

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Dara Tomasson**

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

Are you convinced that certain personality traits are just so embedded in you that you can't change? I've seen 85-year-olds totally change their life with these tools. So keep listening to hear how this level of change is 100% possible for you. I am Dara Tomasson, and this is Weight Loss for Quilters episode 21.

Did you know you could lose weight and keep it off for good? After 25 years of hiding behind my quilts, I have finally cracked the code for permanent weight loss, and I've lost 50 pounds without exercise or counting calories. I'm Dara Tomasson, professional quilter turned weight and life coach, where I help quilters just like you create a life they love by losing weight and keeping it off for good. Let's jump into today's episode.

Hello everybody. So happy to be with you again and today's episode is going to help you during the holiday season. So even if you're listening to this afterwards you have got to check out this podcast because we are going to be talking about people pleasing. But not only are we going to be talking about people pleasing but we're also going to bring in this really sneaky thing that happens to a lot of us. And I've found this a lot in my clients, it's called codependency.

So today we're going to talk about what people pleasing is. We're going to do a little quiz that I found online. Then we're going to talk about what is codependency. And then we're going to compare the two after we dive into that and understand why we have these codependent or people pleasing tendencies. I am going to walk you through eight ways that you can start recovering from that. So today's tool is learning that with power we can become empowered. And people pleasing and codependency, they're not the same thing, we're going to differentiate between the two.

We're going to see why this comes up and I'm going to give you tools to correct it, to be more free in your life. Just like I give ladies the key to food prison jail, you're going to get the keys of getting out of people pleasing and codependency jail. Are you ready?

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

So before we go into all of that I do want to have a little client spotlight. And this came up because of as I was preparing this podcast, we were talking about different wins that we've had. And one of the things that happened, she was at quilt festival, and she was put in a situation where there was a lady who had a booth, she didn't realize the extent of what was required to have that booth. And so she found herself in trouble. And one of the things that codependents do, and people pleasers do is they want to go to the rescue, they want to help.

So this client of mine was there, she saw the need that this lady had. This lady asked this need of her and instead of just diving right in and saying, "Yes, yes, yes, I can do it," and then feeling all sorts of resentment afterwards, and regret, and disappointment. My client used the tools that we teach about learning to get your own back. And she was able to create really healthy boundaries for the relationship, so she wasn't taken advantage of. And then she didn't feel all of that regret and all of those feelings, which I know that you pretty much all can relate to.

And so she was just so proud of herself because she created really healthy boundaries. She liked her reasons. She said what she was willing to do, and she just got to have so much fun with all of that. So I want you to know that it's totally possible to get into your own power. And I'm just so proud of her, she just had such a better experience at quilt festival. Okay, so let's dive in. The first thing we're going to do is we're going to take a little people pleasing quiz. I want to see where you're at in your own people pleasing. So this one I just found online so let's just go for it.

So the first question is, I have had a hard time asking for or accepting help from others. So it's going to be most of the time, sometimes, seldom, or almost never. And you can find this on [vickiechampion.com](http://vickiechampion.com). I just did a random Google search.

It hurts my feelings when others don't say thank you or appreciate me, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never. So if it's easier to put, most of the time as four, sometimes as three, seldom as two, one as almost never.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

I feel like a doormat and that I'm being used, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

I have visitors that either come at inconvenient times or overstay their welcome, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number five, I resent others for having fun when I have to work, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

I am not comfortable with free time, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number seven, I feel that I am not good enough, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

I say yes when I really want to say no, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number nine, others express concern about my need to please, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number 10, I lie rather than face the rejection of certain individuals, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number 11, I worry about hurting others' feelings, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number 12, I am critical of my past decisions or lack of, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number 13, I try to bury my feelings, desires, or dreams, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number 14, how people respond to me is really important, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

Number 15, I have a hard time ending conversations when I want to, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

Number 16, keep going. I measure my self-esteem by how much I do as well as the praise and appreciation I receive from others, most of the time, sometimes, seldom, almost never.

17, I ask for permission, most of the time. You get it.

Number 18, I think I know what others will say or do in certain situations.

Number 19, I don't have enough hours in the day to get everything done.

Number 20, I avoid conflict and disagreements at all costs.

Number 21, I have a hard time making decisions on my own.

22, I feel guilty when I say no.

23, I apologize more than once a day. Okay, so, Canadians, we're kind of famous for saying sorry.

24, I strive to be perfect.

25, I'm worried about something all the time, often it's about the reactions to what I said, or did or what might happen in the future.

Number 26, I think I'm responsible for others' happiness.

