



OVER-DEPENDENT **UNDER-DEVELOPED**

Let's begin today's health talk with a reflection question. **Most days I make sure I have _____ in my life.** Your first thought is probably what should go in the blank. What we make sure we include in our daily lives become what we depend upon to feel okay. Some of our dependencies may be healthy and life-giving. Can you think of some healthy dependencies that you may have?

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On the other hand, some of our dependencies may be unhealthy and destructive to ourselves or to those around us. Can you think of some unhealthy dependencies that you may have?

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When people grow up in family systems where the people around us are not safe, stable, positive, trustworthy, or accepting, self-doubt and confusion may develop. Instead of having caring parents who positively define and value us, we begin a search for something or someone to make us feel good or to get attention and affirmation. When we don't have positive role models who allow us to openly share our questions, thoughts, and feelings, we grow up wondering if we are okay and if we truly have what it takes to be an adult. So we frequently begin a search to try to find something or someone that will make us feel significant or feel okay.

In fact, when you look at most of the ways people are out of control, you will likely discover a failure to develop and mature in some specific, important areas of our lives. Let's do a little group exercise to see what we can learn about people who are overly dependent, where they are likely under-developed, and what are the likely consequences.

Over-dependent upon:

Under-developed:

Consequences:

The approval of others
Personal performance
Food/chocolate/caffeine
Alcohol/drugs
Sex/pleasure
Work
Sports/Recreation/Hobbies
Reading
Computer/technology/video games
Taking care of people

Although each person is different, and we do different things for different reasons, there is one characteristic we all share. Each one of us has been made in the image of God. Another commonality we share is we all have become dependent upon people, substances, or things that are good for us and bad for us. Our hope is that today's health talk has helped you identify one growth area in your life. (Be on the lookout for a future health talk that will provide some resources to grow with.)

"Health Talks" are designed to help us learn to talk and deal with one another in ways that build understanding and a healthy, growing, supportive, Christian community.