

Delphi: Self Assessment



Led by	Reflection Freenote
Title	Assertiveness, Codependency, and Identity
Date	14 June 2009

INTRODUCTION

Our topic this evening is **Assertiveness, Codependency, and Identity**.

We have previously highlighted an assertiveness questionnaire in our quick start seminar this week, and found that people who attended did indeed have a broad range of differences in assertiveness as well as feelings about assertiveness.

In general, modernity allows for radical innovation in the parameters of operation of human groups and teams. In primary mating relationships gender roles and categories are no longer determining, and people are free to define their role or identify in relationship as they would like to. This means, however, that we have to actively negotiate our roles in modern relationships, and this can be a highly conflictual undertaking.

In the 1970's, and essentially during the same time that women began to very actively leave the home for primary work roles outside the home, the divorce rate rapidly increased, and has stayed at or about 50% in the US. When we note that only a proportion of the couples who actually stay together are happy, and that many people have multiple relationships, that don't work, it becomes clear that this negotiating of roles is not easy, and is more often ineffective. So while assertive statements of desires and perspectives leads to maximal opportunity for compromise and synthesis, aggressive and passive aggressive conflict is more the norm (as indicated by the statistics above).

The majority of troubled marriages and primary relationships have as their primary dysfunction, fighting behavior in the marriage. Aggressive responses are essentially those which are emitted with angry and agitated physiological states, and have as a primary motive (consciously or unconsciously) to cause emotional hurt in the other person as a form of punishment. This emotional hurt is typically in the form of attempting to shame, blame, make guilty, or in some other way criticize the other, not only in behavior, but also, frequently in their humanity or personhood.

Assertive responses by comparison are those which are more about me than the other person. More about how I feel (as opposed to how you are making me feel). More about what I would like, (rather than what you have done wrong).

Codependency is a popular term which includes dysfunctions of communication, habits of dysfunctional relational behavior, and an inability to set limits and boundaries in relationship where they should accurately be set. So in a modern relationship, there should be a space which is exclusively mine to define, a space which is the other person's to define for themselves, and a shared space which we both agree to.

Codependency refers largely to dysfunctions where I am attempting to take control of issues that are in your space or the reverse. It often involves me attempting to take responsibility for things that are in your control, or insisting that you take responsibility for things which are in mine.

Identity is powerfully related to assertiveness and codependency.

When I am appropriately assertive, I am taking accurate responsibility to define what I believe, who I am, and what I would like for myself in the world and in the relationship.



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When I am being aggressive, I am attempting to take control of something, where the other is not cooperatively granting this, which often has to do with their behavior, and their space and freedom.

When I am being codependent, I am being unclear with myself and the other about what is my identity, what is their identity, and what is our shared identity.

Our problem is really pretty simple. We want what we want. If what I want lies strictly in my proper sphere of influence, then there is no problem because I can just make it so. If, however, what I want lies in a shared space, or in your space, then I am liable to simply want you to accommodate my desire.

So what do you think?

- ≈ Is assertiveness useful in relationships?
- ≈ Is aggressive and controlling behavior different?
- ≈ Can we reasonably define our individual spaces, and our shared space?
- ≈ And in relationship, is it you and me together? Or is it simply, us?

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DISCUSSION:

[16:40] Abulafia Gray: In terms of what aggressiveness is: I like the way Marshall Rosenberg defines "Violent" (close to what's meant by "aggressive" here): it doesn't just include emotional hurt as a consequence, but even POSITIVE consequences can be inherently violent... it still sets up a pattern where your sense of well being hinges on affirmation or negation from another.

[16:40] DanD Rau: Assertiveness is an expression of ourselves and it is necessary to be a "person" in a relationship

[16:40] Reflection Freenote: very interesting Abu

[16:40] Rothmiel Odigaunt: How do we determine where the boundaries of the relationship 'should' be in the first place?

[16:41] Jacques Oyen: What is a relationship would or could be defined as strictly me or the other?

[16:41] Reflection Freenote: yes Dan

[16:41] DaSein Noyes: so if I spank you because you cant stop me I'm in my sphere of influence

[16:41] Reflection Freenote: Roth, perhaps this is something which we as individuals, and as couples must creatively decide?

[16:41] Deoridhe Quandry: Wouldn't determining the boundaries be both societally and individually determined at once?

[16:42] Rothmiel Odigaunt: I think the concept that the boundaries 'should' be anywhere is the thing I have trouble with.

[16:42] DanD Rau: Relationship boundaries are negotiated and this might be where assertiveness is most important

[16:42] Jacques Oyen: What could I possibly do in a relationship that would not affect my partner in some way?

[16:42] Reflection Freenote: well, Jacques, many people would say that they have an absolute right to have their feelings, for example, and these feelings are not necessarily part of the shared space, unless I decide that they should be

[16:42] Abulafia Gray: I think that's how it often plays out Deoridhe, and I think it's interesting (and challenging as Freenote mentioned in his intro) that the range of possibilities that are in the realm of acceptable is now so wide so as to make negotiating the path towards the boundaries we want that much more challenging.

