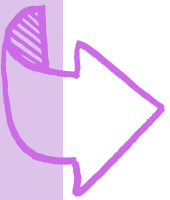




WHY OVER-FUNCTIONING PREVENTS YOUR PARTNER'S REPENTANCE

Another form of people pleasing is over-functioning. When you over-function in your relationship, you do for your partner what he should be doing for himself. It may look like help because you're cleaning up his messes and covering for his mistakes, but ultimately the result is that you enable this laziness, stunt his personal growth and delay his chance of repentance. Plus, in the end you grow weary, frustrated and worn out.



Signs that you May Be Over-functioning in Your Relationship (check the ones that apply to you)

- I feel responsible for him even though he is capable
- I'm angry that I have to do everything
- I give even when I don't want to
- I feel depleted and burnt out
- I'm frustrated about my partner's lack of initiative
- I feel worn out
- I don't have time to do the things I enjoy because I'm always taking care of everything else
- I feel unappreciated so I try to do even more
- Other

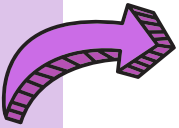
If you rescue your partner from the consequences of his actions, he won't be convicted to change. You'll deprive him of the opportunity to learn from his error. You've meddled with the divine. In your attempts to help, you've interrupted and delayed his chance to change.

God longs for your partner to change more than you do, but when you stand in the way by over-functioning you sabotage the chance for repentance.

The story of the prodigal son is a great example. His father didn't rescue him. He watched for his return daily, but didn't chase after him. He didn't send word to try to convince him to come home. He may have heard of his demise, but he knew that words wouldn't convince or convict him, only consequences would. His father knew the wisdom the writer of Proverbs spoke of. When people are stubborn, they can't be corrected by mere words. Thought they understand, they will not respond (Proverbs 29:19). In wisdom, he waited and watched.



You can read his story in [Luke 15:11-32](#). After he squandered all of his wealth in wild living, five-star hotels, cocktail lounges and escort services (just making it relevant) and found himself eating pig slop, he finally thought to himself, “How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death!”



What does Luke 15:17 say caused him to think that?

It’s unfortunate that it cost him everything he had to come to his senses, but hitting bottom is what makes us look up. Some of us are more stubborn than others and our bottoms sink really deep, but recovery can’t happen until our bottom hits the bottom.

When my dad grew frustrated with one of my brothers who drinks excessively, he’d often say, “Son, I’m going to knock some sense into you.”

Each time my brother got a DUI, my dad would bail him out of jail, but tell him, “&#%!@? This is the last time!”

My brother didn’t learn. Neither did my dad. He bailed him out over nine times.

A reprimand didn’t make my brother come to his senses. It wasn’t until he ran out of options that he finally took responsibility. He didn’t stop drinking, but he stopped driving while drunk. Unfortunately, my brother didn’t come to his senses until my father passed and he knew no one else would rescue him. My brother may have learned this lesson sooner if my father quit bailing him out of jail.

Just like my father’s verbal whiplash or rescue efforts didn’t work, you can’t knock sense into your partner. Try as you may, you can’t force him to stop his foolish or sinful behavior.

Repentance has to come first.

Our desire to help others is admirable, but when good things are used excessively, they become destructive.

- Salt is a great seasoning in moderation, but too much can ruin a meal.
- Truth and honesty are wonderful qualities but if our words are not tempered, they can be offensive.
- Fire can keep us warm but if it’s not controlled it can destroy entire towns.





TRUTH SERUM

When you carry your partner's load, it may be disguised as caring, but too much caring enables others to continue in sin.

Read Galatians 6:2-5 and fill in the blanks below.

Carry each other's _____, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. For each one should _____.

The Bible advises makes a distinction between a burden and a load. We should help others with a burden—something they can't manage on their own, but each should carry their own load by taking care of their own responsibilities.

In what ways have you attempted to carry your partner's load?

- I've made excuses for his behavior so he didn't have to endure the shame.
- I've lied about his failures so he didn't have to face the consequences of his actions.
- I've rescued him to validate my own self-worth.
- I try to earn his love by becoming invaluable to him.
- I've enabled him in order to absolve my own fears.
- I try to prove my love by how much I do for him so he won't leave.
- Other

Some of our beliefs about over-functioning may come from the misinterpretation of certain scriptures. For example, the Bible does tell us to rescue the poor and helpless (Psalm 82:4), but does your partner fit that description?

The Hebrew language describes someone who is poor and helpless as someone who has been subject to oppression and abuse.

