

Sexual **addiction**

Getting free from the lies and bondage

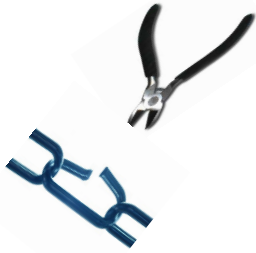
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1 : THE PROBLEM

Suppose you were traveling in another country and walking around some evening. As you walked you came to a building where people were lined up to enter so you got in line. They seemed excited as they seated themselves facing a stage. Everyone applauded and cheered as a man walked out with a large tray covered with a towel. Wild music started to play and lights flashed on and off. Slowly the man would lift one corner of the towel and then another, allowing the audience to catch a glimpse of what was under it. The people cheered louder and louder. Suddenly the towel was totally removed and everyone went wild as the lights dimmed. What you saw before all went dark was a nice, fresh pork shop! What would you think? Was there something wrong with their appetite? Suppose as you left you noticed a magazine stand with pictures of pork chops on the cover and inside. Pork chops were used to sell cars, mufflers, clothing -- anything and everything. TV programs and movies were rated as to how much pork chop was shown. Jokes and general conversation often focused on pork chops. People carry them around to entice the opposite sex. What would you think of a culture like that? Have you caught my analogy yet? That is the way our country is about sex!

"It's different," you say. "Pork chop lust is weird, but sexual preoccupation is just a normal and natural thing." Unfortunately that's true of the time and place we live. Seeing it as normal is the result of growing up in 20th century western civilization. Sexual addiction is becoming more and more common and studies show that 70% of Christian men struggle with sexual sin of one kind or another. Something must be done.



The purpose of these articles is to expose the lies of the 'pork-chop' culture we live in. Only the truth leads to freedom from bondage to addiction. Since our actions are determined by our beliefs, it is essential that our beliefs be based on truth.

Our culture today is based on lies about sex: "Pleasure and fun are the highest goals of life, and sex is the ultimate achievement of fun and pleasure." But it always seems to take more and greater experiences to attain the pleasure. Another lie is that "variety is necessary to sustain sexual pleasure," but then sex becomes an end in itself and is separated from intimate emotional relationships. The focus becomes on self and receiving pleasure, not giving pleasure. Another lie is that 'sexual freedom means doing what I want when I want it.' But this makes us no more than self-centered sex animals.

The truth is that real pleasure that sustains and grows is only found in a committed monogamous relationship of 2 married people.

We'll look at various lies and see how they stand when exposed to the truth. The first lie is that "It's not a problem!" Is sexual addiction a problem or not? What is the truth?

I. COST OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

A. DEFINITION OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

LIE: IT'S NOT A PROBLEM!

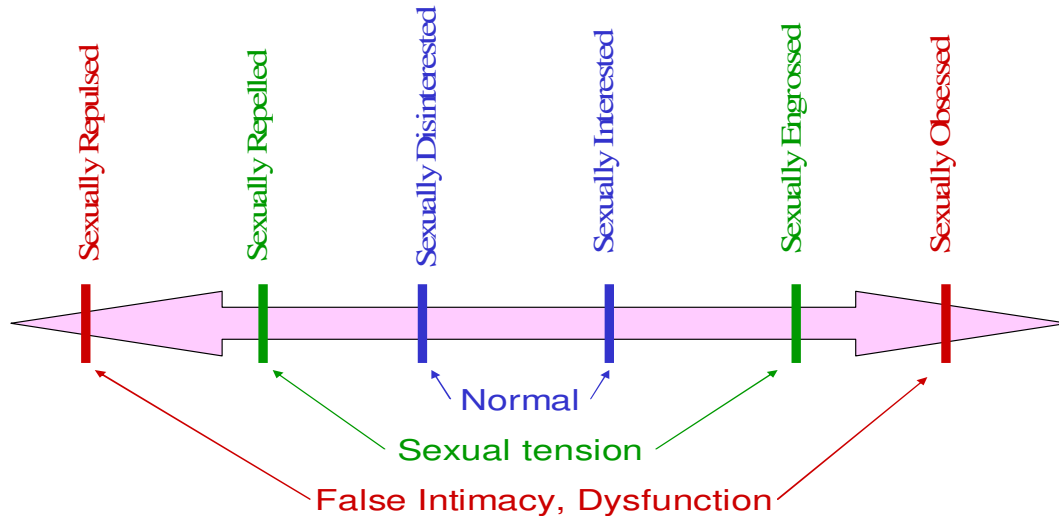
TRUTH: definition of sex addiction shows it is!

Addiction has been described as a compulsion beyond the 'normal' or 'average' range. It is a **habitual dependence on a substance or practice beyond one's voluntary control**. The root meaning of the word 'addiction' is 'enslavement, bondage.' Thus sexual addiction is bondage, a compulsion to sex. Sex becomes an end in itself. Instead of a means to an end (to enjoy and grow in a loving relationship with another), it becomes self-centered. It is the drug of choice to alter mood, mask pain and substitute for real needs.

Addiction doesn't apply to the adolescent discovering sex for the first time and feeling preoccupied with it. Not is the divorced person who uses his or her new-found sexual freedom to excel or the middle age man who goes on a binge because he fears growing old. It's not WHAT a person does but WHY that makes it an addiction.

The following graph explains it well. It is normal to be sexually interested, but sometimes a normal person can become disinterested for a time. Various reasons can lead to one being sexually engrossed or repelled. Sex can become too important, or one may develop a take it or leave it attitude. While not balanced or completely healthy, these attitudes certainly don't comprise addiction. However when one is sexually obsessed in that sex must be obtained at any and all costs, when it is more important than real intimacy, then it has become an addiction.

SEXUAL ADDICTION



Those who are sexually repulsed, who feel sex must be avoided at all costs, aren't addicts but have a serious problem as well. Sexual anorexia is an obsessive state in which the physical, mental, and emotional task of avoiding sex dominates one's life. Like self-starvation with food or compulsive dieting or hoarding with money, deprivation with sex can make one feel powerful and defended against all hurts. It is not our purpose to cover this type of dysfunction at this time.

The key, of course, is balance. A legitimate, God-given desire can become unhealthy the minute we make a God of it. Food, for example, is fine to use and enjoy, but to worship it makes it an idol. That's the point of the pork-chop illustration.

Like with alcohol and other addictions, sexual addicts may not always be acting out their addiction. They can go long periods of time without indulging, the binge. They can't stop finding themselves periodically caught up in their sin, however. They can rationalize it away, but they can't permanently stop it. So they believe the lie that 'It's not a problem.'

