The Codependency Cycle
(in Relationships)

CO-DEPENDENT PERSON
Tends to:
- be other focused / puts others ahead of self (OTHER PLEASER / COMPLIANT / ACCOMMODATING)
- be dependent on OTHERS to get their needs met
- compulsive care—“giving”/compliance at the expense of own needs/ leads to accumulating resentment
- feel guilty
- please others / let themselves get walked on
- overlook their own wants, needs, opinions to keep the peace and avoid negative reactions/feelings/confrontation
- give love & respect w/out requiring it in return
- tends toward victim-thinking, martyr
- denies own needs, caring for others and obtaining approval at the expense of self

COUNTER-DEPENDENT PERSON
Tends to:
- be self-focused / puts self ahead of others (SELF PLEASER / RESISTANT / AGGRESSIVE)
- be dependent on SELF to get their needs met
- compulsive care—“taking” at the expense of others
- blame others
- control / manipulate others / walk over others
- disregard or discount others’ wants, needs, opinions to avoid negative feelings
- get love and respect without giving it in return
- focuses on own needs / caring for self at the expense of others

COMPLEMENTARY CYCLE
- Co-dependent and Counter-dependent represent characteristics on a continuum.
- These complementary/opposite persons attract in relationships.
- Both spouses need the behavior of the other to maintain the cycle.
- Either person can break the cycle by going against their default behaviors, but it’s best if both work to change their side of the pattern.

TO BREAK THE CYCLE / PATH TO WHOLENESS:
- Focus on self / self-care
- Require respect from others / do things out of love not fear
- Show more leadership / take more of the lead
- Stand up / speak up for your wants / needs / opinions. Be open / honest with self and others
- Carefronting—care enough about the relationship to speak up / confronting others when necessary
- Build healthy boundaries / identify your strengths
- Be able to say “No” / cope w/ strong negative reactions / feelings (ie. Be okay w/ someone being mad / disappointed w/you. Be okay being the “bad guy.”)
- Develop more compassion for self

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For more information, see The Flight from Intimacy by Janae & Barry Weinhold