

Healing Your Roots

A Guide to Understanding Your Story and Building Healthier Patterns

Understanding How Childhood Experiences Shape Adult Coping

A Note from Lisa Doyle, certified CBT Life Coach

Welcome. You have already taken a courageous step simply by opening this workbook.

This workbook was created with you in mind — not to label you or diagnose you, but to help you understand your own story with kindness and curiosity. The things that happened to you in childhood were not your fault. The ways you learned to cope were smart and creative. They helped you survive.

Now, we get to explore together which parts of that survival story are still serving you — and which parts might be ready to change.

There is no rush. There are no wrong answers. This is your journey, and you are the expert on your own life. If you wish to explore these more in therapy, please feel free to reach out. If you have any questions about this workbook, I would be happy to answer them. Feel free to start with an email at pioneerstjoe@yahoo.com or by calling or texting 816-205-0082.

— *With warmth and respect, Lisa Doyle*

I am not charging for this workbook but if you would like to donate to help with the time and effort I put into compiling this — it is appreciated. Venmo: Lisa-Doyle-42, Cash App: \$lisacounselor or credit card: <https://square.link/u/t8oHcKYE>

How to Use This Workbook

For Clients

This workbook is yours. You can write in it, doodle in the margins, skip around, or go in order — whatever feels right for you. There are no grades here and no one is judging your answers.

Here are a few things to keep in mind as you go:

- **Go at your own pace.** There is no timeline. If a section feels heavy, it is okay to put the workbook down and come back to it. Your comfort and safety come first.
- **There are no right or wrong answers.** These activities are about your experience — and only you know what that is.
- **You do not have to share anything you are not ready to share.** This workbook is for you. What you write stays private unless you choose to discuss it.
- **Notice how you feel as you read and write.** If you start to feel overwhelmed, try taking a few slow breaths, placing your feet flat on the floor, or taking a short break. Your well-being matters more than finishing any page.
- **Be gentle with yourself.** You are learning about your story, and that takes courage. Treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend.

A Reminder

If you find that certain topics bring up very strong feelings — sadness, anger, fear, or feeling disconnected — please reach out to your therapist or counselor. This workbook is meant to support your healing, not to be done alone in a crisis moment.

Understanding Your Early World

In this section, we look at what it was like growing up in your family. Understanding where you came from is the first step in understanding who you are today — and who you are becoming.

What Is a Dysfunctional Family System?

The word "dysfunctional" can sound harsh, but it simply means a family system that had trouble meeting the emotional and physical needs of the people in it. Many families are dysfunctional — not because people are bad, but because pain, stress, trauma, addiction, mental illness, or their own unhealed wounds got in the way.

A dysfunctional family system often includes one or more of the following:

- **Unpredictability:** You never knew what mood a parent would be in, or what would happen next. Life felt like walking on eggshells.
- **Emotional unavailability:** A parent's body was present, but they were checked out emotionally — due to depression, addiction, stress, or their own pain.
- **Role reversals:** Children were expected to take care of parents' emotional needs, rather than the other way around. This is sometimes called "parentification."
- **Neglect:** Physical or emotional needs — food, safety, warmth, comfort, encouragement — were not reliably met.
- **Abuse:** Physical, emotional, sexual, or verbal harm was present in the home.
- **Chaos:** The family system was disorganized, with no consistent rules, routines, or safe structure.
- **Secrets and denial:** Problems were minimized, hidden, or never spoken about openly. "We don't talk about that."

7 Healthy Family Systems vs Toxic Family Systems:

<https://youtu.be/5ZOjFdNiH2g?si=vNANcicpfiPEkLci>

Something Important to Remember

Growing up in a dysfunctional family does not mean you are broken. It means you grew up in a difficult environment and you adapted. Your responses were *normal reactions to abnormal situations*. This workbook is about understanding those adaptations — with compassion, not judgment.

The Roles Children Play

In families with ongoing stress or dysfunction, children often take on unspoken roles to help manage the chaos, keep the peace, or get their needs met. These roles can become deeply ingrained and follow us into adulthood. See if any of these feel familiar to you.

Role	What It Looks Like	The Hidden Cost
The Hero / Caretaker	The responsible one. Gets good grades, holds things together, takes care of siblings or parents. Makes the family "look good." Often praised for being so mature.	Learns that love must be earned through performance. Struggles to ask for help or show vulnerability. May burn out easily in adult relationships.
The Scapegoat	Identified as "the problem." Gets in trouble, acts out, or expresses the family's hidden pain outwardly. Often blamed for family tension.	Internalizes shame and the belief that something is fundamentally wrong with them. May struggle with anger, trust, or authority in adulthood.
The Lost Child	Goes quiet and invisible. Avoids attention, stays in their room, escapes into books, games, or fantasy. Tries not to be a burden.	Learns to suppress needs and feelings. May struggle with loneliness, identity, and asking for what they need in relationships.
The Mascot / Clown	Uses humor and charm to lighten the mood and reduce tension. Keeps things light so no one has to face the pain. Everyone loves them.	Learns to hide real feelings behind a smile. May struggle to be taken seriously or to let people see their struggles as an adult.

Note: Many children move between roles, or take on more than one. Roles can also shift depending on birth order, changes in the family, or which parent is present.

Dysfunctional Family Roles:

<https://youtu.be/wvnlDJ1O3OQ?si=HDcob0B6aTQ7So1y>

How the Nervous System Learns Safety

Your nervous system is the part of your body that is always scanning the world around you, asking one simple question: *"Am I safe right now?"*

A researcher named Dr. Stephen Porges developed a theory called **Polyvagal Theory**, which helps explain how our bodies respond to safety and danger. In simple terms, our nervous system has three basic states:

- **Safe and Connected (Ventral Vagal):** You feel calm, open, curious, and able to connect with others. This is the "window of tolerance" — the ideal zone for learning, relating, and growing.
- **Fight or Flight (Sympathetic):** Your body senses danger and mobilizes energy — your heart races, your muscles tense, you feel anxious or angry. You are ready to act.
- **Shutdown / Freeze (Dorsal Vagal):** When escape seems impossible, the body shuts down — you may feel numb, disconnected, hopeless, or "checked out."

When you grew up in an environment where safety was unpredictable, your nervous system learned to be on high alert — often all the time. This is not a character flaw. It is biology. Your brain and body were doing exactly what they were designed to do.

What Your Brain Was Doing to Protect You

When children face stress or danger, their brains activate one of four survival responses — often called the **4 F's**:

- **Fight:** "I'll push back or get angry." Anger, defiance, or aggression as a way to feel some control or safety.