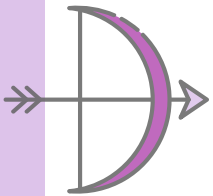
A person who is poor and needy is not just someone who lacks financial resources or the capacity to help themselves. The oppression and abuse came first, causing helplessness and financial ruin.

Not everyone who lacks financial resources meets the standard of who the Bible refers to as poor. And not everyone who has needs is helpless.



Some people experience financial difficulties because of the unwise choices they've made, not because they have limited resources. If your partner's bank account is overdrawn and his credit cards are delinquent because he wasted his money on pleasurable pursuits instead of paying the mortgage, is he really poor? If he lost his job due to dishonesty, addiction or sexual misconduct, is he helpless or is he unwise? If he was unfaithful to you and now he's full of anguish that you might leave, is his emotional despair and poverty of soul due to something he couldn't control or his own sin?

There is a difference between someone who is poor and needy and someone who is experiencing financial difficulties or emotional hardship.



Abuse and oppression cause people to be poor and needy.

Selfishness and sin cause financial poverty and hardship.

Do these distinctions cause you to view your responsibilities and your partner's responsibilities differently? If so, how?

Look up the following verses and fill in the blanks:



The _____ are far from _____, for they do not bother with your decrees ([Psalm 119:155](#)).

Warn a divisive person once, and then warn them a second time. After that, _____ ([Titus 3:10](#)).

A hot-tempered person must pay the penalty; _____ them, and you will have to _____ ([Proverbs 19:19](#)).

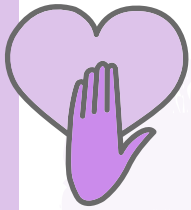


If God doesn't rescue the wicked or give them multiple chances, why should you? God restores us from sin when we repent. Not before.

According to the verses on the previous page, where do you think your responsibility lies?

The truth is that your over-functioning, codependency, or enabling doesn't really help your partner. It may appear to in the short term, but in the long run, your over-functioning hinders his growth and maturity.

In what ways has your over-functioning enabled your partner?



“

**When we
over-function, it may
be disguised as help,
but over-functioning
is control
camouflaged as care**

don't carry his load

Taking Back Your Peace

Jesus warned the disciples against over-functioning. When he sent the 72 out to minister he told them, "If anyone will not welcome you or listen to your words, leave that home or town and shake the dust off your feet."

Shaking the dust off their feet symbolized that they were to carry no more responsibility for failure to listen to the truth.



What does shaking the dust off your feet look like to you in your situation?

When others disregard us, what did Jesus say in Matthew 10:13 to do with our peace? _____

You can't make your partner listen to you or come to his senses any more than the disciples could force salvation on those they preached to. Your help and over-functioning won't convict them. They have to suffer the consequences. This may sound vindictive, but we can't make others hear or listen to us. If we insist, we often do so at our own expense. We lose our peace.

“

Guilt is an invisible dictator that keeps us in bondage.

I wish I could tell you that you can stop over-functioning and not feel guilty about it. Changing habits and mindsets is challenging and uncomfortable. Guilt rears its ugly head. But guilt is an invisible dictator that keeps us in bondage. When we stop bowing to its demands it can feel very intimidating but eventually when we stop over-functioning, the guilt begins to subside.

Allow your partner to be disappointed in you. Don't own his feelings or try to fix everything for him. When he takes advantage of you, doesn't appreciate your help or reciprocate when you need help, don't let your unmet expectations produce bitterness and rob your joy.

When he refuses to listen or repent, remember, shake off the dust and let your peace return to you.





SUCCESS PATH

FREEDOM IN YOUR FUTURE MILESTONES

You've reached the end of module 5. Congratulations! And now it's time to review the concepts we've covered so far. The worksheets you've completed are intended to bring revelation and freedom, not just homework, because I want you to become the Best U possible!

Take a moment to thoughtfully consider your progress in the following areas.

(Note: If you're lacking in any area, make a note to revisit the milestone later to strengthen and reinforce your freedom in being aware.)

your Best U success path

freedom in

- 1 Becoming Aware
- 2 Discernment
- 3 Boundaries
- 4 Identity
- 5 My Future

TIP: don't compare yourself to others. Focus on being your Best U!

- I've identified the faulty mindsets that cause me to react emotionally so I can be mindful to respond in healthy ways.
 - yes
 - no
- I understand that keeping quiet, avoiding confrontation and seeking approval are passive forms of selfish ambition.
 - yes
 - no
- I notice when my partner or others try to control or manipulate me with guilt, flattery or intimidation.
 - yes
 - no
- I understand how my over-functioning hinders my partner's growth, maturity and destroys my peace.
 - yes
 - no