But to a large percent of the population it is a problem. Studies show anywhere from 3% to 10% of the population can be defined as sex addicts. Twenty-five million men use online pornography. There are 5 million pornographic web sites, more than any other category.

Still, while sex addiction is a problem, it's not THE problem. It is really a symptom of a far deeper problem. That problem needs to be realized and worked through for there to be true and lasting victory over addiction. But that won't happen until the seriousness of sexual addiction is realized. It's a lie to think that "It's no big deal!"

B. SYMPTOMS OF SEX ADDICTION

LIE: IT'S NO BIG DEAL.

TRUTH: Symptoms show it IS a big deal!

It is easy to confuse normal sexual desire and conduct with addictive compulsion and gratification. A person can have a stronger-than-normal sexual appetite and not be an addict. Here are some characteristics of addictive sex that help distinguish the two.

1. Addictive sex is done in isolation. This does not always necessarily mean that it is done while physically alone. Rather it means that mentally and emotionally the addict is detached, or isolated, from human relationship and contact. The most intimately personal of human behaviors becomes utterly impersonal.

2. Addictive sex is secretive. In effect, sex addicts develop a double life, practicing masturbation, going to porn shops and massage parlors, all the while hiding what they are doing from others – and, in a sense, even from themselves.

3. Addictive sex is devoid of intimacy. Sex addicts are utterly self-focused. They cannot achieve genuine intimacy because their self-obsession leaves no room for giving to others.

Fear of true intimacy - Inability to relate to women in an honest and intimate way despite deep loneliness. Pornography pays scant attention to men's needs for sensuality and intimacy while exalting their sexual needs. Thus, some men develop a preoccupation with sexuality, which powerfully handicaps their capacity for emotionally intimate relationships with men and for nonsexual relationships with women.

4. Addictive sex is devoid of relationship. Addictive sex is "mere sex," sex for its own sake, sex divorced from authentic interaction of persons. This is most clear with regard to fantasy, pornography, and masturbation. But even with regard to sex involving a partner, the partner is not really a "person" but a cipher, an interchangeable part in an impersonal – almost mechanical – process. As more and more of addicts' energy becomes focused on relationships which have sexual potential, other relationships and activities -- family, friends, work, talents and values -- suffer and atrophy from neglect. Long-term relationships are stormy and often unsuccessful. Because of sexual over-extension and intimacy avoidance, short-term relationships become the norm.

5. Addictive sex is victimizing. The overwhelming obsession with self-gratification blinds sex addicts to the harmful effects their behavior is having on others, and even on themselves.

6. Addictive sex ends in despair. When married couples make love, they are more fulfilled for having had the experience. Addictive sex leaves the participants feeling guilty, regretting the experience. Rather than fulfilling them, it leaves them emptier.

7. Addictive sex is used to escape pain and/or problems. The escapist nature of addictive sex is often one of the clearest indicators that it is present. Though acting out sexually can temporarily relieve addicts' anxieties, they still find themselves spending inordinate amounts of time in obsession and fantasy. By fantasizing, the addict can maintain an almost constant level of arousal. Together with obsessing, the two behaviors can create a kind of analgesic "fix." Just as our bodies generate endorphins, natural antidepressants, during vigorous exercise, our bodies naturally release peptides when sexually aroused. The molecular construction of these peptides parallels that of opiates like heroin or morphine, but is many times more powerful.

CHARACTERISTICS of SEXUAL ADDICTION

1. REPETITIVE – daily or monthly, anything that repeats it self
2. DEGENERATIVE – need more of the activity to satisfy, 'tolerance' is developed
3. UNMANAGEABLE – do things don't want to do, powerless to change
4. MEDICATIVE – change feelings, brain chemistry altered to feel good
5. DESTRUCTIVE – destructive consequences, divorce, disease, financial loss, job loss, etc.
6. DENIAL – secrecy, isolation

C. behaviors

LIE: SO WHAT? EVERYONE DOES IT!

TRUTH: NOT everyone is doing it, and if they were doesn't make it right!

10 TYPES OF COMPULSIVE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

1. FANTASY SEX – no relationship with people, just all in mind, fantasy is cornerstone of sexual addiction, very powerful motivator
2. VOYEURISM - also nonrelational, nonparticipants, but search for sexual objects in real or cyber-world, but don't to get past looking
3. EXHIBITIONISM – showing self not part of sex play but ALL of it, control another's attention by own appearance
4. SEDUCTIVE-ROLE SEX – relationships are about power and conquest, use sex, flirt, perform, romance tools to 'win' – once get attention move on to next conquest
5. TRADING SEX – no bonds, relationship – trade sex for money, gift, etc (reliving childhood sexual abuse)
6. INTRUSIVE SEX – using others without their permission, touching on bus, obscene phone calls, etc. steal sex because think no one would respond as they want
7. PAYING FOR SEX – sex with no intimacy, no relationship
8. ANONYMOUS SEX – no relationships or intimacy, meet someone online or pick up in bar, fear important factor for associate sex with fear from abuse when young
9. PAIN EXCHANGE SEX – pain, degradation, humiliation, can't relate, deserve pain, pain pays for guilt of enjoying sex
10. EXPLOITIVE SEX – distorted courtship, rape because can't relate and have rage issues, also by 'winning' another just for the purpose of sex, boss forcing employee; by pastors, counselors, police, teachers, etc.

INTERNET PORNOGRAPHY

Internet pornography is one of the most obvious and fastest-growing forms of sexually addictive behavior. Twenty-five million men use online pornography. There are 5 million web sites and 372 million pages of pornography on the web site, making it the largest use of the internet. 60% of all internet visits involve sex. Child porn alone brings in over \$3 billion. Having a PC with internet access is like having your own personal porn shop in your home!

This is especially tempting to men, for men are hardwired to visual stimuli. Men receive a chemical high from looking at pictures of nude women. When their eyes lock onto images of nude women, pleasure chemicals (epinephrine, etc) bathe the limbic pleasure centers in the brain, and because it feels food, they want to come back for another hit (look). When these hit the bloodstream, they lock into the memory whatever stimulus is present at the time of the excitement. Thus men remember pictures and things seen for years and years. Pleasure and highs come through their eyes.



Jesus warns in Matthew 5:27-28: ***"You have heard that it was said, 'Do not commit adultery.' But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."*** For men, looking is part of the sexual encounter.