- **Flight:** "I'll get away." Avoiding, escaping, staying busy, running from conflict or discomfort.
- **Freeze:** "I can't move." Going blank, shutting down, dissociating, or feeling paralyzed.
- **Fawn:** "I'll make you happy so you won't hurt me." People-pleasing, agreeing, becoming whatever someone needs you to be.

As a child, these responses were brilliant. They helped you navigate situations you had no power to change. As adults, these same responses can get activated in situations that are not actually dangerous — like a disagreement at work or a difficult conversation in a relationship. This is one of the core things we explore in this workbook.

Fight/Flight/Freeze – Steps to break out of the cycle:

https://youtu.be/4jY1Dv_0a4o?si=RJ2ek7M4eq1HqAyE

Reflection Prompts — Section 1

Take a moment to reflect. Write whatever comes to mind — there are no wrong answers.

1. What role (or roles) did you play in your family growing up? Does one of the descriptions above feel familiar to you?
2. What did "safe" look and feel like for you as a child? Were there people, places, or times that felt safer than others?
3. Which of the four survival responses (fight, flight, freeze, fawn) do you recognize most in yourself — as a child, or even today?
4. If you could go back and whisper something kind to the child who was playing that role, what would you say?

Worksheet 1.1

My Family Map

Think about the key people in your family when you were growing up — parents, stepparents, siblings, grandparents, or anyone else who played a significant role. For each person, fill in the table below. Go as far back or as early as feels comfortable.

Person <i>(e.g., Mom, Dad, Sibling)</i>	Their Role / Behavior <i>How did they act? What was their role in the family?</i>	How I Felt Around Them <i>Safe? Anxious? Invisible? Loved?</i>	What I Learned from Them <i>A belief, a behavior, or a way of seeing the world</i>

After completing the table, reflect: Is there a pattern in what you learned? Did different people teach you similar lessons, or very different ones?

The Messages I Received

Complete the table below with up to eight messages you received as a child. These might be things like:

"I am too much," "Don't show weakness," "My needs don't matter," "Love has to be earned," "The world isn't safe."

[illegible]

Circle one message that you still carry with you today. In the space below, write: *Is this message true? Is it something you would say to someone you love?*

Section Two

How the Past Shows Up Today

In this section, we look at how the coping strategies you developed as a child may have shaped your relationships, behaviors, and beliefs as an adult. Understanding these patterns is not about blame — it is about awareness and choice.

What Is Codependency?

The word "codependency" can feel loaded, but here is what it really means in plain terms:

codependency is a set of learned behaviors that helped you survive an unpredictable or painful environment. It is not a character flaw. It is not a sign that something is wrong with you. It is a sign that you adapted — and adapted well — to a world that required you to focus outward on others in order to feel safe.

Codependency typically develops when a child grows up in a home where:

- Their own emotional needs were not reliably met
- They learned to manage or monitor others' emotions to stay safe
- Expressing needs led to conflict, rejection, or punishment
- Love felt conditional — earned through behavior, compliance, or caretaking

Over time, these survival strategies become deeply wired patterns. As adults, they can show up as difficulty with boundaries, over-giving, fear of conflict, and a persistent sense that your own needs come last — or do not matter at all.

An Important Reframe

Codependency is not a diagnosis or a life sentence. It is a pattern — and patterns can change. Every strategy listed in this section was once useful. The goal is not to shame yourself for having it, but to understand where it came from so you can decide, with intention, whether it is still serving you.

Common Codependent Patterns

Read through the following patterns. Place a checkmark next to any that feel familiar. Remember: recognizing a pattern is the first step toward changing it.

✓	Pattern	What It Can Look Like
	Difficulty saying no	Agreeing to things you don't want to do, then feeling resentful. Saying yes to avoid conflict or to keep the peace.
	Over-responsibility for others' feelings	Feeling like it is your job to manage how others feel. Changing your behavior to prevent someone else's upset or anger.
	Minimizing your own needs	Telling yourself your feelings or needs are not a big deal. Putting everyone else first, often until you are depleted.
	Seeking approval	Measuring your worth by others' opinions of you. Feeling anxious when you think someone is upset with you.
	Fear of conflict	Avoiding disagreement at all costs. Keeping the peace even when something harms you. Difficulty expressing anger directly.

✓	Pattern	What It Can Look Like
	Enmeshment	Having trouble knowing where you end and others begin. Absorbing others' moods and problems as your own.
	Fear of abandonment	Terror of being left, rejected, or alone. Staying in unhealthy situations to avoid that fear.
	Caretaking at your own expense	Giving, fixing, and rescuing even when it hurts you. Feeling most "useful" or "loved" when someone needs you.
	Difficulty trusting yourself	Second-guessing your own perceptions, feelings, or decisions. Needing constant reassurance from others.
	Hypervigilance in relationships	Always scanning for signs that someone is upset or about to leave. Reading the room constantly to feel safe.

The Connection Between Childhood Roles and Adult Patterns

The role you played as a child did not disappear when you grew up — it simply moved into your adult relationships, workplaces, and the story you tell yourself. Here is how those early roles often connect to adult patterns:

Childhood Role	Common Adult Patterns
The Hero / Caretaker	Over-functioning, difficulty delegating, caretaking at own expense, tying worth to productivity and achievement, struggling to receive help
The Scapegoat	Internalized shame, difficulty trusting authority, defensiveness, fear of being seen as "bad," sometimes self-sabotage

Childhood Role	Common Adult Patterns
The Lost Child	Emotional isolation, difficulty asking for needs to be met, over-independence, trouble with intimacy, minimizing own needs
The Mascot / Clown	Using humor to deflect real feelings, difficulty being vulnerable, keeping relationships surface-level, fear of being "too much"

When Coping Becomes a Cage

Imagine a young child who learned that the safest way to survive was to be very, very quiet. To need nothing. To disappear. As a child, this strategy worked — it kept them under the radar and out of harm's way.

Now imagine that same child as an adult — in a loving relationship with a partner who genuinely wants to know what they need. But every time their partner asks, that adult goes quiet, says "I'm fine," and disappears into themselves. The old strategy — the one that once protected them — is now keeping them from connection.

This is what we mean when we say coping can become a cage. It is not that the strategy is wrong. It is that the environment has changed — and the strategy has not caught up yet. That is what we are working on in this workbook.

Codependency Recovery Explained:

<https://youtu.be/wNse0obpotc?si=VEzPT8zE7TMiRrhh>

Reflection Prompts — Section 2

Take your time with these questions. Be as honest as you can — with yourself.