Number 27, I feel my only role in life is giving to or helping others.

Number 28, I feel trapped.

And number 29, I have noticed my need to please is getting worse.

Okay, so that, and you can go over there, and you can do it and she'll give you a little review. Now, if you are finding that you're answering most of the time/sometimes then people pleasing is definitely an issue in your life and it is holding you back from really living the kind of life that you want to have. So that is people pleasing. And we go through people pleasing in Love Yourself Thin, I call it the triple P. We have perfectionism, people pleasing and procrastination.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

Let me go through that. So what I want you to know about people pleasing and I talk about this is that people pleasing really did just come from the fear of rejection or abandonment which drives pretty much everything a people pleaser does. So parental, emotional inconsistency is the main cause of people pleasing. The child not knowing how else to secure and maintain love and connection does all he or she can earn a parent's love.

So if you find yourself thinking you have to earn something, you have to deserve something this is just because of this fear of rejection or abandonment. And I don't know if any of you have read the book, Rejection Proof, but it's fascinating. You should go over on YouTube and watch some of the videos he's done. They are hilarious. He wrote 100 crazy things to get rejected because he wanted to work on not worrying about feeling rejection.

Because we are actually wired to belong. And to be accepted is of the utmost for survival. If you think about in the wagon train, my ancestors came here to Canada in the west. If you were not part of the circle of the wagons you were the first one eaten. So it is super important. And we are wired to belong.

So, often people pleasers, they become high achieving perfectionists. And they often become less interested in exploring who they really are. And they're more interested in learning about what others want them to be because transforming yourself, being nice will be a way that you can secure love for good, so she thinks. This is what makes a people pleaser. So it's just so important just to recognize that that's what's going on.

So now I'm going to talk a little bit, so that's just a lot, even that I could probably stop at this podcast, and you could kind of digest some of that. But now I want to just look at when we think about codependency and there's a definition that I really like with codependency when I was trying to understand it. Because codependency happens a lot with people who grew up in homes, whose parents had, when they grew up they had alcoholism in the family, drug abuse, those kinds of things, as a way of survival when you are in emotions like this.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

So one of the ways that I like to think about codependency if I'm falling into that trap it's if I gave a suggestion to someone and then they didn't do the suggestion and then I get mad. It's like I need someone to behave a certain way so that I can feel better about myself. So that's kind of my rule of thumb for codependency. So here are some other characteristics and these are just simple Google searches of that. But I'm just going to provide it all here for you.

So you know that you're codependent if you focus on other people and their problems. So you spend a lot of time when you're doing dishes or when you're, you know that time in the morning when you don't want to get out of bed and you're just thinking. So you focus on other people and their problems. So caretaking, fixing, advice giving, doing for others even when it negatively impacts your mental health, physical health, and finances. So a lot of times you'll see a rescuer, you're extremely self-critical, you feel responsible for everyone and everything.

You experience high levels of guilt and shame. You absorb other people's feelings, so all those m-Paths out there. You're a people pleaser, afraid of disappointing or upsetting others. You have trouble setting boundaries and being assertive. You ignore your own feelings and needs, possibly numbing them with food, alcohol, drugs, shopping. Intimacy, open communication, and trust are really difficult for you. You act like a martyr, taking care of everyone else, giving without receiving and then feeling angry, resentful, and taken advantage of.

You're a perfectionist, you tend to overwork and overschedule yourself. You can be controlling, nagging and critical of others. And you crave predictability, structure, and certainty.

So why this happens is we are just looking outside of us for the ability to feel better about ourselves. So we're putting our emotions in other people's hands. If we can't work through that then we are literally depending on other people. Melody Beattie, she has a lot of really – she was kind of the pioneer of this concept. And we do a lot of this work in our program.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

I'm just laughing. I saw, there's a book here, it says, you're not crazy, you're codependent. And it's true because we get ourselves so exhausted by these thought patterns. And until we actually figure out why they're there we kind of do feel like we're crazy. It's like, why can't I get this thing resolved? Why can't I figure this out? So we're going to now go into – I'm going to give you some examples if you're kind of unsure if you have codependency or not. And I want you to just think about, is this playing out in your life.

So this being a victim, I never realized until I started doing this work and became certified and some have helped hundreds of women overcome. But victim mentality is really sneaky because it's so unintentional. It comes from such a place, I find, such a place of innocence, when we are developing bonds at a young age, we are searching with our five year old brain for security. We're searching for comfort. We're searching to have that feeling of unconditional love.