[16:43] DaSein Noyes: I tend to agree with Roth. The crossover here is so huge that the model of the three spheres of influence fails miserably

[16:43] Reflection Freenote: yes, Dasein, if you are Pol Pot, you can do what you want, I think

[16:43] Rothmiel Odigaunt: I ascribe the concept that the boundaries are constantly in flux and are determined by the combination of two people being mutually assertive and communicative.

[16:43] Abulafia Gray: I think the goal isn't to not affect your partner - if it was, there wouldn't be any point in the relationship. Rather, perhaps, it can be to assist each other in shaping your lives, and work together, rather than trying to dominate the other person, which a lot of relational issues seem to be about for some folks.

[16:43] Reflection Freenote: sure Deo, society does give us a favored set of templates, although we are not entirely obligated to select from those

[16:44] Abulafia Gray: Well put Roth: it's a dance.

[16:44] Poot Dibou: In answering the posed question "Is assertiveness useful in relationships?", is it worth considering what a relationship would be like when one, some or all parties *aren't* assertive?

[16:44] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Abula, what about for some people that being dominated is what they want out of a relationship? That is, morals aside, fills something they need to feel or live?

[16:45] Deoridhe Quandry: More than templates, Ref. There are some things that society explicitly and implicitly approves and disapproves. Depending on how far out of the bounds one is, relationships can become very difficult.

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- [16:45] Reflection Freenote: the issue is not whether the partner is effected Jacques, we are all effected by each other all the time, but this does not give us the right to claim authority over others
- [16:45] DanD Rau: This brings to mind Dominant/Submissive relationships. But in reality even that is negotiated
- [16:45] DaSein Noyes: so assertiveness isn't really assertiveness but some sort of dance around the other person's boundaries?
- [16:46] Abulafia Gray: Roth, if that's what someone is wanting, then you are helping them in set up the situation they desire. I'm not saying folks shouldn't be able to play around with power hierarchies if that's what they are into: I just think we often make far too much of life about that sort of thing, and there can be other games to play.
- [16:46] Reflection Freenote: yes, Roth, boundaries are often under negotiation and change with time, I am sure, always
- [16:46] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Dan, you mean that even when someone wishes to be submissive, they need to adequately communicate it in order to be submissive?
- [16:46] DanD Rau: Yesm, I mean that
- [16:46] Rothmiel Odigaunt: an excellent point
- [16:47] DaSein Noyes: yes
- [16:47] Rothmiel Odigaunt: I have some questions about what codependency is then; so is that when both people in a relationship are not being communicative? Or is it a kind of assertiveness gone wrong?
- [16:48] DanD Rau: The interesting question is what happens to my identity in a relationship. Do I lose part of it? Give some up?
- [16:48] Kev Uladstron: Since the divorce rate increased is this due to boundary confusion or just opening up the ability for them to be challenged?
- [16:48] Deoridhe Quandry: Codependency was originally thought of to explain why people enabled addicts to remain addicts by taking care of them.
- [16:48] Reflection Freenote: Dasein, I think assertive behavior can be defined in its own right. Behavior that states one's own position, without attempts to coerce the other
- [16:48] DaSein Noyes: k, I like that better
- [16:49] Abulafia Gray: As far as assertiveness goes in relationships, I think it's amazingly useful... the example comes to mind of two friends of mine: ask one for a ride and he'll hum and haw and say "I'd really LIKE to help you out but....".. Ask the other guy in the same situation and he'll say "Naw, I don't feel like it". Even though I'd be more likely to get a ride from the first friend, I feel better asking the second friend, because I know he's assertive and lets me know what he actually wants, and what he's willing to do.
- [16:49] Jacques Oyen: The original concept of codependancy ignored the payoffs for the 'codependant' partner
- [16:49] Naomi Ysabel: Interesting Abulafia
- [16:49] Deoridhe Quandry: How do you mean, Jacques?
- [16:50] Reflection Freenote: Roth, I tend to define codependency as not defining roles and responsibilities with mutuality and consensus, OR, in a way that doesn't work, as indicated above, for example when I insist that you take on a responsibility which is really something that is in my control, rather than yours
- [16:51] Reflection Freenote: Kev, that is a good question, about boundary confusion, vs. the challenging of them, although these may be related things
- [16:51] Rothmiel Odigaunt: I like the idea that the codependency fosters a perpetually poor set of coping skills or approaches to the world that then inherently worsens future outcomes.
- [16:51] Jacques Oyen: The 'codependent' is a relationship gets strokes for being a victim, for being useful, tolerant, etc
- [16:51] Deoridhe Quandry: Ahhh, gotcha. Thanks.
- [16:52] Reflection Freenote: yes, Abula, with assertion, we tend not to create underlying feelings of resentment