1. Which codependent patterns do you recognize most clearly in yourself? Pick two or three and describe a recent situation where you saw that pattern show up.
2. How do these patterns help you? In what situations are they still useful or protective?
3. How do these patterns hurt you? What do they cost you in your relationships, health, or sense of self?
4. Can you trace any of these patterns back to your childhood role or family experience? What is the connection you see?

Worksheet 2.1

My Coping Patterns Inventory

For each pattern below, rate how often you experience it, identify a situation that tends to trigger it, and reflect on what you are hoping will happen when you use it.

Pattern	How Often? <i>Rarely / Sometimes / Often</i>	Situation That Triggers It <i>What tends to set this off?</i>	What I'm Hoping Will Happen <i>What am I hoping to achieve or avoid?</i>
Saying yes when I mean no			
Managing others' emotions			
Putting my needs last			
Seeking approval or reassurance			
Avoiding conflict			
Fear of being abandoned or rejected			

Pattern	How Often? <i>Rarely / Sometimes / Often</i>	Situation That Triggers It <i>What tends to set this off?</i>	What I'm Hoping Will Happen <i>What am I hoping to achieve or avoid?</i>
Rescuing or fixing others			
Doubting my own perceptions			
Scanning for others' moods			
Other: _____			

Worksheet 2.2

Tracing the Root

Choose 2–3 patterns from your inventory that feel most significant or most present in your life right now. For each one, follow the sentence starters below to trace the pattern back to its roots. Take your time — this is meaningful work.

Pattern #1: _____

I learned to _____ when...

At the time, it helped me because...

Today, it shows up when...

The cost of this pattern is...

Pattern #2: _____

I learned to _____ when...

At the time, it helped me because...

Today, it shows up when...

The cost of this pattern is...

Pattern #3: _____

I learned to _____ when...

At the time, it helped me because...

Today, it shows up when...

The cost of this pattern is...

Section Three

Your Body Keeps Score

In this section, we turn our attention to the body — because the body holds memories, emotions, and stress in ways the thinking mind often cannot access. You do not have to understand this fully to begin noticing it.

How Trauma Lives in the Body

Trauma researcher Dr. Bessel van der Kolk, in his widely influential work, has described the concept that trauma is not stored primarily as a cognitive memory — that is, a story we can tell ourselves in words — but rather as a physical experience. The body holds the residue of what happened: in muscle tension, breathing patterns, gut sensations, startle responses, and the way we physically brace or shut down when something feels threatening.

In simpler terms: your body remembers what your mind has tried to protect you from. A smell, a tone of voice, a touch, or even a particular time of year can trigger a full-body response that seems to come from nowhere — because the body recognized something before your conscious mind did.

This is not weakness. This is biology. And it means that healing trauma is not just about talking — it is also about learning to listen to and work with your body.

Signs That Your Body Is Holding Stress or Trauma

- Chronic muscle tension, especially in the shoulders, jaw, neck, or stomach
- Shallow breathing or holding your breath without realizing it
- Feeling physically numb or disconnected from your body
- Stomach upset, digestive issues, or a "knot in your stomach"
- Difficulty relaxing or feeling settled, even when things are calm

- Strong physical reactions (heart racing, sweating, trembling) in response to perceived threat
- Fatigue that does not improve with rest
- Physical symptoms with no clear medical cause

Beginning to Listen to Your Body

Body-based awareness — also called somatic awareness — is the practice of gently tuning in to physical sensations without judgment. This is a skill, and like any skill, it gets easier with practice.

You do not need to be perfect at this. You only need to be willing to try. The goal is not to feel relaxed all the time — the goal is simply to notice what is happening in your body, because that information is part of your healing.

Here are some simple places to begin:

- **Notice your breath.** Is it fast or slow? Deep or shallow? Where do you feel it — in your chest or your belly?
- **Notice your body posture.** Are your shoulders up near your ears? Is your jaw clenched? Are you holding your stomach in?
- **Notice physical sensations.** Warmth, coolness, tingling, heaviness, tightness, emptiness — what do you notice right now?
- **Notice areas of numbness.** Sometimes parts of the body go "offline" as a protective response. That is okay to notice too.

Worksheet 3.1

Body Check-In

The body scan below invites you to bring gentle attention to different areas of your body. This is not about fixing anything — it is simply about noticing.

Before you begin: Find a comfortable position. Take two or three slow breaths. Allow your eyes to soften or close if that feels safe.

Using the body diagram below, mark or describe where you notice the following:

- Place a **T** where you hold tension
- Place an **A** where you tend to feel anxiety or nervousness first
- Place an **N** where you notice numbness or disconnection
- Place an **S** where you feel most settled or safe in your body

Front of Body (HEAD) [
NECK/THROAT] [CHEST] [L
| R] [STOMACH] [L | R]
[HIP/PELVIS] [L LEG | R
LEG] [L FOOT | R FOOT]

Back of Body (HEAD) [
NECK/UPPER BACK] [L
SHOULDER | R SHOULDER] [MID
BACK] [LOWER BACK] [
HIPS/GLUTES] [L LEG | R LEG
] [L FOOT | R FOOT]

Reflection questions:

Where do you feel stress first in your body?

Where — if anywhere — do you feel safe or settled in your body?

Is there anything in your body right now that surprised you to notice?

Body Scan Mindfulness Meditation

<https://youtu.be/2FnFXq6Z13Q?si=9ePjQoNimET6uPxt>

Worksheet 3.2

Sensation Log — 5-Day Tracking

Over the next five days, use this log to track moments when you notice a strong physical sensation or emotion. You do not need to analyze it — just notice and record. Over time, patterns will emerge that can guide your healing.

Intensity scale: 1 = very mild, 5 = moderate, 10 = very intense

Day	Situation <i>What was happening?</i>	Body Sensation <i>What did you feel physically?</i>	Emotion <i>What did you feel emotionally?</i>	Intensity 1–10	What I Did <i>How did you respond?</i>
Day 1					
Day 2					
Day 3					
Day 4					
Day 5					

After 5 days, reflect: Do you notice any patterns? Are certain situations consistently triggering? Are there times of day or types of interactions that seem to move you out of your window of tolerance?

Building New Patterns — Skills & Tools

This section is about possibility. Science tells us that the brain can change — and change in ways that support healing, connection, and peace. Here you will learn practical skills to begin building new patterns, one step at a time.

Neuroplasticity: Your Brain Can Change

For a long time, scientists believed that the brain was fixed — that by a certain age, it stopped developing and could not fundamentally change. We now know that is not true. The brain maintains the ability to form new connections, learn new patterns, and rewire old ones throughout our entire lives. This capacity is called **neuroplasticity**.

