

Adult Children of Alcoholics: Common Behavior Characteristics

We have feelings of low self-esteem that cause us to judge ourselves and others without mercy. We try to cover up or compensate by being perfectionistic, caretaking, controlling, contemptuous and gossipy.

We tend to isolate ourselves and to feel uneasy around other people, especially authority figures.

We are approval-seekers and will do anything to make people like us. We are extremely loyal even in the face of evidence that indicates loyalty is undeserved.

We are intimidated by angry people and personal criticism. This causes us to feel anxious and overly sensitive.

We habitually choose to have relationships with emotionally unavailable people with addictive personalities. We are usually less attracted to healthy, caring people.

We live life as victims and are attracted to other victims in our love and friendship relationships. We confuse love with pity and tend to "love" people we can pity and rescue.

We are either super-responsible or super-irresponsible. We try to solve others' problems or expect others to be responsible for us. This enables us to avoid looking closely at our own behavior.

We feel guilty when we stand up for ourselves or act assertively. We give in to others instead of taking care of ourselves.

We deny, minimize or repress our feelings from our traumatic childhoods. We lose the ability to express our feelings and are unaware of the impact this has on our lives.

We are dependent personalities who are terrified of rejection or abandonment. We tend to stay in jobs or relationships that are harmful to us. Our fears can either stop us from ending hurtful relationships or prevent us from entering into healthy, rewarding ones.

Denial, isolation, control and misplaced guilt are symptoms of family dysfunction. As a result of these behaviors, we feel hopeless and helpless.

We have difficulty with intimate relationships. We feel insecure and lack trust in others. We don't have clearly defined boundaries and become enmeshed with our partner's needs and emotions.

We have difficulty following projects through from beginning to end.

We have a strong need to be in control. We overreact to change over which we have no control.