It's often hard for women to understand this about men. The closest they can come to understanding is to think of how they are affected when they see a large box of luscious chocolates sitting on the table in front of them. Most women will be greatly tempted and distracted by the chocolate and find it hard to concentrate on anything else while it is there. This is similar to what happens in a man when he is visually stimulated.

Internet pornography is very appealing as well as very dangerous because it is so accessible and can be accessed in total privacy. Viewers can be anonymous and have no need of personal interaction. Chances of discovery are minimal. The cost is affordable. The internet also allows the viewer to move quickly from one form of sex to another in a short time. It used to take time to progress to deeper and deeper forms of sexual behavior but now that can happen very quickly. Of course lies abound about internet sex as well. Listed below are a few:

LIES ABOUT INTERNET SEX

1. **IT'S NOT REAL** – so there are no consequences?
2. **IT DOESN'T HURT ANYONE** - but feeds an industry that hurts many of women and innocent children, in addition it cheats your mate of your attention
3. **DOESN'T HURT ME** – all the studies and statistics show it does
4. **I CAN STOP ANY TIME I WANT, I JUST NEED TO TURN OFF THE COMPUTER** - try it for a month and see what happens!
5. **I JUST USE IT OCCASIONALLY. IT DOESN'T INTERFERE WITH OR JEOPARDIZE THINGS IN MY LIFE** - ask your wife, children and boss what they think and see what that say!

WOMEN SEX ADDICTS

While sex addiction used to be exclusively a male problem, that is changing. Now 25% to 33% of all sex addicts are women. Women are more relational in nature so their behavior focuses more on chat rooms and using sex as a substitute for real intimacy. Some woman feel sex is 'dirty' and that they must suffer to enjoy it. Being used is all they deserve. Often sexual abuse when young started this pattern in them. Unfortunately, though, younger women are becoming addicted to sexual behaviors similar to men.

Thus the lie "So what, everyone does it!" doesn't make it right. Even if 'everyone' does the behaviors we have mentioned, that doesn't make the behaviors healthy and beneficial for growing relationships. Let's look at another lie.

D. OTHER ADDICTIONS & sex addiction

LIE: AT LEAST I DON'T _____ (Drink, Use Drugs, Gamble, Smoke)

TRUTH: Addiction is addiction, no one 'better' or 'worse' than others

The justification behind this lie is that 'my sin isn't as bad as it could be so I don't have to change.' Not only is that faulty reasoning, but the premise that one sin isn't as bad as another if incorrect. All addictions are compulsions. While the dysfunction may take different forms, the

damage is still being done. Sexual addiction also produces a chemical 'high' to cause one to feel 'normal.' The addict is self-focused and uses others to attain his needs.

Sex can become addictive in a similar way to alcohol and illegal drugs. During sex, our bodies release a powerful cocktail of chemicals that make us feel good. Some people get addicted to these chemicals and become obsessed with getting their next fix - their next sexual high. As with other addictions, the body also gets used to these chemicals, so the sufferer needs increasing amounts of sex to achieve the same buzz.

Studies show that 87% of those who are addicted to sex are also addicted to other things as well.

FOOD AND SEX 38% of sex addicts also struggle with an eating disorder. Sexual addiction is an escape, a search for counterfeit intimacy, so medicating ones self with food is common.

ALCOHOL, DRUGS AND SEX Alcoholics doesn't cause sex addiction. It is a separate addiction that works with sexual addiction. 42% of male sex addicts and 50% of female sex addicts also have problems with chemical dependency. 50% to 70% of cocaine addicts have problems with sexual compulsions.

WORKAHOLISM AND SEX These addictions are very common and complement each other. It's not surprising that 28% of sex addicts also struggle with compulsive working.

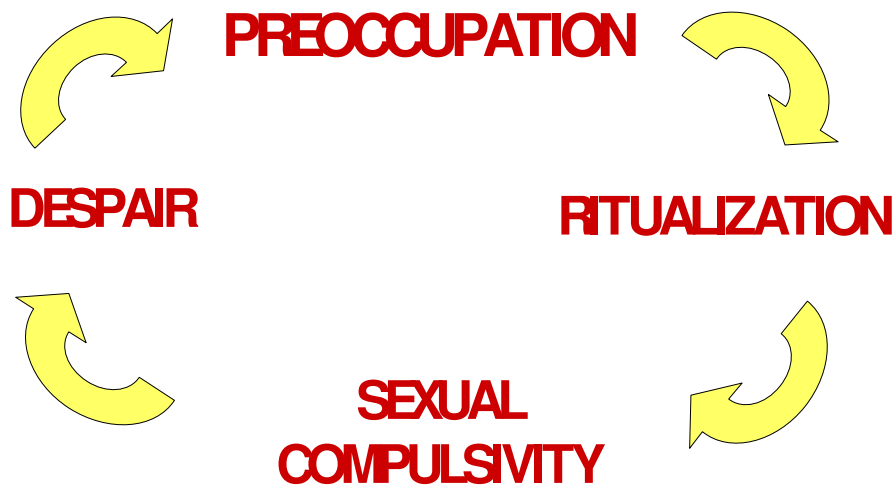
EMOTIONAL ILLNESS AND SEX Depression, bipolar disorders, obsessive-compulsive behavior, etc., are compounded by sex addiction.

So saying that sexual addiction isn't a problem because it isn't as bad as other addictions is faulty reasoning as well. One of the more common and damaging lies is that the addict can stop any time they want.

e. cycle of addiction

LIE: I CAN STOP ANY TIME I WANT.

TRUTH: powerless to stop and stay stopped



THE ADDICTION CYCLE
Not everyone who struggles with sexual sin is an addict, but just like with alcohol or smoking or drugs, when a person isn't able to stop on their own they are addicted.

First there is a **PREOCCUPATION WITH SEXUAL THOUGHTS**. Thoughts start running through the mind, bringing a mild rush of adrenaline (James 1:13-14). The adrenaline rush gets addictive, as does the escape from reality the thoughts bring. We assume

acting on our thoughts will be the solution to our problems. This is where the cycle must stop. If we don't bring our thoughts captive (II Cor 10:5) at this point it will be much harder later in the cycle.

The **RITUALIZATION** stage of the cycle is when one starts acting on their thoughts. This usually takes a similar pattern each time. For men today it may include surfing the net late at night, hanging around a certain magazine stand or book store, going to a video store when the wife is away, walking past a certain secretary's desk or many other things. Thoughts of sin are conceived (James 1:15a) and grow. A ritual means don't have to stop and think or disrupt focus. This is a very important and necessary stage, not to be rushed. He can't be orgasmic all the time. This anticipation is sometimes better than the event itself for despair follows the act. Now all is positive and optimistic – this is what I need! During this time cares, worries, failures, stress, deadlines, responsibilities are suspended (medicated). He can't stop at this point, he is on his way down a sliding board – he must first stop his preoccupation with sex.