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- [16:52] Abulafia Gray: I agree, Roth. It's not that there's something morally wrong with someone maintaining codependant relationships... and of course there are "payoffs" for both parties. But I think in the long run it hampers one's ability to really evolve as a person.
- [16:52] Abulafia Gray: Exactly, Reflection.
- [16:52] Deoridhe Quandry: Someone could say, that the unassertive person is actually creating a dynamic whereby they create their own resentment? For some secondary gains.
- [16:52] Jacques Oyen: Some people don't want to evolve as a person, that's a value judgment
- [16:53] DanD Rau: Codependency seems to be an example of a poor relationship. A healthy relationship lets each party grow
- [16:53] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Jac, that implies there is a direction that people should be going in
- [16:53] Jacques Oyen: I agree Deoridhe
- [16:53] Marvin Macbain: oops
- [16:53] Jacques Oyen: No, I meant the opposite: what is wrong with being 'codependent'?
- [16:54] Reflection Freenote: yes, Deo, I think that is often the case, although usually this is not very conscious in my experience
- [16:54] Naomi Ysabel: Is doing things you wouldn't normally do in order not to hurt the other or to disappoint him or her is constructive or destructive in a relationship? I'd say destructive... But I'd like to hear someone's opinion on it. Coz that was mainly was my previous relation was about.
- [16:54] Seraph Timeless: Can a relationship be codependant and still grow- or does the codependency itself stunt the relationship?
- [16:54] Ungo Azambuja: a codependant sometimes sustains the other's addiction(s) as leverage to get what he or she wants out of the relation. Seems to me that feeding an addiction is always (or at least usually) wrong. No?
- [16:54] Abulafia Gray: Jacques, I agree. I don't mean people should be "forced" to evolve in whatever direction someone else thinks they should... just as I don't think someone should be forced to stop hitting themselves in the hand with a hammer. ... saying they "should" stop is a value judgement. Saying there are other things they could be doing that might benefit them more is also, but I think that's fine, as long as you don't make the person stop ;)
- [16:54] Deoridhe Quandry: I would say, Ref, that the secondary gains are much more immediate, and the primary payoff is easily attributed to other people.
- [16:55] MaryJoesphine Glas: marriages that start out co-dependent do they end when the dependencies stop and they grow apart
- [16:55] Rebeka Markus: can relation be absolutely free from codependency?
- [16:55] Rothmiel Odigaunt: I would disagree Ungo; addiction is just another brain illness, which inherently is amoral.
- [16:55] Reflection Freenote: sure, Jacques, many people have 50 year relationships which are horrifically codependent, and from the outside look like hell on earth, but you can't dynamite them out of those roles (however much they may complain about them)
- [16:56] Deoridhe Quandry: I would point out that the concept of codependency has been expanded to include valid dependency as a pathology, probably in response to the Western idealization of independence.
- [16:56] Rothmiel Odigaunt: but the addiction can shape how you relate to other people, bringing in another relationship into an existent dyad
- [16:56] Reflection Freenote: Naomi, I think that is a very common pattern, that most of have to some degree. We don't want the other person to hurt, so we alter who we authentically are (or attempt to), but I agree I don't think that really works well over time
- [16:56] Ungo Azambuja: but I referred to the other person, sustaining the addiction, as blameworthy. not the addict, though I wouldn't be so sure about that one either
- [16:56] Jacques Oyen: I also think that many wonderful relationships are 'codependent' We only care when a relationship is codependent and what we judge as 'unhealthy'
- [16:57] Naomi Ysabel: Thanks Reflection :-)