What this means for you: the patterns laid down in childhood are not permanent. Every time you practice a new response — noticing before reacting, setting a gentle boundary, asking for what you need — you are literally building new neural pathways. It takes repetition. It takes patience. And it absolutely works.

A Note on Practice

Learning a new skill feels awkward at first. That discomfort is not a sign you are doing it wrong — it is a sign that you are doing something new. Be patient with yourself. Even small, imperfect practice creates change. You do not have to get it right. You just have to keep trying.

Rewire your brain!

<https://youtu.be/2FnFXq6Z13Q?si=9ePjQoNimET6uPxt>

Skill 1 — Grounding Techniques

Grounding techniques help bring you back to the present moment when you feel overwhelmed, anxious, or disconnected. They work by engaging your senses and your body to interrupt the stress response.

5-4-3-2-1 Sensory Grounding

When you feel overwhelmed, engage each of your five senses by identifying:

- **5 things you can SEE** — look around and name them
- **4 things you can TOUCH** — notice texture, temperature, pressure
- **3 things you can HEAR** — listen for sounds near and far
- **2 things you can SMELL** — notice any scents in the air
- **1 thing you can TASTE** — notice any taste in your mouth

Box Breathing (4-4-4-4)

Box breathing activates the body's calming response. Try this sequence:

1. **Inhale** slowly for 4 counts
2. **Hold** the breath for 4 counts
3. **Exhale** slowly for 4 counts
4. **Hold** again for 4 counts

Repeat 3–5 times. Notice how your body feels after each round.

Bilateral Tapping (Butterfly Hug)

Cross your arms over your chest so your hands rest near your shoulders or upper arms. Gently and alternately tap — left, right, left, right — in a slow, steady rhythm. As you tap, breathe slowly. This gentle bilateral stimulation can help soothe an activated nervous system and bring you back to the present.

Skill 2 — Boundary Basics

What are boundaries? Boundaries are not walls. They are not about keeping people out. A boundary is a limit or guideline that communicates how you need to be treated in order to feel safe, respected, and able to be in relationship with someone. Boundaries are an act of self-respect — and an act of love, because they make authentic connection possible.

Why are boundaries hard for codependent individuals? If you grew up in an environment where your boundaries were not respected — or where having needs led to conflict or rejection — setting boundaries as an adult can feel terrifying. It can feel selfish, rude, or like a guarantee that you will be abandoned. These feelings make complete sense given what you experienced. And they can change.

Three Types of Boundaries

Type	What It Means	Example
Physical	Limits around your body, personal space, and touch	"I am not comfortable with hugs right now."
Emotional	Limits around how much emotional labor you take on for others, and what you share about yourself	"I care about you, but I'm not able to be your emotional caretaker."
Energetic	Limits on your time, attention, and energy — protecting what you need to function and thrive	"I need to leave by 8pm to get enough rest."

Scripts for Saying No

- "That doesn't work for me."
- "I appreciate you asking, but I'm not able to do that right now."
- "I need some time to think about that before I answer."
- "I care about you, and I can't do this."
- "No, thank you." (complete as a full sentence — no explanation required)

Why setting boundaries is important!

https://youtu.be/rtsHUeKnkC8?si=-4ReLFuz1c_dbqT1

Skill 3 — The STOP Skill (from DBT)

The STOP skill comes from Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) and is a powerful tool for pausing before reacting — especially in emotionally intense moments. It creates a small but important gap between stimulus and response.

Letter	Step	What to Do
S	Stop	Freeze. Do not act. Do not speak yet. Do not send that text. Pause completely.
T	Take a breath	Take one slow, deliberate breath. This signals to your nervous system that you are safe.
O	Observe	Notice what is happening — inside you (thoughts, feelings, body sensations) and around you (what actually happened, what was actually said).
P	Proceed mindfully	Ask yourself: "What response is in line with my values and goals right now?" Then act from that place, not from reaction.

Skill 4 — Needs Identification

Wants vs. Needs: A want is something that would be nice to have but is not essential for your well-being. A need is something fundamental — something whose absence causes real harm over time. For many people who grew up in codependent or dysfunctional families, needs were minimized, denied, or punished. Reconnecting with your needs is a radical act of self-care.

Psychologist Abraham Maslow described human needs in layers — from the most basic (survival) to the highest (growth and meaning). For trauma recovery, we might think of it this way:

Level	Need	In Recovery, This Looks Like...
Safety	Physical and emotional safety	Not being in danger; feeling that your environment and relationships are reliable
Stability	Routine, predictability, basic needs met	Having enough food, sleep, shelter; a sense of order
Connection	Belonging, love, relationships	Feeling seen, valued, and genuinely close to others
Esteem	Self-worth, recognition, autonomy	Feeling capable and worthy — not because of what you do, but because of who you are
Growth	Meaning, purpose, creativity	Doing things that feel meaningful; growing into who you want to be

Unmet Needs vs. Unrealistic Expectations: Where to Draw the Line in a Relationship

<https://youtu.be/INiNSU55uQE?si=IcPASsB0VsjeCXSD>

Worksheet 4.1

My Boundary Practice

Identify 2–3 situations in your current life where you feel a boundary might be needed. For each one, draft what that boundary could sound like, and note any fears or barriers you anticipate.

Situation <i>Where do you feel your boundary is being crossed, or where do you struggle to set one?</i>	My Boundary Statement <i>Draft what you might say. Use the scripts above if helpful.</i>	Fears / Barriers <i>What feels scary or hard about this boundary?</i>	One Small First Step <i>What is one tiny thing you could do?</i>

Situation <i>Where do you feel your boundary is being crossed, or where do you struggle to set one?</i>	My Boundary Statement <i>Draft what you might say. Use the scripts above if helpful.</i>	Fears / Barriers <i>What feels scary or hard about this boundary?</i>	One Small First Step <i>What is one tiny thing you could do?</i>

Worksheet 4.2

My Needs Inventory

Below is a list of common human needs. Place a checkmark next to any that feel unmet or undermet in your life right now. Then answer the reflection questions at the bottom.

✓	Need	✓	Need	✓	Need
	Safety / Security		Connection / Belonging		Rest / Sleep
	Love / Affection		Autonomy / Choice		Joy / Play
	Recognition / To be seen		Respect / Dignity		Creativity / Expression
	Physical touch / Comfort		Meaning / Purpose		Peace / Quiet
	Honesty / Trust		Celebration / Fun		Nourishment / Food / Water
	To be heard / Understood		Movement / Exercise		Spiritual connection
	Support / Help		Growth / Learning		Other: _____

Choose one unmet need to focus on. Which one feels most important right now?

