

CODEPENDENCY AND *boundaries*



CODEPENDENCY + BOUNDARIES

Codependency isn't just limited to romantic relationships. Codependent behaviors and patterns can happen in friendships, sibling, and parent/child relationships — even at work.

Codependency is a dysfunctional boundary pattern where you are overly invested in the feeling states, decisions, and outcomes of other people to the detriment of your own life or self-care. It can feel like something bad happening to someone else is actually happening to you. There is an urgency to help, fix or correct the other person's situation.

This can feel like an honest desire to be of service or help reduce another person's suffering but if you can't NOT do it- your behavior falls into the category of codependency. And it's exhausting! Having healthy boundaries means taking care of yourself first and taking care of the people you love in an appropriate and mutual way.

You can make different choices that support YOU, your mental, physical, and emotional wellbeing and still be a deeply caring, loving person, partner, and friend.

RAISE YOUR AWARENESS WITH THESE TWO ACTIVITIES

TOP OF MIND EXERCISE:

To gain some clarity, I invite you to take 24 hours and write down every time you do one of the following:

- Say “yes” when you really want to say “no”
- Say you are sorry or apologize – not only when you’re not sorry, but also when you’re angry
- Avoid confrontation at all costs
- Put everyone else’s needs above your own

This will give you a clear snapshot of the way you’re functioning and help you to start to practice being more mindful of your behavior. You don’t have to change all the things right away.

Awareness is the first step to transforming anything.

I bet the results will surprise you.

GO DEEPER

Take An Over-functioning Inventory

Have you ever been in a relationship (romantic or platonic) where you regularly did more than your share of the work and they regularly did less than theirs (under-functioned)? Or did it start out more balanced and then developed into an over/under-functioning dynamic?

This type of behavior is a form of codependency and it’s depleting if you are the over-giver. The first step is to identify where this might be occurring.

Activities:

1. Name the individual for whom you over-function
2. Name exactly what you do that is not your responsibility.
3. Name the benefit you believe YOU receive from this behavior.
4. Name what you think would happen if you decided to stop.

The last step is to make a list of actions and behaviors that you now recognize as over-functioning that you can eventually work towards stopping.

QUICK SCRIPTS:

Simple Scripts for Speaking Up

- “That plan really doesn’t feel good to me. Here’s what I would love (insert your desired plan).”
- “Do you have thoughts on how we can meet in the middle?”
- “I’m telling you how I feel, not asking for your opinion on my feelings.”
- “What I really need at this moment is for you to just listen, please.”

I am struggling with the giving unasked for advice and am worried my lack of advice-giving will be seen as being cold and distant.

You are not being cold and distant if you are actively listening. Instead of automatically giving advice, you can ask:

- What do you think you should do?
- How can I best support you right now?
- Can you say more about that? or Is there more you would like to say?

- Are you looking to problem-solve or need me to hold space for what you are going through?”

Below are a few suggestions of phrases you can have at the ready to use to say NO with ease.

- I'm afraid I can't.
- I'm not really into that type of (music, food, outdoor event, etc.) but hope you have a wonderful time
- I'd rather not.
- Thank you for thinking of me but I am already committed on that date

with love Terri



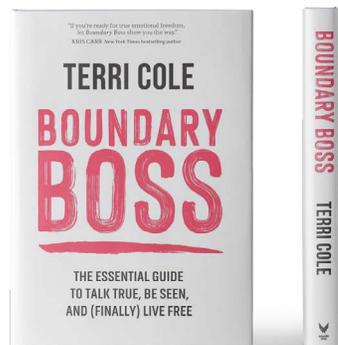
Terri Cole is a licensed psychotherapist and global leading expert in female empowerment. For two decades, Terri has worked with some of the world's most well known personalities from international pop stars to Fortune 500 CEOs.

Terri has a gift for making complex psychological concepts accessible, and then actionable so that clients and students achieve sustainable change i.e. true transformation.

She empowers over 250,000 people weekly through her blog, social media platform, signature courses, *Real Love Revolution™* and *Boundary Bootcamp™* and her popular podcast, *The Terri Cole Show*.

Terri is also the author of *Boundary Boss - The Essential Guide to Talk True, Be Seen and (Finally) Live Free* (April 2021).

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