When we are stimulated emotionally – including being visually stimulated by sexually charged images, an automatic signal is sent to the adrenal glands. This starts in anticipation during this stage. A hormone called epinephrine is secreted into the bloodstream, which locks into the memory whatever stimulus is present at the time of the emotional excitement. This reaction causes us to involuntarily remember emotionally charged events, negative and traumatic ones as well as positive ones.

COMPULSIVE SEXUAL BEHAVIOR - ACTING OUT usually follows the ritualization pattern. The sin is committed, in action or in mind. Then comes the **GUILT & SHAME**. As James says, sin gives birth to death (1:15b-16). Instead of life we get death. Instead of joy there is sorrow. Short-lived pleasure is replaced by a long time of pain. Emptiness fills us. We end up feeling trashed afterwards. We promise we'll never do it again. But before long the cycle is repeated.

DESPAIR, feeling of being trashed – hopelessness, powerlessness, guilt, shame, etc. – only escape is to medicate self so don't hurt – start again with preoccupation. Sex is his escape from pain. Person's values are broken and more shame results. Addicts experience intense mood shifts, often due to the despair and shame of having unwanted sex. Sexual addicts are caught in a crushing cycle of shame driven and shame-creating behavior. While shame drives the sexual addicts' actions, it also becomes the unwanted consequence of a few moments of euphoric escape into sex.

Two sets of activities organize sexual addicts' days. One involves obsessing about sex, time devoted to initiating sex, and actually being sexual. The second involves time spent dealing with the consequences of their acting out: lying, covering up, shortages of money, problems with their spouse, trouble at work, neglected children, and so on.

Clear examples of this cycle are seen in the Biblical accounts of Amnon with Tamar (II Samuel 13) and Samson with his 'wife' and Deliah (Judges 13-16).

WOMEN AND THE SEX CYCLE

With many women who are addicted to sex, obsessive thought begins with planning how to attract a sexual partner. For example, Sandy spends inordinate amounts of time envisioning or fantasizing about attracting a partner. Her **RITUALS** include hours of shopping for seductive outfits, putting together outfits from her closet, meticulous bathing and shaving in anticipation of being sexual, cleaning her house and preparing coffee for the morning after, and even excluding thoughts of other matters, such as her bills or her child's school problems.



Her **PATTERNS** of obsessive thought circle around trying to judge, interpret, and analyze any responses to her, then carefully planning a reaction to the perceived responses. From an external view, these behaviors are all very much within the societal norms of female behavior. What cannot be seen by society or by the therapist, however, is the internal focus on thoughts of being sexual. Sometimes even the client herself cannot detect this obsessive focus, due to her inability to see through her own defenses.

Many sexually addicted women **fantasize about sexual abuse**, including being physically forced in some way to have sex, forcing someone else to have sex, or watching someone else being forced to have sex. Mary's fantasies include degradation or objectification, such as prostitution or being watched by someone while having sex. At first, these fantasies seem to portray a loss of the woman's power, but many times the arousal is associated with the power of being so irresistible or innocent that rapists, gangs, or authority figures cannot control themselves around the seductive powers of the woman. This appears to take away guilt/responsibility when she is 'forced.' Sex is seen as bad, evil.

A mood-altering level of excitement occurs for female sex addicts in seductive behaviors involving flirting, dancing, dressing, or otherwise personally grooming to be seductive. Some have several affairs going on at the same time, while others are monogamous but need a new relationship to get out of, or deal with, the loss of the prior relationship. **Seduction** is the key to the addictive cycle, even in preparation for sex with self, i.e., using flirtation, pornography, or sugary

foods in preparation for masturbation. Pornography is only one of the commonly used printed materials that women sex addicts use. Others are sexual stories, sex manuals, or clothing catalogs that show swim wear, underwear, or lingerie. Videos and cable television are also used to achieve the mood-altering sexual high through visual stimulation. Exhibitionism is commonly an aspect of sexually addicted behaviors in women. This is a more blatant display than the subtle seductive behaviors described above: wearing no bra; having sex in a car or other visible place; sex with self or another in front of a partner; stripping at parties; or taking or posing for nude photos. Some sex-addicted women's exhibitionism seems to stem from behaviors modeled in their families of origin, while others seem to be in direct contrast to strict, rigid family rules about nudity or sex.

STOPPING THE ADDICTION CYCLE

This addiction cycle must stop at the very start -- what we do with the first thought

DOWNWARD SPIRAL

Romans 1:24-28 Therefore God gave them over in the sinful desires of their hearts to sexual impurity for the degrading of their bodies with one another. 25 They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen. 26 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. 27 In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion. 28 Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done.

"Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more" (Ephesians 4:19)

Sexual addiction is often progressive. While addicts may be able to control themselves for a time, inevitably their addictive behaviors will return and quickly escalate to previous levels and beyond. Some addicts begin adding additional acting out behaviors. Usually addicts will have three or more behaviors which play a key role in their addiction -- masturbation, affairs, and anonymous sex, for instance.

In addition, 89% of addicts reported regularly "bingeing" to the point of emotional exhaustion. The emotional pain of withdrawal for sexual addicts can parallel the physical pain experienced by those withdrawing from opiate addiction.

The ultimate question is not DO YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO DO WHAT YOU ARE DOING, the real question is, CAN YOU STOP? It's a lie to say "I can stop any time I want" – that's just not true and that's what defines this as an 'addiction.'

One other lie that comes under this category of the cost of sexual addiction is the one that says 'there's no harm done – I'm not hurting anybody.'

F. CONSEQUENCES OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

LIE: THERE'S NO HARM DONE! I'M NOT HURTING ANYBODY

TRUTH: Sexual addiction is a bondage that destroys the addict as well as others close to him and used by him

- 70 per cent had severe relationship problems
- 40 per cent had lost a partner
- 27 per cent had lost career opportunities
- 40 per cent had experienced unwanted pregnancies
- 72 per cent suffered suicidal obsession
- 17 per cent had attempted suicide
- 68 per cent had been exposed to sexually transmitted infections

ULTIMATE RESULT of the addiction cycle: loss of family and job - no longer a double life is needed for there are no friends or family to lie to or protect, no job to keep – so why live? Suicidal thoughts dominate

CONSEQUENCES FOR WOMEN: Negative consequences might include unplanned pregnancies, abortions, sexually transmitted diseases, terror resulting from unprotected sex, or shame about behaviors that conflict with individual values. Additional red flags are tension or decreased productivity at work due to sexual behaviors with co-workers, complications or dramas due to secret relationships, depression or despair about inability to change sexual patterns, or violence in relationships. Other consequential problems may include unhealthy weight gains and losses, chemical addiction or other behavioral addictions aimed at medicating feelings associated with sexual behaviors or relationships, diverting from the therapeutic process by beginning a relationship, or sexual occupation or avocation such as stripping, exotic dancing, phone sex, or internet sex.

