

The Continuum of Self

Adapted from *The Human Magnet Syndrome* and *Emotional Manipulators & Codependents: Understanding the Attraction* by Ross A. Rosenberg



Neutral Point

(A Balanced Self-Orientation)
...between **Others** and **Self**

- Motivated by getting their needs met at the expense of self
- Compulsive care-"giving" at the expense of own needs / Denies own needs for survival
- Will give love and respect without requiring it in return
- Tends toward victim-thinking, people pleasing, martyr

- Motivated by getting their needs met at the expense of others
- Compulsive care-"taking" at the expense of others / Focused on own needs for survival
- Will get love and respect without giving it in return
- Tends toward blaming, manipulation, etc.

OPPOSITES ATTRACT -- We tend to naturally attract someone whose strengths and weaknesses complement ours. Those with codependent (other-oriented) personalities and those with emotionally manipulating (self-oriented) personalities are natural human magnets

Continuum of Self Value (CSV) Personality Type Breakdown (-5 → +5)

The following list matches each of the 11 Continuum of Self Values (CSVs) with a general personality description. These examples are only intended to illustrate the range of general personality possibilities according to the Continuum of Self Theory's self-orientation concept.

- 5** A codependent person is completely absorbed with the **L**-ove, **R**-espect, and **C**-are (L-R-C) needs of others, while completely ignoring and devaluing their own. These individuals are often powerless, unable and/or unwilling to seek LRC from their romantic partners.
- 4** A person with codependent tendencies. They are almost always focused on the LRC needs of others, while only intermittently seeking to have their own LRC needs reciprocated or fulfilled. This person is able, albeit unmotivated, fearful and/or inexperienced in seeking LRC from their romantic partners. They often choose not to ask others to fulfill their LRC needs, as they don't want to upset others or cause conflict. If asking for some semblance of LRC from their partner, they do so nervously and with distinct feelings of guilt or neediness.
- 3** A person who identifies with their caring and giving nature. They are predominately focused on the LRC needs of others, while often diminishing, delaying, or excusing away the fulfillment of their own needs. This person's identity and reputation is fused with their helping and caretaking nature. They are typically in relationships in which there is an imbalance between their partner's and their own LRC needs – giving much more LRC to their partner than receiving. This individual is capable of setting boundaries in relationships, while also asking for what they need. However, they tend to feel guilty or needy when setting such boundaries or when asking for LRC or help from others.
- 2** Involved in relationships in which their caretaking identity is valued and appreciated, but not exploited. They enjoy relationships with others in which they provide ample amounts of LRC, without wanting equal amounts reciprocated. They are able to ask for what they want or need from others, although are slightly uncomfortable doing so. They are comfortable with partners who need more LRC than they are willing to give in return. They are able to set boundaries and ask for what they need when the LRC balance goes beyond their comfort level. They might experience mild feelings of guilt or neediness when asking their partner to meet their own LRC needs. As much as is possible, they avoid individuals who are narcissistic, exploitative or manipulative.
- 1** A person with a healthy balance between loving, respecting and caring for self and others. They typically seek life experiences and relationships in which they are able to satisfy their own LRC needs. They tend to participate and appreciate relationships that are based on a reciprocal and mutual distribution of LRC. Although they derive meaning and happiness when helping and caring for others, they do not tolerate selfish or self-centered romantic partners. They often enjoy caring for others, but do not identify themselves as a caretaker or helper. They do not experience guilt or feelings of neediness when asking for LRC from others.

- 0** A person who participates in relationships where there is an equal distribution of LRC given and received. They easily ask for what they need from their partners, while being open to their partners LRC needs. With their LRC-balanced relationships, they easily fluctuate between being the recipient and giver of LRC.
- +1** A person with a healthy balance between loving, respecting and caring for self and others. They tend to participate and appreciate relationships that are based on a reciprocal and mutual distribution of LRC. This individual values personal and professional goals and ambitions, which they confidently pursue. Although they derive meaning and happiness through the pursuit of their own goals and ambitions, they are also cognizant of the necessity to Love, Respect and Care for their romantic partner. They effortlessly provide LRC to their romantic partners when necessary or requested. They may identify with both the role of a caretaker or helper while wanting to fulfill their own goals and ambitions.
- +2** A person who prefers to be involved in relationships in which the pursuit to fulfill their own ambitions, desires, and goals is encouraged and supported. In a romantic relationship, they actively seek attention, appreciation, and affirmation. Although they are go-getters and may be consumed with "being in the limelight," they are willing and able to fulfill their partner's needs. They are neither exploitative nor selfish. As individuals who are more oriented toward their own LRC needs, they periodically forget about the inequity of LRC distribution in the relationship. They respond favorably and non-reactively when their partner asks them for higher amounts of LRC. Although they can be comfortable in a caretaking role, they don't maintain it.
- +3** A mildly selfish and self-centered individual. They are predominately focused on the LRC needs of self, while often diminishing, delaying, or excusing away the fulfillment of their partner's needs. This person's identity and reputation is fused with their need for attention, validation, and recognition. They identify with the persona of the go-getter and success-driven individual. They are typically in relationships where there is an imbalance between their partner's and their own LRC needs, expecting or taking more LRC than giving. If confronted about the LRC inequality, they may get defensive, but will be able to make corrections. They can modulate or control their self-centered and seemingly selfish attributes. Although they may be perceived as self-consumed and self-centered, they are willing and able to Love, Respect and Care for their partner; they just need frequent reminders.
- +4** A narcissistic individual. This individual is absorbed and preoccupied with the LRC needs of self, while rarely seeking to fulfill the LRC needs of others. They come across as being entitled, self-absorbed, and self-centered, as they are driven to seek LRC from others, while giving very minimal amounts of the same in return. They are comfortable with the LRC disparity, as they believe their needs are more important than their partner's. Although this person is overtly narcissistic, they are still able to give nominal levels of LRC to others. If confronted about the LRC inequities, they typically get angry and defensive and are quick to justify their actions. They, however, do not experience a narcissistic injury or exhibit narcissistic rage when confronted.
- +5** An emotional manipulator. Unable and unmotivated to Love, Respect and Care for others. They are consumed with fulfilling their own LRC needs with no intention of reciprocating. They have great difficulty in exhibiting empathy, unconditional positive regard or love. When they do give LRC to others, it is typically conditional (strings attached). They are not able to comprehend or accept their pathological levels of narcissism. When confronted about the LRC imbalances, they often strike back with either direct or passive aggression.