

Worksheet: Empowering Healthy Communication Skills for Codependents

PURPOSE:

To develop practical communication skills that empower you to express your needs, establish healthy boundaries, and create balanced, respectful relationships.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Reflect on the following prompts and use the provided text boxes to write your responses.

1. Recognizing Your Needs

Write down situations where you felt unheard or unimportant in a relationship. For each, identify one need or desire you were trying to express.

Situation:

(Example: "I was upset when my friend canceled plans without telling me.")

Need:

(Example: "I need reliability and open communication.")

2. Practicing Assertive Communication

Rewrite these common passive or aggressive statements to make them more assertive and respectful.

(Use "I feel... when... because... I need..." structure.)

Example:

Original: "You always cancel plans. You're so unreliable!"

Assertive: "I feel disappointed when plans are canceled last minute because I value our time together. I need clear communication if something comes up."

Try these:

1. "You never listen to me."
2. "You make me feel guilty for asking for help."
3. "I don't care what we do, you decide."

3. Identifying Boundary Violations

Think of a time when someone crossed a boundary. Reflect on how you responded and how you could communicate your boundary more effectively in the future.

- What happened?
 - How did I respond?
 - How would I like to respond next time?
- (Example: "When you borrowed my things without asking, I felt disrespected. In the future, I need you to check with me first.")*

4. Communicating Needs During Conflict

Choose a recent disagreement and break it down to practice healthy conflict resolution. Reflect on how you expressed your needs and how you can improve.

- What was the disagreement about?
- How did I express my feelings and needs?
- How can I rephrase or communicate better next time to focus on my needs instead of blaming?

5. Practicing Saying 'No'

Reflect on situations where you said 'yes' but wanted to say 'no.' For each, write a respectful way to decline while maintaining your boundary.

Example:

Situation: "A friend asks you to help them move on a weekend you've already set aside for rest and personal time."

Response: "I appreciate you thinking of me, but I won't be able to help this weekend. I need to take some time to recharge. I hope the move goes smoothly!"

6. Self-Reflection: Celebrating Wins

Identify moments when you communicated effectively and felt proud. What did you do well, and how did it make you feel?