And so being a victim, it's a very normal progression when you haven't been able to understand what's really going on. And you're going to your five year old brain of I need to make sure I'm safe, so I need to do certain things. I need to be a certain way in order to be loved, in order to be accepted.

And so it's really complicated in a lot of our minds as adults because when we come up with situations that are challenging, we literally go back to being that five year old, trying to figure out what we should do. That's why food is such a big problem for so many of us because when we didn't have the ability to verbalize, or to articulate, or to understand our feelings, and our moms got mad at us because we didn't do something right. And we thought that our mom was supposed to love us unconditionally and that should be safe and secure.

Going to food, like a scoop of peanut butter, or having some Kraft dinner, or having a peanut butter sandwich, we literally gave ourselves a dopamine hit. And just like Geneen Roth says, every time we go to food it literally is a way for us to have some self-care. Because we always got a dopamine hit,



## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

it was very consistent every time we ate anything because that is actually how we are wired. So being a victim is kind of a default. And until we slow everything down and realize, I'm just going into that victim mentality, then we can say, "That is not how I want to show up."

Because the problem with being a victim is the other person or the issue, they then become a villain. And when they're a villain then it's really scary and overwhelming. And we don't feel empowered to do anything about it. So this is such a simple example. But the first one that popped into my head was this need to be approved.

So last Sunday I went to church, and I had a brand new dress. And I love this dress. And I was really excited to buy it. And I was excited to wear it. Now, in the past, if I didn't get a compliment on that dress I would have questioned my own self, my own ability to pick dresses, what I think was good. I need other people's approval of that dress to feel better, I needed. This was the past Dara. And so it was interesting because it's like I just need someone to say, "That's a really pretty dress," to validate my own confidence of myself.

So I'm putting myself as a victim because I'm not giving myself the ability to say, "Whatever you like to wear and however you like to show up is really important." So we do that subconsciously all the time. If we got a new haircut, or we tried a new lipstick, or we try something different, and if we need someone to approve us then we're now being like a victim and we're not able to be in our own power. So that's just a really simple example.

Another example that we can talk about with, if you're people pleasing or codependent is when you say yes to someone, you're literally saying no to yourself. Because even if it's a five minute, or a 10 minute, or a 20 minute, or a three hour, when you're doing something for someone else that means you're taking away time for yourself, that you could be sleeping more or whatever that is.

So I just want you to start thinking about, as I went down the list of the codependency and of the people pleasing, what comes up for you? So

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

codependents are people pleasers, but not all people pleasers are codependents. And I really want you to just look at those two lists that I shared and see where you are in your ability to see where you come from. So you can be a people pleaser, but you don't have to be a codependent. So just go with that, think about it.

If this is spurring something in your brain, reach out to me, you can do Google searches, there's so much there. But I do recommend, Melody Beattie, such a good book. She has a series of them in fact. And we do a lot of this work in Love Yourself Thin.

Alright, so now this is the part you've been waiting for. You're like, "I don't want to hear about all the problems. I want to hear all the solutions." So I want you to know just like weight loss, there's not a little pill that you can take even three times a day that it's going to solve it. Because all of the problems we have they come from our thoughts. And until we can slow everything down and see our thoughts we are not able to change. So these eight steps are going to help you to clean up your thoughts or clean up the way you think about your thinking. So are you ready?

Number one, we need to develop a strong sense of self. So really spending time with yourself. I know this is one of the – when ladies come into my program, they have homework. And there's worksheets. And we do workshops. So I'll say, "Okay, for the next three minutes write down this." And even in our coaching and we have extra programs that I teach. And they involve you to go into your own brain and start developing a real strong sense of who you are. There is only one of you in this world. You are unique.

You are an individual and it's so much fun for you to learn who you are. You have different qualities. And in fact yesterday my nine year old, it was so cute. He's like, "Can we snuggle?" I said, "Sure." And he said, "I think I'm the only kid who has a mom who's a life coach for quilter and a dad who does this job." And I said, "Yeah, you are super unique."

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

And it was just really fun for him to – just like that sense of himself of who he is and where he is in the world, it's really fun as a nine year old that he's doing this work. So if he can do it, you should do it. You should. I'm shoulding on you but it would be a benefit for you to do that. Let me just change the way I said that. Okay, so developing a strong sense of who you are.

Number two, plan time to be with yourself. And this is really important, not living for others. So one of the characteristics I said was that you have a hard time being by yourself. And you tend to work a lot. And you really don't even know who you are really. You're just living for other people. So do you have free time? Are you spending time just doing? Or even when you are doing quilting or doing dishes, do you have to have music on or the radio? So just get really curious about that.

