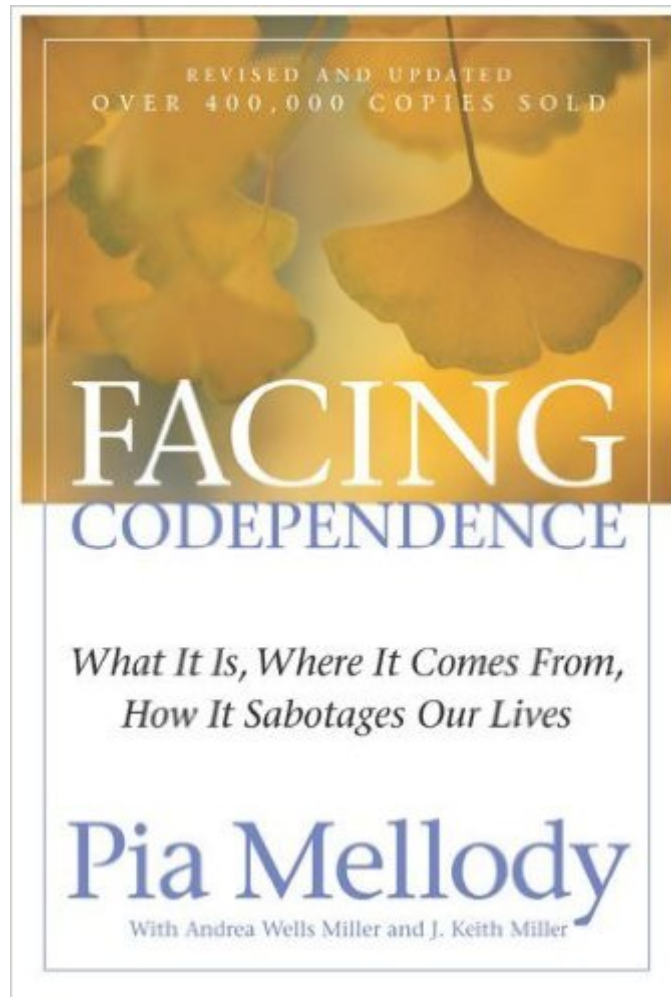


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# Facing Codependence: What It Is, Where It Comes From, How It Sabotages Our Lives



## Synopsis

Pia Mellody creates a framework for identifying codependent thinking, emotions and behaviour and provides an effective approach to recovery. Mellody sets forth five primary adult symptoms of this crippling condition, then traces their origin to emotional, spiritual, intellectual, physical and sexual abuses that occur in childhood. Central to Mellody's approach is the concept that the codependent adult's injured inner child needs healing. Recovery from codependence, therefore, involves clearing up the toxic emotions left over from these painful childhood experiences.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Some things said simply are more powerful thanks to their simplicity. This book provides a forceful, unflinching description of how people who are raised in a dysfunctional or abusive environment often sabotage and cripple their lives. The structure of the book is straightforward. The situations Mellody discusses are often sound sadly ordinary rather than extraordinary. But the resulting emotional resonance of this book is undeniable. Mellody methodically dissects the disorder she calls codependency. She first explains how when working with addicted individuals as a nurse in a recovery center in Arizona she saw a repeated pattern of dysfunctional behavior in individuals and their families that went beyond the addictions for which the individuals were being treated. Her work there and her own personal development led to the conclusions in this book. (One of the wonderful aspects of the book is that when Mellody talks about codependents and their behavior) she does not speak condescendingly about "those codependents", but rather uses examples that begin with "I" or "us." This creates a powerful intimacy. There are four main sections to the book. The first

section details what she sees as the core symptoms of codependency: difficulty experiencing appropriate levels of self-esteem, difficulty setting functional boundaries, difficulty owning and expressing one's own reality, difficulty taking care of one's adult needs and wants, and difficulty behaving moderately. The second section details how dysfunctional family can push a child (whom Melody describes as inherently valuable, vulnerable, imperfect, dependent, and immature) into codependency.

I sought counseling for depression earlier this year, and this book was recommended to me several times by my social worker. He urged me to "take it with a grain of salt," as Ms. Melody is very much against codependency, while my counselor does not believe that all aspects of it in all cases are all bad. Until recently, I was hesitant to do any more self-exploration than I was already doing on an almost-daily basis, but since I have started to feel better, I decided to look into this codependency theory. I am only 50 or so pages into the book, but I'm finding it difficult to put down because it seems to describe me to a T in some ways that I never thought anyone else would understand. All my life I have found most of my self-satisfaction only after ensuring that I am pleasing others. When my husband and twin sister kept telling me last year that I never seemed happy (but I never felt truly unhappy), that's when I decided I needed to make a significant change in the way I was living my life. Basing your self-worth on what Ms. Melody refers to as "others-esteem" (as opposed to self-esteem) is a vicious, exhausting circle. I think I intuitively figured this out over the last few months on my own with the help of my counselor, but it really makes sense hearing Ms. Melody explain it, because she has been there, so I can identify with her explanations MUCH better than those provided by someone who doesn't understand what it's like to have grown up this way. I hope to convince my husband to read portions of this book, because I think it will help him to realize that my struggles are real and not so unusual after all. The only downside I have found so far is that nearly all of Ms.

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