



Identify – Detach – Decide

As he grows, the recovering codependent will learn to identify codependent behavior, detach to reflect on his feelings and circumstances, and decide to make good choices. Let's look at these three elements of the healing process.

Identify

Savior	Judas
Feelings: grandiose, importance, superior, certain, euphoric, confident, appreciated, angry, self-righteous, jealous, possessive, easily hurt	Feelings: depressed, lonely, angry, helpless, confused, fearful, hurt, inferior, hopeless, guilt, numbness, trapped, martyr, persecuted, lethargic, worthless, shame, tired
Thoughts and Words: It's all your fault. You made me fail. I can help. He (she) needs me. Why aren't people as perceptive as I am? I deserve their respect and love. I can make life good.	Thoughts and Words: It's all my fault. I'm a failure. I can't do anything right. Everything I do is wrong. Yes, but I mean no. No, but I mean yes. I don't deserve their respect and love. Life will never be good for me.
Black or White: People really need me. I am indispensable to the Kingdom of God. People won't be helped and the Great Commission can't be fulfilled without me.	Black or White: People really need me, but I'll only let them down Good Christians wouldn't think or act this way. God must be mad at me. He'll punish me.
Actions: exaggerate (high), self-promotion, overcommitted, workaholism, easily manipulated, control others through praise and condemnation, rescue people without being asked, deny reality, compulsion to avoid failure, giving, helping, try to please people, defensive, overly responsible, outbursts of anger, rationalizes, trusts self and others.	Actions: exaggerate (low), self-denigration, withdrawal, avoid people and risks, easily manipulated, control others through self-pity, deny reality, passive-aggressive, afraid to fail, believes he can't please anybody, defensive, irresponsible, outburst of anger, rationalizes, doesn't trust self but may trust others.



Detach

As you learn to detach so that you can be honest about your feelings and objective about your circumstances, you will see a sharpening contrast between codependent and healthy thoughts, feelings and actions. Perhaps it would be helpful to list some questions to ask yourself when you detach. Here are some suggestions.

- *Why did he say (do) that to me?*
- *What did she mean?*
- *How do I feel about it?*
- *How would a healthy person feel?*
- *Is he controlling me? Condemning me? Neglecting me?*
- *Why do I feel guilty? Driven? Afraid? Lonely?*
- *Am I rescuing?*
- *Am I acting as a savior? A Judas?*

Also, it might be helpful to develop some statements that trigger certain thought processes in your mind. This may seem “hokey” but getting a handle on objectivity is very difficult for codependents. Use whatever helps you! Here are a few statements that may help you think and feel.

- *I'm not responsible for making him happy.*
- *I'm not responsible for fixing her problem.*
- *He needs to be responsible for himself.*
- *I can respond calmly.*
- *I can say no.*
- *I can say yes.*
- *I can make my own decision.*
- *I feel angry...lonely...guilty...driven...afraid.*
- *I am loved, forgiven and accepted by God through Jesus Christ.*

Decide

Setting Limits – Codependent behavior has very few limits. We feel responsible for everyone and everything. We try to help everybody. We feel guilty about everything. But as our sense of identity, independence and objectivity grows, we will quickly realize that we cannot continue life without limits. We need to set limits clearly and firmly, such as:

- *This is what I will do. This is what I won't do.*
- *I will not take this kind of behavior anymore.*
- *I'm not responsible for his happiness.*
- *I refuse to be manipulated any longer by her.*
- *I'm sorry. I wish I could help you, but I can't.*
- *Why did you say that to me? Do you know how I feel when you say things like that?*
- *I don't want to talk about this.*
- *I want to talk about this.*