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- [16:57] Marvin Macbain: well the real issue is how much is reasonable to mold yourself to fit a partner
- [16:57] Reflection Freenote: seraph, I think codependency is often so inaccurate to emotional and other realities, that it is difficult to "grow" if by that we mean progress in our adaptive adjustment to life
- [16:57] Abulafia Gray: That's an awesome point Deoridhe.... it's interesting watching the pendulum begin to swing the other way, as people recognize increasingly that community and some level of dependence can be extremely healthy, and that striving for pure independence is a step away from reality.
- [16:57] Rebeka Markus: emotional addiction can not be avoided, I am afraid
- [16:57] Rothmiel Odigaunt: exactly my thought jac; that the inherent valence of codependency depends on the individual relationships themselves
- [16:58] Abulafia Gray: We can't avoid emotional addiction, but we can learn from it when we notice it in ourselves, I think.
- [16:58] Kev Uladstron: Marvin - I think that is an excellent question. Additionally, how long can you be held within that mold?
- [16:58] Deoridhe Quandry: I'm troubled by the term "emotional addiction". How are we defining that?
- [16:58] Jacques Oyen: I certainly think most peoples' relationships with their own children are codependent. But we honor those 'self-sacrificing' relationships.
- [16:59] Marvin Macbain: The fact is that any relationship involves compromise
- [16:59] Reflection Freenote: yes, Deo, in the west we do have a radical focus on independence of self, which is very much out of step with the rest of the world, and human history in general, I think (not to mention human neurology) which is why all of this is so challenging, although there you are (or here we are;-))
- [16:59] Rebeka Markus: we can make something, of course, and we have to, but some degree of addiction is always when we have feeling we will die if we don't see the other person next day, hehehe
- [16:59] Deoridhe Quandry: I mean, are infants "emotionally addicted" because they become sick without human contact?
- [16:59] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: individuals have to define their own relationship they cant let society or outside individuals determine that 4 them
- [17:00] DaSein Noyes: if whatever people agree is functional and reasonable then successful relationships have more to do with honest communication than whatever then however the agreed system actually manifests
- [17:00] Jacques Oyen: But Wytch, isn't society just one big relationship? us and them?
- [17:00] Deoridhe Quandry: I dunno, I think society, or at least members of it, often have a lot of insight into health and illness in relationships.
- [17:00] Abulafia Gray: Along Rebeka's lines: I think when we put our emotional state totally in the hands of others.. or convince ourselves that our happiness is in their hands.... which is different from whether people's actions affect our emotional state.
- [17:00] Ungo Azambuja: society is also like an environment--can't leave home without it
- [17:00] Macov Finkler: I agree Wytch, I think a relationship is in trouble long before you start thinking about boundaries and codependency
- [17:01] DaSein Noyes: so the divorce rate has more to do with lack of communication than any specific arrangement
- [17:01] Reflection Freenote: Jacques, I don't think the term codep, is meant to be applied to parent child relationships, which are by definition, without equality of freedom or independence to begin with, and where most of the responsibility does lie with the parents
- [17:01] Synergy Watanabe: sometimes people grow apart
- [17:02] Ungo Azambuja: divorce rate has to do with people doing what they think they're supposed to, then finding out they were mistaken
- [17:02] Poot Dibou: what is the divorce rate for ages by decade, though? I mean, so people who marry young tend to divorce more?
- [17:02] Reflection Freenote: we should also note that codep does not really apply to patterns of even extreme dependency between people where this is freely chosen by both parties, and is accurate to their emotional desires

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- [17:02] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Again its the trouble of things that people are
- [17:02] Deoridhe Quandry: The divorce rate also has to do with people getting out of physically and sexually abusive relationships, and an increase in women's independence which means our sense of self wasn't solely dependant on a single relationship with a single man who determined most of the aspects of our lives.
- [17:03] Synergy Watanabe: divorce can be a good thing if you realize u got into it 4 the wrong reasons
- [17:03] Ungo Azambuja: yes, Deoridhe
- [17:03] Rebeka Markus: well, we all know, of course that freedom is prime condition of any feeling, but still, we have feeling if Pascal's cane fased with absurd if between us and nothing is not 1 we love
- [17:03] Areyn Laurasia: would you say that codependency exists in a relationship where an individual is less assertive than the other?
- [17:03] Deoridhe Quandry: Codependents would tend not to divorce, since it's a stable system, unless one of the people changed.
- [17:03] Poot Dibou: ("so people" was meant to be "do people")
- [17:03] Rebeka Markus: sotty f sorry doe my english
- [17:03] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Again its the trouble of things that people are 'supposed' to do or 'should' do. How do we define that?
- [17:03] Marvin Macbain: There is often a distinction drawn between "interdependence" and "codependence" - perhaps someone knows how to distinguish them?
- [17:03] Naomi Ysabel: I often don't take decisions according to what I want, but according to how its making someone else happy, or at least not hurt. At the end I never end up exactly where I wanted to be... Does that make me the dominated? (Forgive my French, and I guess my out-of-bonderiness)
- [17:03] Abulafia Gray: I think when looking at divorce rates it's useful to also recognize that the way people think of marriage and divorce nowadays has a huge factor. It was Anathema to get divorced in the 30s or 40s, where as now it's pretty acceptable in a large portion of western culture.
- [17:03] Ungo Azambuja: can't define "supposed to": it's always largely illusory
- [17:04] Jacques Oyen: I think the divorce rate is a function of our growing rate of narcissism individually and as a culture
- [17:04] Rothmiel Odigaunt: then why do people follow it?
- [17:04] Macov Finkler: Naomi, not sure that 'thoughtful'= 'dominated'
- [17:04] Naomi Ysabel: Ok :-)
- [17:04] Ungo Azambuja: rothmiel--follow which?
- [17:04] Skeezi Westland: Or couldn't the divorce rate simply be an artefact of human individual liberation? Why does it have to be emblematic of "narcissism"?
- [17:05] MaryJoesphine Glas: When a relationship is defined by boundaries such as this, then I feel like we are talking about turf, power struggles.
- [17:05] Ungo Azambuja: it can be lots of things at once--likely is
- [17:05] Rebeka Markus: agree Skeezi
- [17:05] Rothmiel Odigaunt: sorry - why do people follow what they are supposed to do or should be doing ? how is it such a strong motivator in people's lives and therefore relationships
- [17:05] Synergy Watanabe: yeah like when Brittany divorced K-Fed...I mean who really cares
- [17:05] Skeezi Westland: The end of a marriage is not necessarily the failure of a marriage
- [17:05] Deoridhe Quandry: Marvin, personally I would define 'dependant' on 'needing someone else's help in order to supply' (which actually applies to all of us, whether or not we are aware of it), 'interdependent' on 'consciously knowing you need this person's presence and being to live happily' and 'codependent' as 'the self-destructive actions of one member of a group are the focus of the entire group to the detriment of the lives of other members of the group'.
- [17:05] Reflection Freenote: Areyn, not necessarily at all, because most couples differ on the dimension of assertiveness, one way or another. It is a problem, when one person is unassertive, and the other person then dominates that person in a way which is not consensual or accurate to the dominated persons desires