What is one small, concrete thing you could do this week to begin meeting this need?

What gets in the way of meeting this need? (Old beliefs, patterns, fears?)

What would it feel like if this need were consistently met?

Section Five

Moving Forward — Your Healing Vision

You have done significant work in this workbook. In this final section, we look forward — with honesty about the road ahead and hope for what is possible when we commit to our own healing.

Healing Is Not a Straight Line

One of the most important things to understand about healing from trauma and codependency is this: **it is not a straight line.** There will be days when you feel like you have made enormous progress — and days when an old pattern shows up with full force and you wonder if you have made any progress at all.

Those hard days are not setbacks. They are part of the process. Healing often looks like a spiral — you keep revisiting the same themes, but each time, you come to them with a little more awareness, a little more compassion, a little more choice.

Normalizing the Journey

- It is okay to grieve what you did not get as a child.
- It is okay to feel angry. Anger often means you are beginning to recognize what was not okay.
- It is okay to have good weeks and hard weeks.
- Progress in healing is often quiet and internal before it becomes visible in behavior.
- Setbacks are not failures — they are information. Ask: "What does this tell me about what I still need?"
- Self-compassion is not weakness — it is the very foundation of change.

What Recovery Can Look Like

Moving from surviving to thriving does not happen overnight, but it does happen. Here are some signs that healing is taking root:

- You begin to notice your patterns *before* they have fully taken over — and that pause gives you a choice
- You can set a boundary — even an imperfect one — and survive the discomfort
- You ask for what you need, even when it feels vulnerable
- You feel genuine compassion for the child you were, and stop blaming yourself for how you coped
- Relationships feel more balanced — you can both give and receive
- You trust your own perceptions more
- You begin to enjoy your life — not just manage it

Self-compassion — the practice of treating yourself with the same kindness you would offer a good friend — is not a destination but a daily practice. Researcher Dr. Kristin Neff describes it as having three parts: mindfulness (noticing what is happening without judgment), common humanity (recognizing that

suffering is part of shared human experience), and self-kindness (responding to yourself with warmth rather than criticism).

Letter to My Younger Self

One of the most powerful healing exercises is writing a letter to the younger version of yourself — the child who was living through the experiences we have explored in this workbook. This is an opportunity to offer that child what they needed and may not have received: validation, comfort, understanding, and love.

Use the sentence starters below as a guide. Write as little or as much as feels right.

Dear [your name or "little one" or whatever feels right],

I want you to know that what happened was not your fault. You were only a child, and you were doing the best you could with...

The things you did to survive — the way you _____ — were so smart and so brave, because...

I want you to know that you deserved...

The thing I most want you to hear is...

I am taking care of you now by...

*With so much love,
Your adult self*

Worksheet 5.1

My Healing Goals

Setting goals in therapy is most helpful when goals are specific, meaningful, and broken down into manageable steps. Use the format below to identify three healing goals. These do not have to be big — small, consistent steps are the foundation of lasting change.

My Goal <i>Be specific. What exactly do you want to change or practice?</i>	Why It Matters to Me <i>What will be different in your life?</i>	One Small Step I Can Take This Week	Possible Barrier <i>What might get in the way?</i>	Support I Need <i>Who or what can help?</i>
Goal 1:				
Goal 2:				
Goal 3:				

Worksheet 5.2

My Strengths and Resources

It takes strength to survive a difficult childhood. It takes courage to do this work. Before you close this workbook, take a moment to acknowledge what you already bring to your healing journey.

Part 1 — Strengths I've Developed

Complete the following prompts. Try to answer each one with something specific and genuine.

I have survived...

I am good at...

People rely on me for...

Something I have learned about myself through hard times is...

A value or quality I am proud of in myself is...

One thing I have done recently that showed courage or growth is...

Part 2 — My Support Network Map

In the circles below, write the names or descriptions of people and resources in your support network.

The closer to the center, the more trusted and close that support is.

**INNERMOST
CIRCLE** *Most
trusted — closest
relationships*

MIDDLE CIRCLE
*Good friends,
therapist, mentor*

OUTER CIRCLE
*Community, support
groups, services*

After completing your map, reflect: Are there circles that feel empty? What would it take to build more support in those areas?

The following books are widely respected in the fields of trauma recovery and codependency. They are offered here as optional reading to supplement your work in therapy and in this workbook.

Resources:

Title	Author(s)	Focus Area
<i>The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma</i>	Bessel van der Kolk, M.D.	Trauma, somatic healing, neuroscience
<i>Codependent No More: How to Stop Controlling Others and Start Caring for Yourself</i>	Melody Beattie	Codependency recovery, self-care
<i>Complex PTSD: From Surviving to Thriving</i>	Pete Walker	Complex trauma, emotional flashbacks, inner child work
<i>Adult Children of Emotionally Immature Parents</i>	Lindsay C. Gibson, Psy.D.	Emotional neglect, parental immaturity, healing
<i>Self-Compassion: The Proven Power of Being Kind to Yourself</i>	Kristin Neff, Ph.D.	Self-compassion, shame reduction, inner critic
<i>Waking the Tiger: Healing Trauma</i>	Peter A. Levine, Ph.D.	Somatic Experiencing, body-based trauma healing

Glossary of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided in plain language to help you understand the concepts used throughout this workbook.

Term	Definition
Attachment	The deep emotional bond that forms between a child and their primary caregivers. Early attachment experiences shape how we relate to others throughout life — our sense of safety, trust, and closeness in relationships.
Boundaries	Limits or guidelines that define how we need to be treated in order to feel safe and respected. Boundaries can be physical, emotional, or energetic, and they are essential to healthy relationships.
Codependency	A set of learned behaviors — such as people-pleasing, caretaking at one's own expense, and difficulty with boundaries — that developed as adaptive responses to growing up in an unpredictable or painful environment.
Dysregulation	A state in which the nervous system is out of its comfortable range — either too activated (anxious, reactive, overwhelmed) or too shut down (numb, disconnected, flat). The opposite of dysregulation is regulation.
Enmeshment	A pattern in relationships where the boundaries between people are blurry or absent — where one person's feelings, needs, and identity are entangled with another's, making it hard to know where one person ends and the other begins.
Fawn Response	A trauma survival response (alongside fight, flight, and freeze) in which a person appeases, placates, or complies with others to avoid conflict or threat. Often develops in childhood when keeping others calm felt essential to safety.

