

Caring vs Codependent

Caring partners are

- Respectful
- Able to set healthy boundaries
- Independent
- Capable of making decisions
- Active Listeners
- Trusting / Honest
- Not afraid to say “no”
- Clear communicators
- Open & approachable

Codependent partners are

- Dependent on their partner
- Compelled to control others
- Dishonest in how they truly feel
- Fearful of being abandoned or alone
- Angry / Resentful
- Poor communicators
- Rigid with change
- Needing extreme recognition
- Lacking trust in self and/or others

@thecodependentperfectionist

@WELL.GUIDE

THIS IS EMPATHY

“I hear how hard this is for you. I’m here to listen.”

“What support do you need right now?”

“I care about how you feel, but I need to be honest too.”

“Your feelings matter and so do mine.”

THIS IS CODEPENDENCE

“I can’t stand you being upset. I must fix this for you.”

“I feel responsible for making you feel better.”

“I’ll lie or withhold how I really feel to keep the peace.”

“I can’t relax until you’re okay with me again.”

ISRAA NASIR, MHC | @WELL.GUIDE

@WELL.GUIDE

Empathy vs. codependence

A friend is venting about a tough day

- **Empathy:** “That sounds really hard. I’m here to listen. Want to talk more about it?”
- **Codependence:** “I need to fix this for them. If they’re upset, I can’t relax.”

Your partner is in a bad mood

- **Empathy:** “I can sense something’s off. Let me know if you want to talk, here.”
- **Codependence:** “Did I do something wrong? Should I cancel my plans just in case they need me?”

Empathy vs. codependence

Your sibling makes a mistake

- **Empathy:** “We all mess up. I believe they’ll find their way through this.”
- **Codependence:** “Let me step in so they don’t feel ashamed. I’ll fix it for them.”

A friend is being emotionally distant

- **Empathy:** “Their distance might have nothing to do with me. I can be curious, not clingy.”
- **Codependence:** “I need to do more to get them to open up.”