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- [17:05] DanD Rau: Perhaps divorce results from people growing at a different rate
- [17:05] Jacques Oyen: I find the most growth for me as a person in the struggles and successes of a long-term committed relationship
- [17:06] Abulafia Gray: Roth: re: "Supposed to", I think there's a few "supposed to's"... one that's enculturated, and one that comes from who we are and acting in resonance with that. Of course, who we are can change, and we have an impact on that... but both "supposed to" types make sense in terms of why we follow them, I think (which isn't to say that we always should)
- [17:06] Synergy Watanabe: it takes perseverance
- [17:06] Rebeka Markus: ppl divorce because they forgot who they were they take self explanatory that they know each other
- [17:07] Skeezix Westland: Murray Bowen said that the biggest dilemma in the human condition is how to attend to our need for individual accomplishment and simultaneously our need for connection to others.
- [17:07] Marvin Macbain: So finding codependency, as opposed to other forms of dependence, requires making a judgement about what is "destructive", I suppose?
- [17:07] Macov Finkler: Skeezix, ideally the two should be the same thing
- [17:07] Rebeka Markus: ah
- [17:07] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Marvin, yes it does; there are some inherent judgements in this all around.
- [17:07] Skeezix Westland: Macov, I don't see how that is even conceivable.
- [17:07] Rebeka Markus: how boring
- [17:07] Deoridhe Quandry nods to Marvin. "Traditionally, I would include abuse of drugs, physical and sexual abuse, and possibly emotional abuse, but the cultural variation would be wide."
- [17:08] Rebeka Markus: ideally boring
- [17:08] Abulafia Gray: Marvin: perhaps co-dependence is about whose hands you put your emotional state in, yours or someone else. Alternately, interdependence is about relying on the other person, in a practical sense?
- [17:08] DanD Rau: Your emotional state is your own to manage
- [17:08] Poot Dibou: isn't some degree of codependence inevitable after a decade or two in a relationship?
- [17:09] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: agreed Dan
- [17:09] Abulafia Gray: Poot, perhaps inevitable, but you can work on lowering the degree.
- [17:09] Deoridhe Quandry: I dunno, when the person I loved most died I felt pretty awful, but we didn't have a co-dependent relationship unless you want to claim my feeling awful that she died indicates it must have been because my emotional state was in her hands.
- [17:09] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Deo - I would put out there that there are those who engage in all of the above (abuse, drugs, etc) because it feels a particular need in their lives. The valence or value of the actions and results of their maintaining themselves in abusive relationships is a separate discussion.
- [17:09] Jacques Oyen: You can only have the illusion - or excuse - that you have put your life in the hands of another.
- [17:09] Abulafia Gray: DanD: Yes! And I think that's the difference. You can have interdependence without codependence if you don't think others "make" you feel any given way.
- [17:09] Reflection Freenote: poot, again codep, is not interdependency. We can be extremely dependent on each other, but increasingly accurate about our feelings and those of the other person
- [17:10] Poot Dibou: I also find that, as time goes on, I am so comfortable with my partner that I have to remind myself he's a separate person - does that make sense to anyone else?
- [17:10] Macov Finkler: I think people want their relationships to be destructive because it's the only way they can make their lives interesting
- [17:10] Naomi Ysabel: I divorced coz I found that my relationship was more about sacrifices than anything else. Sacrifices on both ends, not just on mine. It somewhat didn't make sense to me, to let go of a lot of things that at the end makes you who you are to start with.
- [17:10] Rebeka Markus: o_O