Term	Definition
Hypervigilance	A state of being constantly "on guard" — scanning the environment and other people for signs of danger or upset. A common response to chronic stress or trauma that can persist into adulthood long after the original threat is gone.
Nervous System	The body's communication system, including the brain, spinal cord, and a network of nerves throughout the body. The nervous system constantly monitors for safety and danger, and coordinates the body's responses to both.
Neuroplasticity	The brain's ability to change, adapt, and form new connections throughout life. This is the scientific foundation for why healing is possible — the brain is not fixed, and new patterns can be learned at any age.
Polyvagal Theory	A framework developed by Dr. Stephen Porges that explains how the autonomic nervous system responds to safety and threat through three states: social engagement (safe and connected), fight-or-flight (mobilized), and shutdown (immobilized).
Trauma	The lasting emotional and psychological impact of events or experiences that overwhelmed a person's ability to cope. Trauma is defined not by what happened, but by the impact it had on the person's nervous system, sense of self, and ability to function.
Window of Tolerance	A term coined by Dr. Dan Siegel for the zone of arousal in which a person can function most effectively — not too activated (hyperarousal) and not too shut down (hypoarousal). Healing work ideally happens within this window.

Notes

Use this space for your own reflections, thoughts, or anything that came up as you worked through this workbook.

Notes

Continue your reflections here — or use this space to write something to yourself that you want to remember.

"You did not create the roots — but you can grow new branches."

Journal Prompts for Codependency

1. **What emotion am I feeling right now — before I check in with anyone else?** Sit with this for at least two minutes before writing. Codependent patterns often mask the answer with "I'm fine" or immediately redirect to someone else's feelings.
2. **When was the last time I said "I'm fine" when I wasn't?** What was actually happening inside me? What was I afraid would happen if I told the truth?
3. **Describe a recent situation where I felt responsible for someone else's emotions.** What did I do? What did I sacrifice? Looking back, was their emotional state actually my responsibility?
4. **What parts of myself do I hide in my closest relationships?** Write about the version of you that only exists when you're alone — the opinions, preferences, and feelings you edit out around others.
5. **If no one would be disappointed, angry, or hurt by my answer — what would I actually want right now?** Not what's "realistic" or "reasonable." What you genuinely want.
6. **What beliefs about myself did I absorb from my family of origin?** List them without editing. Then ask: which of these are actually true, and which did I inherit?
7. **When I imagine setting a boundary with someone I love, what fear comes up?** Name the fear specifically — abandonment? Anger? Rejection? Being "selfish"?
8. **How do I feel when I have nothing to fix, solve, or manage for someone else?** Describe the sensation honestly — relief? Anxiety? Emptiness? What does that tell me about where I find my sense of purpose?

9. **What's the difference between empathy and losing myself?** Write about a time you crossed that line. What was the first sign that you'd gone from caring *about* someone to disappearing *into* their experience?
10. **If I described myself without referencing any relationship or role (not a partner, parent, employee, friend), who would I be?** What's left when you remove every label that connects you to someone else?

Tip: If you notice yourself immediately thinking about how your answers affect someone else, pause. That reflexive redirect is itself codependency in action. The prompt is about **you**.

Setting Boundaries

1. **Name a boundary I know I need but haven't set.** What's the cost of not having it? What story am I telling myself about why I "can't" set it?
2. **When someone criticizes me, do I automatically absorb it as truth?** Write about the last time this happened. What if their criticism says more about them than about me?
3. **What's the difference between a boundary and a wall?** Where in my life do I have walls instead of boundaries? What am I protecting myself from — and is the protection working?
4. **Describe a time I said yes when I meant no.** What physical sensations did I feel when I agreed? What was I afraid of? What would I say now if I could redo the conversation?
5. **Who in my life consistently crosses my boundaries?** Do they know they're crossing them — have I ever clearly stated the boundary? If not, why?
6. **What was the model for boundaries in my childhood home?** Were boundaries respected, ridiculed, or nonexistent? How does that pattern show up in my adult relationships?

7. **Write about a time someone set a boundary with me and I felt hurt or rejected.** Looking back, was their boundary reasonable? Can I separate their need for space from my worth as a person?
8. **What internal boundaries do I struggle with?** Do I take on others' moods? Let their opinions override my own? Feel responsible for their choices? Pick one pattern and trace it back to its origin.
9. **If I had perfect boundaries tomorrow, what would change in my daily life?** Be specific. What would I stop doing? What would I start doing? How would I *feel* different?
10. **Write a script for one boundary I need to set this week.** Use this format: "I feel [emotion] when [situation]. I need [specific request]. If that doesn't work, I will [consequence]." Practice saying it out loud.

Journal Prompts for Self-Esteem and Self-Worth

1. **Where does my sense of worth come from right now?** List the top five sources. How many of them depend on another person's response? What happens to my self-worth when those sources disappear?
2. **What compliment do I struggle to accept — and why?** Write about the internal resistance. What belief system makes it hard to let in something positive about myself?
3. **Write about something I'm genuinely good at that has nothing to do with helping others.** This might be harder than it sounds. Codependency often makes it difficult to value skills that don't serve someone else.
4. **When did I first learn that my worth depended on being useful?** Trace this belief back as far as you can. Who taught it to you — through words or through the way love was distributed?

5. **What would I do differently if I truly believed I deserved good things — not because I earned them, but because I exist?** Don't censor. Write the version of your life where worthiness isn't something you have to prove.
6. **How do I talk to myself when I make a mistake?** Write the exact internal dialogue. Now write what you would say to a close friend who made the same mistake. Notice the gap.
7. **What's the difference between healthy self-esteem and selfishness?** Codependent thinking often collapses these two concepts. Define each one clearly. Where did you learn that taking care of yourself was "selfish"?
8. **List ten things about myself that I value — that have nothing to do with what I do for others.** Qualities, interests, perspectives, experiences. If you struggle to reach ten, that's important information.
9. **When I imagine someone loving me without needing anything from me, what comes up?** Comfort? Disbelief? Anxiety? What does your reaction reveal about your relationship with unconditional love?
10. **Write a permission slip to yourself.** "I give myself permission to ____." Fill in at least five completions. These are your reclaimed rights — the things codependency convinced you weren't allowed.

Journal Prompts for Emotional Regulation

1. **On a scale of 0-10, where is my emotional intensity right now?** If it's below 3, am I genuinely calm or am I numbing? If it's above 7, what triggered the escalation? Practice noticing without judging.
2. **What emotions do I allow myself to feel, and which ones are "off-limits"?** Many codependent people have a short list of "acceptable" emotions (usually sadness and worry for others) and a long list of forbidden ones (usually anger, desire, and joy that isn't about someone else).