So it's clear to see that believing these lies about sexual addiction contributes to the bondage and defeat that comes with the problem. But before we can talk about a cure we need to better understand just exactly what causes sexual addiction.

A large, 3D, white text graphic with a dark shadow, reading "SEX ADDICTION". The text is slanted upwards from left to right and is positioned in the lower half of the page.

II. CAUSE OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

We've seen several lies that feed this addiction. There are lies that deny or cover up the cause as well. One is that 'It's just the way I am.'

A. SECONDARY CAUSES

LIE: IT'S JUST THE WAY I AM. (I can't help it. It's a disease.)

TRUTH: It's not a disease or something we can't help, we are responsible and CAN change!

Sexual addiction is not a 'disease' whereby someone is a helpless victim. There are victims, of course, and the addict himself may have been victimized when young, but as an adult is responsible for his choices and behavior. Calling it a 'disease' implies we can't control it and that we are therefore free to let it go. This can be justification for the addict and an excuse for their mate. While sexual addiction does have great power over us, it can be overcome!

National surveys reveal that most sexual addicts come from severely dysfunctional families. Usually at least one other member of these families has another addiction. This is true in 87% of the cases.

Inconsistent parental nurturing and love definitely can contribute to sexual addiction. It destroys a child's natural desire for intimacy and makes them suspicious of the 'good times.'

A sense of parental betrayal when they need to feel emotional and spiritual love and support can make a person susceptible to turning to sex to find security.

Insufficient parental teaching and modeling can leave a child without a solid foundation of love and respect. When they are taught that intimacy brings pain then they soon learn it is safer to withdraw emotionally from others. Substitutes are needed to meet needs for intimacy.

Stress can contribute as youth seek to escape or avoid stress by use of sex. Often this is modeled by their parents and passes from generation to generation.

Early sexualization by sounds, sights and touches that are inappropriate can cause a child to assign an improper place to sex in life.

Child abuse is a major contributor to sexual addiction in adults. Research has shown that a very high correlation exists between childhood abuse and sexual addiction in adulthood. 97% of sex addicts have been emotionally abused as a child, 83% have been sexually abused and 71% have been physically abused.

Some children are impacted more than others by child abuse. This is influenced by the innate personality differences of various children. Also, some have a strong supportive relationship with an adult that helps them grow through the abuse.

While these things contribute to causing sexual addiction in a person, there is a deeper root cause that needs to be understood

B. ROOT CAUSES OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

Remember, sexual addiction itself isn't the problem, although it can cause multiple problems. Sex addiction is just a symptom of a far deeper problem. Cures don't come by treating symptoms!

Sex addiction is a byproduct of loneliness, pain and the need to be loved and accepted. It is a substitute for these, a counterfeit way to meet legitimate, real needs. However it fails to really meet these needs so greater and greater amounts are sought in a futile search for what is missing.

Addictions are reactions to gaping holes in a person's life. These are caused in childhood when proper love and security isn't given to a child. Babies are born with a great need for unconditional love and security. They need to be loved and cared for. We all have a deep inner need to be held and told we are special and important. We need our parents to hug us and tell us they are proud of us, we are unique and will have a great future. We need to have this happen over and over and over. If it doesn't, or if mixed messages are sent, we get the message that we are inferior and unlovable. Children assume it is their fault that they aren't loved and cared for. They feel something must be wrong with them for their parent or guardian to be unable to love them in the way they need. As we mature we know in our minds that this isn't true – often the adult had their own issues that made it difficult or impossible for them to show unconditional love. By the time we are old enough to realize that the damage has been done, the messages have been sent and believed, and patterns of behavior to compensate have become firmly established.

Everything in life is then geared to bring safety and security, to answer the question, "Am I lovable?" Where can I find acceptance and security? How can I handle the hurt and loss inside? What can I do to get rid of my pain and fear? This leads to all kinds of substitutes and counterfeits. Sex addiction is one of many ways of 'coping.'

When a person is unable to have real intimacy with another, to really give oneself without reservation, to overcome feelings of rejection or failure, sexual compulsions often compensate. Sex becomes a way of escaping pain and substituting reality with a fantasy world. Society conditions us to this, for everywhere around us we see lust replacing love and substituting for real closeness. Satan works with this, too. His demons magnify openings we give him and keep working on them, putting thoughts and desires into a person's mind. Often this follows family lines, going from grandfather to father to son.

MALE SEX ADDICTS

Male sex addicts invariably feel powerless around women. They have a very hard time relating emotionally so they only relate sexually. In their fantasies or acting out they are in control of women, who are objects for their use. This causes them to feel superior and in control, to seem like they are needed and a woman can and will respond to them as a male, even if just sexually. A sexual object can't hurt or reject them, nor can the object make demands of them or have needs they can't fill. They are what they have always sought to be: safe, secure, in charge and needed. In degrading women they are paying back all women for the hurt they received when young. Sex becomes a substitute for intimacy.

In addition, the chemical lift that was described earlier gives them such a pleasurable high that all pain and fear is temporarily removed and, often for the only time, they feel 'good.' When over, though, men feel trashed and terrible about themselves. They often promise to change their behavior but, because they feel even worse about themselves than before, they end up reverting to their only means of escape – sex.

WOMEN SEX ADDICTS

For most people, having sexual relationships, fantasies, and behaviors would be normal human behavior, but for the sex addict, they cause problems. Most women who are sex-addicted don't have role modeling from their mothers and/or fathers for how to have emotional intimacy in nonsexual ways. Research has shown that there is often a combination of rigidity of some kind and a lack of emotional support in the sex addict's family of origin. Also, there is a high incidence of sexual abuse (with and without touch) in the histories of women sex addicts. Thus men give love to get sex and women give sex to get love!

IN SUMMARY:

EMOTIONALLY for the sex addict sex isn't really about sex, they just use sex. Sex is involved as a means to an end but is not the end itself. It is really about emotional intimacy – lack of it, need of it, fear of it and the drive to attain it. The addiction provides an illusion of affirmation, a veneer of control and connection in a 'safe' environment.

