event by writing it out
- Identifying distorted thoughts
- Restructure and eliminate shame-based thinking by rewriting the distortions to be more realistic

-Bradshaw

Role of the Therapist

- Ask questions
- Support/coach
- Intervene
- Normalize
- Challenge
- Guide
- Educate/interpret
- Monitor movement in recovery
- Provide resources
- Maintain flexibility
- Multiple focus

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