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- [17:10] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Macov - that implies people wish to suffer tremendously, I have a tough time believing that for the vast majority.
- [17:10] Ungo Azambuja: ref: so for you, codependency is defined by its degree of self-deception?
- [17:11] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: nah u can have peace in the relationship an still find ways to make things interesting
- [17:11] Macov Finkler: roth, why is Eastenders/Days of Our Lives popular?
- [17:11] DaSein Noyes: all life is about sacrifices
- [17:11] Reflection Freenote: Roth, I don't think that drugs or violence toward others, actually "fulfils" any need in a person, which is why such approaches to life work so poorly
- [17:11] Marvin Macbain: if a relationship is destructive, and consumes all your attention, it enables you to avoid facing where your own life is going.
- [17:11] Rebeka Markus: I would say by the kind
- [17:11] Deoridhe Quandry: Rothmiel, I would counter that abuse is not the same as use. Use of a drug to fill a need is different from the abuse of that drug to mask emotional or psychological damage.
- [17:11] Poot Dibou: macov - jeopardy is a key ingredient in good TV
- [17:11] Rothmiel Odigaunt: macov - there is an inherent love of watching drama, but that does not imply people wish it for themselves.
- [17:11] Marvin Macbain: A relationship can be a distraction from living your life.
- [17:12] Reflection Freenote: macov, yes, I think we are drawn to drama (although it is better kept in virtual reality, I think;-))
- [17:12] DanD Rau: Yes, a relationship can be so all-encompassing that your own life goes wanting
- [17:12] Abulafia Gray: Marvin: very true. And the higher the codependency, the greater the excuse for not doing what it is you "need to" (according to your own deeper self)
- [17:12] Reflection Freenote: Ungo, yes, lack of accuracy to feelings of the individuals, whether or not they are conscious of the inaccuracy
- [17:13] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Deo: I don't disagree; but again, we're drawing a line between abuse and use that then hinges on whether or not we feel the relationship is going in a direction that it 'should.' We've implicitly passed judgement there.
- [17:13] Skeezi Westland: Melody Beattie included in the definition of co-dependency the issue of doing for others what they should & could be doing for themselves.
- [17:13] Marvin Macbain: The important thing to realize is that whatever it is that is identified as getting in the way, could just be a convenient distraction.
- [17:13] Poot Dibou: we should (hah) ban the use of 'should' here
- [17:13] Naomi Ysabel: I heard that being in love (or in a relationship) is not to look at each other, but to both look in the same direction
- [17:14] Ungo Azambuja: so a fairly large amount of codependence results from masking our (as codependent) motives in the relationship--I keep coming back to the feeding of destructive habit for security's sake
- [17:14] Marvin Macbain: The way to test whether this is the case: does something else immediately fill the void in stopping your progress, as soon as the first "problem" is gone?
- [17:14] Deoridhe Quandry: Rothmiel, I think you're drawing the arrow in the opposite direction than I am. The abuse is primary; the relationships around it becoming codependant or nonexistent is secondary. This is really a side point at this point, though, I think.
- [17:14] Jacques Oyen: According to Beattie, all relationships are codependant
- [17:14] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Marvin - but then there's a role for it, and there are some times when security might be more important than the other needs you may have.
- [17:14] Skeezi Westland: That's not true, Jacques.
- [17:14] Abulafia Gray: Poot: I think the word "should" has its place... it just gets applied in destructive, arrogant and dominating ways a lot. It doesn't have to have any of those aspects.

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- [17:14] Reflection Freenote: yes, skee, that is the very important issue of accurate responsibility taking in relationship
- [17:15] Deoridhe Quandry: Again, codependence has been redefined in many cases to cover all needing of other people and pathologize basic human nature.
- [17:15] Marvin Macbain: Rothmiel, I agree that you should never paint things as black and white. Even a rotten relationship fills in some gaps.
- [17:15] Skeeix Westland: Her most famous book is "Codependent No More." She talks about recovery from codependence so you can have more fulfilling relationships
- [17:15] Reflection Freenote: yes, Ungo, I think so
- [17:15] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Deo: I agree and a topic for another night
- [17:15] Rebeka Markus: if we kill partner, we are most definitely not dependant, hehe
- [17:15] Deoridhe Quandry tips a nonexistent hat to Rothmiel.
- [17:15] DaSein Noyes: its only the actually agreement that is necessary not whether the relationship is somehow codependent or not
- [17:15] Starling Ansar: oooff
- [17:15] Jacques Oyen: Yes, Skee, if you read her definition of codependency, this is not a single couple that would be considered in love and not codepent
- [17:16] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: I think u need to be able to balance all aspects of your life relationships included its always in constant flux an growth
- [17:16] Skeeix Westland: Actually, abuse often occurs in codependent relationships.
- [17:16] Deoridhe Quandry: Actually, not true, Rebeka. One of the running theories into the murder of spouses and children by men before suicide is that the men feel profoundly dependant on their family, project that dependence, and remove them for their own sake.
- [17:16] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Marvin: exactly right, but its easy to lose sight that even the most dysfunctional or destructive relationships serve a purpose. Its easy to lose sight of that.
- [17:16] Reflection Freenote: sure abula, there is a use of should which is "it might work better if....."
- [17:16] Marvin Macbain: well some specialists have a tendency to pathologize the ordinary
- [17:16] Ungo Azambuja: yes, wythy--but you have wings. I fall on my ass a lot
- [17:16] DaSein Noyes: if you both agree to abuse each other you are also having a successful relationship
- [17:16] Poot Dibou: do these concepts equally apply to polyamorous relationships?
- [17:16] Skeeix Westland: Sometimes, poot.
- [17:16] DaSein Noyes: only the communication part does, poot
- [17:16] Thoth Jantzen: [17:16] DaSein Noyes: if you both agree to abuse each other you are also having a successful relationship...
- [17:16] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Skee: that's a rather large judgement there.
- [17:16] Starling Ansar: lol Dasin
- [17:17] Thoth Jantzen thinks.... "wow."
- [17:17] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: lol Ungo id give ya a hand
- [17:17] DanD Rau: Polyamory must require a great deal of negotiation
- [17:17] Starling Ansar agrees to abuse Thoth
- [17:17] Poot Dibou: what Dasein is true in transactional analysis terms
- [17:17] Rothmiel Odigaunt: das&co: but its true; a good dom/sub relationship requires mutual conversation and assertiveness
- [17:17] Ungo Azambuja: I know you would, Wytchy
- [17:17] Thoth Jantzen: I get abused enough, starling, thanks. ;o)
- [17:17] Skeeix Westland: Which one?
- [17:17] Starling Ansar: =)
- [17:17] DaSein Noyes: I am saying that the communication and any agreement is paramount to the actual structure

