

Claudia Black, Ph.D.

FAMILY ROLES

In an addictive or depressed family system the disease becomes the organizing principle. The affected person becomes the central figure from which everyone else organizes their behaviors and reactions, usually in what is a slow insidious process. Typically family members do what they can to bring greater consistency, structure and safety into a family system that is becoming unpredictable, chaotic or frightening. To do this they often adopt certain roles or a mixture of roles.

Original work regarding family roles was by Virginia Satir, then adapted by Claudia Black and Sharon Wegscheider Cruse to fit the addictive family. Over the course of years the names vary, yet the descriptions fit. You are welcome to rename that which best describes you. ♦



FAMILY HERO ♦ RESPONSIBLE ONE

STRENGTHS	DEFICITS
Successful Organized Leadership skills Decisive Initiator Self disciplined Goal oriented	Perfectionist Difficulty listening Inability to follow Inability to relax Lack of spontaneity Inflexible Unwilling to ask for help High fear of mistakes Inability to play Severe need to be in control

PLACATER ♦ PEOPLE PLEASER

STRENGTHS	DEFICITS
Caring/ compassionate Empathic Good listener Sensitive to others Gives well Nice smile	Inability to receive Denies personal needs High tolerance for inappropriate behavior Strong fear of anger or conflict False guilt Anxious Highly fearful Hypervigilant