PHYSICALLY sex activates the natural opioids and dopamine producing intense pleasure and euphoria which accentuates the addiction.

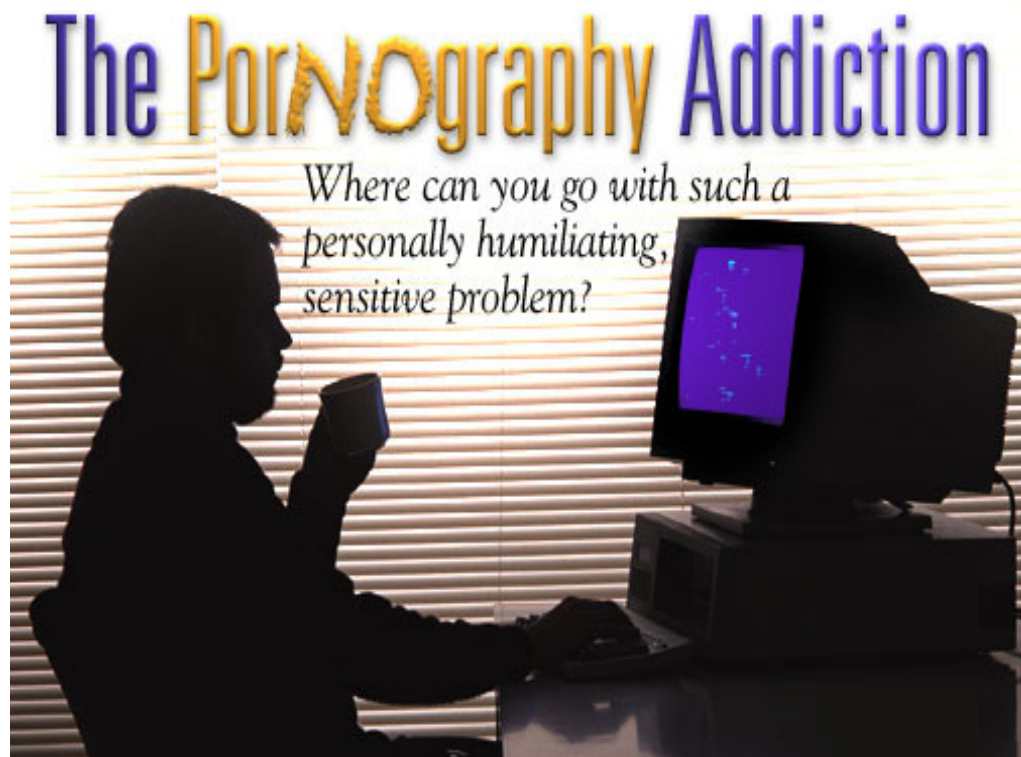
SPIRITUALLY sex feeds the delusion that fulfilling comfort, love and security can be experienced on a strictly human level apart from God. That can't happen. All addicts and addictions are basically self-centered and demanding. Real spiritual needs can't be met in that way. Only in humility and real submission to God can our deepest spiritual needs be met.

LIE 1: I'M NOT WORTHY OF REAL ACCEPTANCE

LIE 2: NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM

LIE 3: OTHERS NEVER MET MY NEEDS

LIE 4: SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED



| 1. I AM A BAD, UNWORTHY PERSON | 2. NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM | 3. OTHERS WILL NEVER MEET MY NEEDS | 4. SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED |
|--|--|--|--|
| Distorted concept of SELF | Distorted concept of OTHERS | Distorted concept of GOD | Distorted BELIEFS |
| <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts conclude from their family experiences that they are not worthwhile persons. Feelings of inadequacy and failure predominate. Addicts often see humiliation and degradation as justified or deserved. The desperate struggle around sexual compulsivity absolutely confirms this belief and enhances feelings of low self-worth. Addicts are committed to hiding the secret reality of their addiction at all costs because of their unworthiness. Yet the addiction guides almost all behavior & decisions.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts believe that everyone would abandon them if the truth were known. They have a constant fear of being dependent on others. Addicts perceive their sexual behavior as so bad that everyone becomes their 'fault.' Addicts assume responsibility for all the pain in loved ones. Honest guilt and remorse cannot be expressed because that would require honesty about behavior. Addicts become progressively more isolated.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts feel unloved and unlovable, which means other people cannot be depended on to love them, so their needs will not be met. The resulting rage becomes internalized as depression, resentment, self-pity; and even suicidal feelings. Because they have no confidence in others' love, addicts become calculating, strategizing, manipulative and ruthless. Rules and laws are made for people who are lovable. Those who are unlovable survive in other ways.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts confuse nurturing and sex. Support, care, affirmation and love are all sexualized. Absolute terror of life without sex combines with feelings of unworthiness for such intense sexual desires. Sexual activity never meets the need for love and care, but continues to be seen as the only avenue to meeting those needs. Addicts have a high need to control all situations in an effort to guarantee sex. Yet there is a secret fear of being sexually out of control. Addicts promise themselves to stop or limit sexual behavior because of this fear.</p> |
| <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Addicts create a front of 'normalcy' to hide their sense of inadequacy. They may even appear grandiose and full of exaggerated self-importance. As consequences to behaviors emerge, the front contrasts with actions that seem to be degrading or self-defeating or both. Others see decisions or behaviors as irrational, incomprehensible, or even self-destructive, but not 'normal.'</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Addicts create the image of being in charge of life and in no need of help. They appear unaffected by any problem, but will often do extreme or indulgent things as if making up for something. No explanation is offered, however. Some addicts may continue to be charming and sociable, but all addicts become 'unreachable' personally as they close off all avenues of vulnerability.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Addicts rage about unmet needs in the past prevents the possibility of expressing needs now because they anticipate being rejected. Addicts appear not to want or need anything. They are purposely unclear about their intentions in relationships and are thus seductive in behavior, i.e., they try to be affirmed or cared for without expressing that they need it so they will not risk rejection. Addicts make extensive efforts to show how respectable and law-abiding they are.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Sexual obsession pervades lifestyle and behavior. Addicts make maximum effort to ensure all possible sexual opportunities. Addicts at all levels of behavior feel the need to control sexual access, protect their 'supply.' Seeking degrading or humiliating sexual experiences simply extends internal feelings of unworthiness. Addicts publicly profess extreme sexual propriety, however about some sexual matters. Cover-ups, lies, and deceptions are made to conceal personal sexual behavior.</p> |
| <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS Close friends and family members become angry and frustrated with the addicts' egocentricity, especially when there is insensitivity to others. Not knowing the interior world of an addict, they are troubled by what looks like destructive or curious behavior that does not fit the image the addict's project.</p> | <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS Significant persons in the addicts' lives start to feel pushed away, useless, neglected and unnecessary. They become confused at seemingly generous gestures, but in the absence of any personal warmth or presence. Anger and hurt accumulate with a sense of abandonment in reaction to the addicts' contradictory behavior.</p> | <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS Those who are close start to see the double life, the Jekyll and Hyde, in the addicts' worlds. The addicts' ups and downs remain difficult to understand. Worse, distrust and disbelief in the addicts begin. Things appear to be so smooth, yet the intuition is that they are not. Inconsistencies between the addicts' public and private lives confirm these intuitions.</p> | <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS The addicts' protestations of high sexual morality obscure the impact of sexual obsession on friends and families. Close family and friends tend to reject suspicions of sexual compulsivity because of the addicts' values. Evidence of powerlessness over behavior and unmanageability mounts, these persons become confused, not knowing what to believe. They do not wish to intervene in something so personal. Since they don't feel close enough to become involved, they choose the other option, which is to withdraw.</p> |