3. **Describe the last time I felt anger.** What did I do with it? Swallow it? Redirect it into caretaking? Explode? What would "healthy anger" look like — anger that protects my boundaries without damaging the relationship?
4. **What is my fawn response?** The fawn response is the automatic impulse to appease, agree, or accommodate when you sense conflict or disapproval. Describe your specific version. What does it look like in action? What triggers it?
5. **When I'm overwhelmed by someone else's emotions, what happens in my body?** Tight chest? Stomach knot? Dissociation? Learning your body's signals is the first step to recognizing enmeshment before it takes over.
6. **Write about a time I overreacted — and a time I underreacted.** What do these two extremes have in common? What's the pattern beneath both?
7. **What's my emotional "default setting" in relationships?** Anxious vigilance? Cheerful accommodation? Quiet resentment? Name it honestly. Then ask: when did this default get installed?
8. **What would it feel like to sit with an uncomfortable emotion for five full minutes without fixing it, distracting from it, or making it about someone else?** Try it. Then write about the experience.
9. **How do I distinguish between my emotions and emotions I've absorbed from someone else?** If you struggle with this, describe a recent emotional experience and try to separate what's yours from what's theirs.
10. **What calming strategies actually work for me — and which ones are just avoidance in disguise?** "I go for a walk" might be genuine self-care or it might be fleeing difficult conversations. Be honest about the difference.

Journal Prompts for Codependent Relationship Patterns

1. **In my closest relationship, what role do I play?** Caretaker? Fixer? Peacemaker? Rescuer? When did I audition for this role — and did I actually want it?
2. **What do I get from being needed?** Be brutally honest. Does being indispensable make me feel safe? Worthy? In control? What would happen if this person didn't need me anymore?
3. **Describe a pattern I keep repeating across different relationships.** Different people, same dynamic. If codependent patterns contributed to a friendship ending, [friendship breakup journal prompts](#) can help you grieve the loss while untangling the dynamics that played a role. What's the common denominator? (Hint: it's probably you — and that's not a criticism, it's useful information.)
4. **Have I ever stayed in a relationship because leaving felt like abandoning the other person?** What was the cost of staying? What do I believe about my right to leave situations that aren't working for me?
5. **When was the last time I did something for someone that they could have done for themselves?** What motivated me? Was it genuine helpfulness, or was it a way to feel needed, avoid their discomfort, or maintain control?
6. **What's the difference between supporting someone and enabling them?** Write about a specific situation where you're not sure which one you were doing. What would support without enabling look like?
7. **Do I keep score in my relationships?** ("I did this for you, so you should...") Where did I learn that love is transactional? What would it look like to give without an invisible ledger?
8. **What conversations am I avoiding right now — and why?** List them. For each one, name the fear underneath the avoidance. Then ask: is maintaining this silence actually protecting the relationship, or is it slowly corroding it?

9. **Write about the healthiest relationship you've ever witnessed.** What made it healthy? What specific behaviors, communication patterns, or boundaries did you observe? How does it differ from your own relationship patterns?
10. **If I stopped managing everyone else's emotions, needs, and problems for one week — what would happen?** Write the catastrophe scenario. Then write the realistic scenario. Notice the gap between them.

Journal Prompts for Attachment Styles and Codependency

1. **When my partner (or closest person) pulls away, what's my immediate internal response?** Panic? Pursuit? Withdrawal? Anger? Describe the sequence — physical sensations first, then thoughts, then behavior. This is your attachment system activating.
2. **What did I learn about love from watching my parents' relationship?** Not what they said about love — what their behavior taught me. Was love stable or unpredictable? Conditional or unconditional? Safe or something you had to earn?
3. **Do I tend to idealize people early in relationships and then feel disappointed later?** Write about the pattern. What am I projecting onto new people? What need am I hoping they'll finally fulfill?
4. **How do I handle conflict in relationships — and does that match how conflict was handled in my childhood?** People-please? Shut down? Escalate? Flee? Draw the direct line from then to now.
5. **Write about a time I confused intensity with intimacy.** Drama, crisis, and emotional highs can feel like deep connection, especially for anxiously attached people. What does genuine, quiet intimacy feel like to me — and is it less appealing? Why?
6. **What's my relationship with being alone?** Not just physically alone — emotionally alone. Can I sit in solitude without reaching for my phone, a distraction, or another person? What comes up when I try?

7. **If I could design a perfectly secure relationship, what would it look like?** Describe the communication patterns, the boundaries, the way conflict is handled. Now ask: am I capable of showing up that way? What would I need to change?
8. **What's the story I tell myself about why relationships fail?** "I give too much." "I pick the wrong people." "I'm too needy." Examine the narrative. Is it the full truth, or is it a story that protects me from seeing my own contribution more clearly?

[Start Writing My Story](#)

Inner Child Journal Prompts for Codependency Recovery

Answer capsule: Codependency originates in childhood — it's a survival strategy that made sense when you were small and powerless. [Inner child work](#) through journaling lets you reparent yourself: giving your younger self the validation, protection, and unconditional love that was missing.

Inner child work isn't about blaming your parents. It's about recognizing that the codependent patterns you carry today were once **adaptive responses** — a child's best attempt to stay safe and loved in an environment that required self-abandonment as the price of connection. These prompts help you meet that child with compassion. For a comprehensive guide, visit our [inner child journal prompts](#) collection.

1. **Write a letter to your younger self at the age when you first learned to put others' needs before your own.** What do you want them to know? What do you wish someone had told them?
2. **What role did you play in your family as a child?** The responsible one? The peacemaker? The invisible one? The entertainer? How did that role protect you — and what did it cost you?

3. **Describe a specific moment from childhood when your feelings were dismissed, minimized, or punished.** What did you need in that moment that you didn't receive? Can you give that to yourself now, in writing?
4. **What did you have to be or do to receive love in your family?** Perfect? Quiet? Helpful? Invisible? Write the unspoken contract. Then write the truth: you deserved love without conditions.
5. **Write a conversation between your adult self and your inner child.** Let the child speak first. Ask them what they need. Listen without fixing, explaining, or minimizing. Just hear them.
6. **What emotions were "allowed" in your childhood home, and which were forbidden?** Was anger permitted? Sadness? Joy? How do those childhood rules still govern your emotional life today?
7. **If you could give your younger self one gift, what would it be?** Not a material thing — an experience, a feeling, a truth. Write about why this specific gift matters.
8. **What's the most courageous thing your inner child ever did?** Surviving a difficult childhood takes enormous strength that often goes unrecognized. Name and honor that courage.
9. **Write a "reparenting script" for a situation that triggers your codependency.** When the trigger happens, what does your inner child need to hear from your adult self? Write the words. Practice them.
10. **How would your life be different if you had received the message "You are enough, exactly as you are" as a child?** Don't rush past this one. Let yourself feel the gap between what was and what could have been — and then write a commitment to giving yourself that message now.