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- [17:18] Rothmiel Odigaunt: ...and is inherently separate from the structure itself
- [17:18] Reflection Freenote: wow, Poot, the dyadic sort seems sooo complicated as it is;-), but then some of us are easily bored:))
- [17:18] Rothmiel Odigaunt puts some words in Das' mouth for good measure
- [17:18] DaSein Noyes: ty
- [17:18] Skeezi Westland: Typically, codependent relationships show difficulty in negotiating.
- [17:19] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Skee: you're speaking in huge generalities again. Can you be more specific?
- [17:19] Abulafia Gray: I'm curious how people find these questions play out in their actual lives.... defining your spaces with partners, assertiveness & aggressiveness.... I think we often learn more from one another in sharing wisdom gleaned from experience, rather than getting too abstract and theoretical.
- [17:19] Skeezi Westland: So in polyamorous relationships, where negotiation skills are key, this can create a serious problem in maintaining the relationships.
- [17:19] DaSein Noyes: the boundaries we're looking at are not individual boundaries or boundaries of self but simply terms of the relationship contract
- [17:20] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: if u can have good communication that solves a huge amount of relationship issues
- [17:20] Skeezi Westland: My first relationship had a lot of difficulty in taking care of my partner when he should have done for himself.
- [17:20] Ungo Azambuja: Skeezi--chaos theory--too many equations running at the same time = unimaginable complexity
- [17:20] Skeezi Westland: It helped develop a lot of resentment on both our parts.
- [17:21] DaSein Noyes: imagine a child who is ready to unlatch from the breast but won't do so willingly. codependency doesn't imply inability to be not codependent
- [17:21] Ungo Azambuja: resentment makes the whirled go round
- [17:21] Deoridhe Quandry: Well, I think personally a big part of any relationship agreement is to save the worry that we will invest time, attention, and energy into another person out of feelings of love and affection, then find out we were being used for some other purpose and the other person either doesn't return the feelings or will use what we've shared with them against us.
- [17:21] Skeezi Westland: ;-) Ungo
- [17:21] Poot Dibou: I find deprogramming gender roles to have an equal say in decisions insurmountable (re: abu's question about real relationships)
- [17:22] Reflection Freenote: so Deo, relationship agreements are about creating security about the future?
- [17:22] Thoth Jantzen: well, some of that gender stuff is hardwired into our brains. It's possible to 'tell ourselves' to behave one way, quite another to do it, especially effectively and sincerely.
- [17:22] DaSein Noyes: even the idea of marriage can come loaded with expectations like gender roles ... expectations which then might be neglected in negotiation
- [17:22] Abulafia Gray: I think it's interesting that it only takes one person to move past codependency often: I know in my relationships when I've gotten into a co-dependentish argument with the other person, as soon as one of us realizes we're feeding off each other's emotional co-dependency, that person is able to break the cycle, and we have an amazing conversation.
- [17:22] Deoridhe Quandry: I would say so, Ref, and thus inherently unstable because we can't be secure about things that haven't happened yet.
- [17:23] Naomi Ysabel: The best thing I've learned in the last 3 years, is the relationships are not only unnecessary to me, but kind of a drag. With all its rules and sacrifices. There's enough of that in life to start with. Love is a wonderful feeling that is meant I hope for something, but it always seem to fade away after a couple of years (sometimes less). It becomes a 'work', almost as something meant to fall apart, that you try to keep together as long as you can, or until someone snaps. Thoughts? :-)
- [17:23] Reflection Freenote: yes, Abula, I agree, one person can put a halt to inaccurate interaction