-From "Out of the Shadows" by Patrick Carnes

2 : THE SOLUTION

A 36-year-old woman, the mother of three small children, was raised by a ragefilled alcoholic father and a dependent mother. She married a man who also had an alcoholic parent. Over the course of their marriage, he had multiple affairs. She denied the most blatant evidence of his philandering until she at times doubted her own sanity. Although she knew he was having sex with other women, she did not dare deny him sex for fear he would leave.

Frightened of confronting her husband and expressing her anger, she had bouts of depression and periods of overeating. During her second pregnancy, she contracted gonorrhea from her husband. Although she felt intense guilt about risking her fetus's health, she continued having sex with her husband. She expressed intense shame when she disclosed her home situation to her physician.

She became progressively obsessed with her husband's infidelity and would drive around town at night, with her three small children, looking for her husband's car. When she found his car at a girlfriend's house-she would send one of the children to ring the doorbell and ask daddy to come home. Despite her recognition of how hurtful this behavior was to her children, she was unable to stop.

Now HE had problems – probably sexual addiction among them. But she had a problem, too. She was an enabler, co-dependent with her husband. Both of them need to get healthy emotionally, only he won't face and work through his issues until she changes her patterns. As long as she keeps enabling his addictions he won't have to change.

In this section of this paper we will consider how she can become free from her harmful patterns. Then we will talk about how he can also have victory and growth to maturity.

As seen before, there are lies that underline what this wife is doing. These lies must be recognized and the truth substituted in order for positive actions to replace her current unhealthy responses. ***"They exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served created things rather than the Creator — who is forever praised. Amen."* (Romans 1:25)**

III. CO-ADDICTION TO A SEX ADDICT

A. DEFINITION of co-addiction

LIE: I DON'T HAVE A PROBLEM, HE (SHE) DOES!

TRUTH: Those who are co-addicts have a problem also, and it not only hurts them but the person they think they are 'helping.'

A codependent individual is addicted to a person entangled in an addiction(s). As a result, the person plays a role in the context of the other person's addiction(s). Codependency and coaddiction have been defined by numerous authors and are often used as interchangeable terms.

Typically the definition revolves around the idea that a codependent individual is addicted to a person entangled in an addiction(s). As a result, the person plays a role in the context of the other person's addiction(s). From this idea evolves the concept that individuals can become addicted to "people, processes, and/or substances." Anything that can have a mood altering effect on the person can develop into an addictive process.

For example, the partner of a sex addict may sense something is out of step with their partner's behavior. For some individuals they may ignore the signs or cues that something is out of character. This is called 'enabling,' the person's behavior protects and/or rescues their partner from the consequences of addictive behavior. In essence this person becomes numb to the addiction and often later reports that they violated their own integrity in the context of their partner's addiction. The payoff is that this individual is not challenged around their ability to be emotionally and physically intimate in the relationship.

For others, the partner may attempt to question the addictive behavior of their partner. If the answers don't add up, the individual may go on a mission to "find the truth" by acting as a detective. In this role they violate their own integrity and the trust of their partner by looking through their belongings, following them, or even using software programs to track their partner's Internet activity. This intrusive behavior can take many forms and become an addictive process. In both cases, there is a mood altering experience that creates unmanageability for the person referred to as a coaddict.

In addition, when sexual addiction is discovered and/or disclosed, then coaddiction adds an additional layer of trauma in response to sexual betrayal in the relationship. There is a persistent re-experiencing of the partner's betrayal that results in intrusive thoughts, images and even physiological reactions to "triggers" that remind the partner of the betrayal. These images of betrayal take on a life of their own, similar to the way an addiction takes on a life of its own. There is often increased arousal and hyper vigilance to cues in the environment that result in fear, rage, and loss of trust in self and others. The fear that results from the trauma of sexual betrayal actually changes brain neurochemistry.

Therefore it is obvious that the co-addict does have a problem. So just what does co-addiction look like? Are they just trying to 'help' or is there a pattern of symptoms that can be seen.

B. SYMPTOMS of co-addiction

LIE: I'M JUST TRYING TO HELP!

TRUTH: You're doing it more for yourself than the one you are 'helping' – you have as strong a problem they you are denying.

God created the family to, among other things, provide love and security for children. Children need to feel unconditionally loved and totally secure to mature emotionally into healthy adults. When they don't feel that from their parents, they must substitute or compensate in some way. They can't really mature past that until they find unconditional acceptance. Many never find it, and that's why so many turn to addictive or compulsive behaviors. They are trying to meet a legitimate need, but it will never be met by illegitimate means.

A codependent is a person who tries to control others for their own benefit. The reason this is done is to make one happy by having others impressed with what is done for them. Another reason for the control is to keep negative things from happening. Codependents feel responsible for the problems of those around them and are compulsively driven to correct them. Because of their low self image, they feel their happiness must come from others.

ABIGAIL Codependency is easier to understand when it is illustrated in operation. Abigail is such an example. Codependents may appear to have everything going for them, but that is just the outer appearance. Abigail and Nabal seem to be the couple with everything. He was a rich rancher and property owner. She was intelligent and beautiful. However when we look closer we see he was surly and mean (I Sam 25:2-3). Success and financial security offer no protection against relational difficulties.