So number three, it's safe and okay to express your opinions. So one of the things I see with a lot of my clients is they come, and they have had a history of thyroid issues. And one of the problems is that we get thyroid problems because we do not speak our truth, we do not speak up, we sugarcoat what we say. And so I have exercises for them to do. And it's been really fun for them to get off their thyroid medication.

And of course I'm not telling you not to go to a doctor. But it has been really interesting to watch as they learn to have a voice and to use it, and to see how physically how that has helped change their relationship with their bodies.

Number four, validate your own opinions. So going back to my dress, I just got to validate myself. I love this dress. I think it looks good on me. And it's the perfect dress for me. So you need to start validating your own opinions. This is particularly interesting when we go to quilt guilds, and everyone does their show and share. Not everyone has the same taste and isn't that wonderful? Life is way more interesting when we're all super unique and different.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

Number five, manage your anger. Now, one of the problems that codependent/people pleasers fall into is we are often exhausted, and we are often riddled with resentment because we say yes when it didn't serve us, when we keep putting ourselves on the backburner. We're doing everything for everyone, and we are so exhausted because we're never taking any time for ourselves. So that's number five, manage your anger.

Number six, neutral sounding board. How often do you take on everyone else's problems? And you start becoming a control enthusiast. And you start being like the director of a play and you're giving everyone a script saying, "Do this, do that, do this. And if you don't do this you don't do that." Then everything is terrible. Then you go back into your all or nothing thinking and then this whole perfectionism thing comes back.

I'm just going to give you a quick tip on the neutral sounding board. One of the things that I do with the neutral sounding board is I even go to compassionate listener. And one of the tips that I do for myself is I physically sit on my hands while I'm listening. So it is a reminder for me that I'm just listening, I'm just here with compassion listening. And so when I physically sit on my hands it reminds me that that is just what I'm doing right now is just listening. So that might be really helpful for you.

Number seven, healthy boundaries. Creating a boundary just like we have our yards, most yards have fences around them. So now we know this is my yard, that's your yard. And so just with a boundary, I will say, "If you would like me to babysit the grandkids, I need two weeks' notice or I need three days' notice," or whatever that is. If you want to come over for dinner you can't just show up at the door, you need to give me 24 hours' notice. That's a boundary.

Because if you never say it then they just assume it's not a problem. So you're seething underneath, being angry and mad, thinking no one respects me. But if you just keep doing it, they don't even know that it's a problem.

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

Okay, number eight, this is the last one I'm going to be sharing. We need to prioritize self-care and treat ourselves with respect. Now, self-care, I can do a whole episode on that, is not just getting a manicure. Self-care is truly resting ourselves, being in our best version of ourselves, anything you need to do. So if it's reading scriptures and feasting on the words of God, or if it's going for a walk, if it's being in nature, if it's saying no three times a day, if it's prioritizing yourself to make sure you have seven hours of sleep.

If it means that you have to spend some time cutting vegetables and eating longer than a peanut butter sandwich shoved in your face while you're driving to go from one babysitting to another, or having to deliver dinners, or whatever that is. I really want you to think about what do I need to do so that I will be my best version of me? That is what self-care is.

Okay, so do you see how important this episode was? Especially when it comes to Christmas, so if you are high in the people pleasing realm, just give yourself a lot of love especially your five year old self, she was kind of confused. She wasn't feeling very secure and love. She had a lot of mixed messages. So I want you to give your five year old self a lot of love. You could even have some conversations with her. And just really, really just love on her.

And then as you just look through these lists or listen to these lists and as you think about yeah, I do this, and so much of it really was self-preservation. But now you're grown-up and you can make those decisions for you. And you're not alone. There's so many women that are suffering also. So even this episode has brought you so much transformation because now you can articulate what's going on. And just like we say, knowledge is power. And so now you can do something about it.

So thank you so much for listening, for joining us and if you are being stuck in these patterns, reach out for help. We talk a lot about our physical health. I'm the weight loss coach for quilters, but unless we get our mental health in check that weight loss is not going to be sustainable. So that is why as a weight loss coach, we don't talk about calories, we don't talk about exercise. We talk about what's going on in our brain. And when we

## 21. People Pleasing and Codependency

can learn to really think about our thinking that's when we can get permanent change.

Alright, it's so good to spend this time with you. You all have an amazing day.

Thanks for listening to *Weight Loss for Quilters*. If you want more info, please visit [daratomasson.com](http://daratomasson.com). See you next week.