A 30-Day Codependency Journaling Plan

Week 1: Foundation — Self-Awareness & Reality

- Day 1: Self-Awareness Prompt 1 — What am I feeling right now?
- Day 2: Self-Awareness Prompt 2 — When did I last say "I'm fine" when I wasn't?
- Day 3: Self-Awareness Prompt 5 — What would I want if no one would be hurt?
- Day 4: Self-Esteem Prompt 1 — Where does my worth come from?
- Day 5: Inner Child Prompt 2 — What role did I play in my family? (Want more? [Generate a personalized inner child prompt set.](#))
- Day 6: Emotional Regulation Prompt 1 — Where is my emotional intensity right now?
- Day 7: Free write — reflect on what you've noticed this week

Week 2: Boundaries & Relationships

- Day 8: Boundary Prompt 1 — Name a boundary I need but haven't set
- Day 9: Relationship Prompt 1 — What role do I play in my closest relationship?
- Day 10: Boundary Prompt 4 — When did I say yes and mean no?
- Day 11: Relationship Prompt 2 — What do I get from being needed?
- Day 12: Boundary Prompt 6 — What was the model for boundaries in my childhood?
- Day 13: Attachment Prompt 1 — What happens when my partner pulls away?
- Day 14: Free write — patterns I'm noticing across two weeks

Week 3: Deepening — Emotions & Inner Child

- Day 15: Emotional Regulation Prompt 3 — The last time I felt anger
- Day 16: Inner Child Prompt 1 — Letter to my younger self
- Day 17: Emotional Regulation Prompt 4 — What is my [fawn response](#)?
- Day 18: Inner Child Prompt 4 — What did I have to do to receive love?
- Day 19: Emotional Regulation Prompt 9 — My emotions vs. absorbed emotions
- Day 20: Inner Child Prompt 5 — Conversation with my inner child
- Day 21: Free write — what emotions have surfaced that surprised me?

Week 4: Integration & Action

- Day 22: Self-Esteem Prompt 5 — What would I do if I believed I deserved good things?
- Day 23: Relationship Prompt 10 — What would happen if I stopped managing everyone?
- Day 24: Boundary Prompt 10 — Write a boundary script
- Day 25: Attachment Prompt 7 — Design my ideal secure relationship
- Day 26: Self-Awareness Prompt 10 — Who am I without my roles?
- Day 27: Inner Child Prompt 9 — Write a reparenting script
- Day 28: Self-Esteem Prompt 10 — Permission slip to myself
- Day 29: Emotional Regulation Prompt 10 — Which coping strategies are avoidance?
- Day 30: Write a letter to your future self — the person you're becoming through this work

Tips for sustaining the practice:

- **Time:** 15-20 minutes is enough. Codependency recovery doesn't require marathon sessions — it requires showing up.
- **Safety:** Some prompts will bring up difficult material. If you feel overwhelmed, pause, breathe, and ground yourself before continuing. You can always return to a prompt later.
- **AI journaling support:** If you want guided follow-up to your responses, an AI journaling companion like [Life Note](#) can ask personalized follow-up questions that help you go deeper — like having a reflective conversation partner available any time you write.
- **Professional support:** Journaling is a powerful complement to therapy, not a replacement. If your codependency is rooted in trauma, abuse, or addiction, please work with a licensed therapist alongside your journaling practice. Codependents Anonymous (CoDA) is also a free, widely available resource.

Can journaling replace therapy for codependency?

Journaling is a powerful complement to therapy, not a replacement. It helps you build self-awareness between sessions and process insights at your own pace. However, if your codependency is rooted in childhood trauma, active addiction dynamics, or [abusive and toxic relationships](#) relationships, professional support is important. Many therapists actually assign journaling as homework because it deepens the therapeutic work.

What is the difference between codependency and being a caring person?

Healthy caring maintains your sense of self — you help because you genuinely want to, you can say no without guilt, and your self-worth doesn't depend on being needed. Codependency involves [self-abandonment](#) — you help because you feel you have to, saying no triggers intense anxiety, and your identity is wrapped up in your role as caretaker. The distinction is whether giving enhances your life or depletes it.

Codependency isn't a character flaw — it's a survival strategy that outlived its usefulness. Every prompt you answer is a small act of coming home to yourself. The person you've been taking care of your whole life? It's time to turn that devoted attention inward. You already know how to show up for others. These prompts will teach you how to show up for yourself.

The Twelve Steps of Co-Dependents Anonymous

1. Admitting powerlessness over others.
2. Believing a Higher Power can restore sanity.
3. Turning will and life over to that Higher Power.
4. Conducting a moral inventory.
5. Admitting wrongs to God, self, and another person.
6. Becoming ready for removal of defects.
7. Asking for shortcomings to be removed.
8. Listing people harmed and becoming willing to make amends.
9. Making direct amends when possible.
10. Continuing personal inventory.
11. Improving conscious contact with God through prayer/meditation.
12. Carrying the message to other codependents and practicing the principles.

Working the 12 steps:

A great workbook to work the 12 steps of Codependents:

<https://coda.org/default/assets/File/Literature/2013%20Workbook%201-88.pdf>

STEP 10 DAILY CHECK IN:

Am I using my recovery tools? A) Attend meetings? B) Practicing the steps? C) Recite Serenity Prayer/Step Prayers? D) Attend meetings? E) Recite Affirmations? F) Read Recovery literature? G) Journaling? H) Prayer & Meditation/Yoga? I) Connect with someone on the phone list?

Have I completed what I said I would do today?

Did I honor my feelings today?

Did I communicate in a healthy way?

If I let my codependent behavior take over today, what was that codependent behavior?

-Review codependent patterns

Did I let go of codependent behaviors such as trying to change or trying to control others?

Steps 6 & 7 Did I do some form of prayer or meditation?

Step 10 Am I living my Higher Power's will?

Step 11 Am I practicing gratitude?

Am I getting enough sleep and rest?

Recreation?

Did I exercise today—take a walk, swim, or do any other self-care activities?

Am I eating a healthy diet?

Did I observe the positives and celebrate new behavior in my recovery?

Am I taking care of myself?