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- [17:23] DaSein Noyes: that's silly Naomi ...you are here because you lust communication and crave relationships
- [17:23] Poot Dibou: I'm sure gender roles are hard-wired (woman deferring to man / man using aggressive posture to make a point) but it seems to me one can deal with them rationally
- [17:24] DaSein Noyes: there is nothing else to do except meditate
- [17:24] Skeezi Westland: Do you mean all relationships or only romantic 1-on-1 relationships?
- [17:24] Reflection Freenote: yes, Deo, which is why I might not define relationship understandings in those ways, even though we have a profound tendency to do so
- [17:24] Naomi Ysabel: yes DaSein, in short terms its wonderful
- [17:24] Deoridhe Quandry: Wait.... I have to defer to other people in order to be a woman?
- [17:24] Deoridhe Quandry blinks.
- [17:24] Poot Dibou: it's surely about compromises, not sacrifices
- [17:24] SG Rae: can somebody explain that whole woman defers to the man thing...to my wife?
- [17:24] Skeezi Westland: That's right Deo. You've been failing in your gender role all this time. ;-)
- [17:25] Industria Dowler seconds that blink.
- [17:25] Deoridhe Quandry: I'll have to let my uncle know he's a woman and I'm a man. Shit.
- [17:25] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: lol
- [17:25] Deoridhe Quandry: And I got trained into it by my mother - who is also a man!
- [17:25] Naomi Ysabel: but why doesn't it stay that way? At least for me.. Maybe I got it all wrong
- [17:25] Reflection Freenote: sure, Naomi, I think there is a huge difference between romantic love, and the mature partnership which couples often form, especially when they have been or are "friends" as well as "lovers"
- [17:25] Starling Ansar: mine too Deo
- [17:25] Rothmiel Odigaunt: yeah, I think that little generalization needs to be stricken
- [17:25] Skeezi Westland: Balls, Ovaries, who can tell the difference?
- [17:25] Deoridhe Quandry: Not paediatricians, sometimes! ;)
- [17:26] Industria Dowler: Internal versus external, I think. :)
- [17:26] Rothmiel Odigaunt: fuzziness?
- [17:26] DaSein Noyes: we don't do much else in life than communicate and the relationships are the agreements we've been able to negotiate
- [17:26] DaSein Noyes: pretty much by definition
- [17:26] Deoridhe Quandry: I would add, though, that all relationships contain a certain amount of work. You have to be able and willing to negotiate differences and communicate emotional and rational thoughts and be heard and responded to.
- [17:26] Poot Dibou: my generalisation? Are men and women considered to be exactly the same psychologically?
- [17:27] Skeezi Westland: It depends on the man & the woman.
- [17:27] SG Rae: only if you have Aspergers
- [17:27] Macov Finkler: poot, no, but in the same way that short and tall people aren't the same psychologically
- [17:27] Rothmiel Odigaunt: No Poot, but the pure dichotomy of your statement doesn't do justice to reality.
- [17:27] Abulafia Gray: Naomi: Thanks for sharing that! I know we can get "stuck" in patterns of relationships, and that can sometimes lead to a well needed break from them for a while. With a natural learning towards some kinds of codependency, I had to spend several years on my own to get anchored again in who I was, and to define those self boundaries so that I could engage positively in relationships again.
- [17:27] Skeezi Westland: To require someone to fit into something that they don't fit in is social slavery.
- [17:27] Abulafia Gray: (much delayed response on my part)
- [17:27] Deoridhe Quandry: Poot, the differences between individuals is, like in most large groups, larger than the differences between groups.
- [17:27] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: well both people have to actually care and put effort into a relationship so it grows just think plant :)

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[17:28] Naomi Ysabel: Thanks :-)

[17:28] DaSein Noyes: gender distinction is really a whole other topic; relationships aren't gender specific

[17:28] Skeezi Westland: I agree. I'm a gay man, so all my romantic relationships have been with other guys.

[17:28] Industria Dowler: Agreed, Dasein.

[17:28] Poot Dibou: to not accept that there are commonalities in men and women in our society is also to dismiss personality theory, for example Myers Briggs temperament scale which, shock horror, puts people into one of 16 groups

[17:28] Skeezi Westland: Codependency still can develop

[17:29] Skeezi Westland: But the Myers Briggs is not humanity, in the same way that a map is not the territory.

[17:29] Rothmiel Odigaunt: Although Myers Briggs was developed by our good friend Jung, who had some mild holes in his theories, Poot

[17:29] Reflection Freenote: yes, regardless of the physiological foundations of gender differences in behavior, the templates for relationship used to be quite rigidly defined, and now they are not, leading us all, as individuals to have that most stressful of benefits (freedom:))

[17:29] Skeezi Westland: Jung didn't develop the Myers Briggs. It was developed based on his theories.

[17:29] Deoridhe Quandry: And the Myers Briggs has only one gender-related variant, which is the feeling/thinking axis, and which the psychologists themselves pointed out was likely societally influenced.

[17:29] Poot Dibou: in any case, I didn't say "every" man and "every" woman

[17:29] Rothmiel Odigaunt: that's what I mean Skee

[17:30] Wytchwhisper Sadofsky: I think being aware of your own patterns help u avoid falling back into them cause then u approach communication with others differently

[17:31] DaSein Noyes: but freedom from preconceived notions allows us not to neglect important things by assuming them and then dealing with the horrors of disappointment