Don’t Call it Love
Breaking Through the Cycle of Relationship Dependency

Timothy Clinton, Ed.D. ◦ Gregory L. Jantz, Ph.D.
What is Relationship Dependency?
Dependent Personality Traits
Patterns of Relationship Dependency
Fears of Relationship Dependency
Role of Attachment Theory
WHEN I NEED A FRESH START, 
I JUST GO THE OTHER WAY.
What is Relationship Dependency?
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Loneliness and the feeling of being unwanted is the most terrible poverty.

Mother Teresa
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Co-dependency is a pathological dance “characterized by preoccupation with and extreme dependence (emotionally, socially, and sometimes physically) on a person or object.”

Clinton & Springle (2012), pg. 13
Dependent Personality Traits

• Difficulty making everyday decisions without advice and reassurance
Dependent Personality Traits

• Need others to assume responsibility for many major areas of life
Dependent Personality Traits

• Difficulty disagreeing with others out of fear
Dependent Personality Traits

- Struggle to start projects or do things on their own
Dependent Personality Traits

• To gain approval, they may do things they don’t want to do
Dependent Personality Traits

• Anxious or distressed when alone or thinking about being alone
Dependent Personality Traits

• Urgently seeks another relationship when a close relationship ends
Dependent Personality Traits

• Feel better solving the problems of others
Dependent Personality Traits

• Puts the needs of others above their own needs
Dependent Personality Traits

• Take on responsibility for meeting hurtful, difficult or even impossible needs
Dependent Personality Traits

• Make themselves responsible when bad things happen
Dependent Personality Traits

• Feel responsible to fill the expectations of others
Dependent Personality Traits

• Aware of the feelings of others but unsure of their own feelings
Dependent Personality Traits

• Consider the feelings and opinions of others of greater value than their own
Dependent Personality Traits

• High need for validation and approval from others
Dependent Personality Traits

• Adapt their behavior and physical appearance to the desire of others
Dependent Personality Traits

• Unable to create or defend personal boundaries
Dependent Personality Traits

• Unsure of appropriate boundaries for intimacy
Dependent Personality Traits

• Attempt to manipulate others and situations to maintain relationship
Dependent Personality Traits

- Difficulty accepting challenging or disturbing truths about themselves or others
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Search phase</td>
<td>New person, same pathology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attraction phase</td>
<td>Fantasy overshadows reality</td>
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<tr>
<td>Relief phase</td>
<td>Euphoria in new relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety phase</td>
<td>Reality begins to shatter fantasy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Denial phase</td>
<td>Avoidance of reality, will make excuses, distort and deny</td>
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<tr>
<td>Escalation phase</td>
<td>Emotional desperation with irrational behavior to save relationship</td>
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<tr>
<td>Switching phase</td>
<td>Aggressive you-owe-me mode</td>
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<tr>
<td>Withdrawal phase</td>
<td>Disengagement, depression and propulsion into Search phase</td>
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Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of EXPOSURE
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of EMPTINESS
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of ABANDONMENT
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of REJECTION
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of INSIGNIFICANCE
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of LOSING SECURITY
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of LOSING CONNECTION
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of LOSING CONTROL
Fears of Relationship Dependency

Fear of SELF NOT ENOUGH
The Role of Attachment Theory
The Role of Attachment Theory
The Role of Attachment Theory

4 Foundational Questions:

2 SELF Questions
1.  Am I worthy of being loved?
2.  Am I able to do what I need to do to get the love I need?

2 OTHER Questions
3.  Are others reliable and trustworthy?
4.  Are others accessible and willing to respond when I need them?
The Role of Attachment Theory

FOUR Attachment Styles:

• SECURE
• AMBIVALENT
• AVOIDANT
• DISORGANIZED
The Role of Attachment Theory

SECURE is the stable platform

1. Yes, I am worthy of being loved.
2. Yes, I am able to do what I need to do to get the love I need.
3. Yes, other people are reliable and trustworthy.
4. Yes, other people are accessible and willing to respond to me when I need them.
The Role of Attachment Theory

AMBIVALENT is the shaky platform

1. No, I am not worthy of being loved.
2. No, I am not able to do what I need to do to get the love I need unless I demand it.
3. No, other people are not reliable and trustworthy because I am not worthy.
4. Yes, people can be accessible and respond when I need them only if I force them to through my behavior.
The Role of Attachment Theory

AVOIDANT is the inflexible platform

1. Yes, I am worthy of being loved not for who I am but for what I can do.
2. Yes, I am able to do what I need to do to get the love I need because I give it to myself.
3. No, other people are not reliable and trustworthy, so I need to rely only on myself.
4. No, people are not accessible and willing to respond to me when I need them, so I need to take care of myself.
The Role of Attachment Theory

DISORGANIZED is the chaotic platform

1. No, I am not worthy of being loved.
2. No, I am not able to do what I need to do to get the love I need.
3. No, other people are not reliable and trustworthy.
4. No, people are not accessible and willing to respond to me when I need them.
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Recommended Resources

*Break Through: When to Give In, How to Push Back*
by Dr. Tim Clinton & Pat Springle

*Attachments: Why You Love, Feel and Act the Way You Do*
by Dr. Tim Clinton & Dr. Gary Sibcy

*Controlling Your Anger Before It Controls You* by Dr. Gregory Jantz
*Healing the Scars of Emotional Abuse* by Dr. Gregory Jantz
*Turning Your Down Into Up* by Dr. Gregory Jantz

For a complete list of books by Dr. Gregory Jantz, please visit [www.drgregoryjantz.com](http://www.drgregoryjantz.com).