

Signs That You May Be In A Unhealthy or Co-dependent Relationship With A Church or Religious Institution

A co-dependent relationship is one in which an individual is attached or dependent on another individual, group or institution in an unhealthy, immature and sometimes dangerous relationship.

These signs may indicate you are in a co-dependent relationship with a church or religious organization. These symptoms may occur to some degree and from time to time in any relationship, but if they persist over time and feel overwhelming they may be signs of an unhealthy or co-dependent relationship. If that is the case, you should address these issues if you wish to prevent an emotional or physical separation.

1. You feel like you cannot honestly express your feelings or perceptions of the institution or people in the institution.
People in a healthy relationship can always express their feelings or perceptions about the relationship and the people in the relationship.
2. You feel compelled to make excuses for what the institution thinks, says, does or believes.
People in a healthy relationship do not excuse, condone or enable behavior which they feel is inexcusable or hurtful to themselves or others.
3. You feel like you are expected to think, say, act or believe things that do not make sense to you.
People in a healthy relationship have the right to think, say, act and believe what makes sense and is convincing to them.
4. You fear that you will be embarrassed, rejected, or punished if you do not think, say, act or believe what you are expected to think, say, act or believe.
People in a healthy relationship generally have the right to think, say, act and believe what is true for them without fear of retribution or rejection.
5. You have been directly or indirectly judged or threatened for not thinking, saying, acting or believing what you are expected to think, say, act or believe.
People in a healthy relationship are not threatened or blamed for thinking, saying, acting or believing what makes sense to them.
6. You feel like a child who is threatened, intimidated, or controlled by the institution or people in the institution.
People in a healthy relationship feel like an adult who is accepted, respected and affirmed as an adult; they do not feel like they are being controlled ignored or de-valued.
7. You feel like the institution or people in the institution are lying to you.
People in a healthy relationship expect and receive the truth; they do not feel like they are being manipulated, fooled or misled.
8. You feel trapped in this relationship; you would like to leave, but are afraid to do so or have no options.
Healthy relationships are always voluntary relationships; people stay in the relationship freely and intentionally, not because they are forced to.
9. You feel angry, resentful or guilty about your relationship to the institution.
People in a healthy relationship generally feel proud, satisfied and happy about their relationship.