Nabal's pride and lack of responsibility soon become apparent. It was sheep shearing time and his servants were busy with their own 3,000 sheep so David's men helped out by protecting the other animals from robbers and harm. However when David asked for his due payment Nabal rudely refused to pay (4-11). David and 400 of his armed men marched to Nabal's estate to destroy it (12-13). Here's where Abigail's codependency becomes obvious.

The servants told her about the problem, knowing she could be counted on to bail Nabal out (14-17). They also knew not to go to him. She came through, making whatever personal sacrifices were necessary to soothe the wounds, mend the fences and keep the family functioning. She was obviously skilled at this (18). Perhaps as a girl growing up she found herself in the role of taking care of responsibility one or both of her parents should have assumed. She was 'trained' to rescue and fix. Her needs and feelings had to go on hold.

She became good at dropping everything to rescue another or solve a crisis. Actually codependents thrive on this responsibility for it gives them a false sense of self-worth. It is their substitute for the unconditional love and acceptance they missed growing up.

Anyway, Abigail jumped into action, not even telling Nabal. She was obviously used to functioning without his help. Feeling isolated and alone is common among codependents. Resentment and anger build but aren't shown. Instead the anger is turned inward to cause depression or other forms of dysfunction. That adds to the drain on their emotional battery and before long they are burnt out and emotionally exhausted. Their love tank is always empty and when their emotional battery goes dead they are in poor shape.

One of the major contributing factors to this is the codependent's belief that they are responsible for all that goes wrong. Abigail believed that she should have headed off the problem; therefore it is her fault (20-25). Codependents feel guilt for others' sins. The classic example is the woman who feels it is her fault that her husband beats her. If she was just a better wife he wouldn't get so angry.

Abigail was quite persuasive. She was an intelligent, beautiful, godly woman, very sincere in what she was doing. She greatly impressed David and he changed his mind about killing her family. When she returned home, though, she didn't tell Nabal anything right away for he was drinking (36). She protected him from the consequences of his actions and kept her feelings to herself. When she did tell him, the shock killed him (37-38). Her sacrificial giving of herself all those years to protect him didn't really help him in the long run -- it never does. It would have been better if he had to face the consequences for his actions much earlier. Perhaps his mother had started this pattern in him and Abigail just picked it up and kept it going. Nevertheless, codependency is destructive. It destroys the one being protected as well as the one doing the protecting. No one wins.

Unfortunately Abigail didn't enjoy her freedom; she married David as quickly as possible, getting into another codependent situation. She needed someone to serve, to pour her life into (40-41). In David's large family there was plenty of opportunity. David soon married another woman and then another and Abigail again lacked an intimate love relationship with a mate. I'm sure she continued to serve, though, perhaps even blaming David's sin on her not being totally satisfying to him as a wife.

THE PROBLEM Codependents are fine, sincere, godly people. Because of their needs for approval and their lack of self-esteem they live for others, using others for their needs of worth, feeling they are responsible to fix what is wrong in those around them. Unable to relax and say no, to see their own needs as legitimate and their own feelings as true, they push until exhaustion. They end up bitter, drained, lonely and depressed and withdraw into isolation. They go to the opposite extreme to compensate. What a waste this is of a fine, gifted person.

CO-ADDICT TEST

(From In the Shadows of the Net by Patrick Carnes)

1. I constantly think or obsess about my partner's behavior and motives.
2. I engage in self-destructive behaviors (physically, sexually or emotionally)
3. I check my partner's e-mail accounts, computer files, disks, and the like for evidence of Sexual material.
4. I blame myself for all the problems related to my partner's sexual addiction.
5. I believe that if I changed, my partner would stop acting out sexually.
6. I feel shame as a result of my behavior or my partner's behavior related to sex.
7. I feel anxiety as a result of my behavior or my partner's behavior related to sex.
8. I use my own sexuality as a way to manipulate my partner.
9. I feel numb to my own sexual needs and wants.
10. I accept my partner's norms as my own.
11. I find myself doing sexual things I don't want to do.
12. I am over sexual to satisfy my partner.
13. I take responsibility for my partner's sexual behaviors and their consequences.
14. I keep secrets to protect my partner.
15. I rarely feel intimate during sexual encounters with my partner.
16. I lie to cover up for my partner.
17. I totally deny that there are any problems with my husband's sexuality.
18. I always seem to be in the midst of a crisis or problem.
19. I threaten to leave my partner, but never follow through.
20. I am giving up on my own life goals, hobbies and interests as a result of my partner.
21. I have changed my dress or appearance to accommodate my partner's wishes.
22. I believe I can eventually change my partner.
23. I play martyr, hero or victim roles.
24. My life seems increasingly unmanageable.
25. I go against my own morals, values and beliefs.
26. I deny my intuitions.
27. I am feeling more and more unworthy as a person.
28. I shut down sexually from my partner as a result of his or her use of sex.
- 29.; I am obsessed with learning more about my mate's sexual dysfunction through the media, the Internet and so on.
30. I am considering engaging in sex outside my relationship as a way to make my partner understand my feelings.
31. I have fantasies about getting revenge on my partner and his or her 'friends.'
32. I am in competition with my mate's other sexual avenues for my partner's time and attention.
33. I am irritable with others when I think about my partner's sexual addiction.
34. I neglect important areas of my life because of my partner's sexual lifestyle.
35. I am a sexual addict codependent.

SIGNS & CHARACTERISTICS OF CO-ADDICTION

COLLUSION: cover up in some way, keep family image, secret, lying to cover up, making excuses, feeling his problem isn't really so bad

OBSESSIVE PREOCCUPATION: think about partner's 'problem' and motives, keep close watch, play detective, obsessed with his problem, don't think about self, own problems,

DENIAL: ignore what is really happening, ignore intuitive feelings, stay busy and distracted, feel they can change partner

EMOTIONAL TURMOIL: emotional roller coaster, emotional binges, go from one crisis to another, free-floating shame and anxiety

MANIPULATION: try to control partner's behavior and acting out, use sex to manipulate or patch up disagreements, play martyr, hero or victim roles, threatening to leave but never doing so, try to limit/control computer use (or whatever the problem is)

EXCESSIVE RESPONSIBILITY: very hard on self, blame self for the problem, believe if they changed so would mate, take responsibility for their sin, create Codependency situations to make yourself indispensable

COMPROMISE OR LOSS OF SELF: give up life goals, hobbies and interests, act against own morals, values and beliefs, change dress or appearance to accommodate partner, accept partner's sexual norms as own,

BLAME & PUNISHMENT: increasingly more self-righteous and punitive, destructive to others, homicidal thoughts or feelings, acting out to punish partner or prove own worth, withholding sex from partner as punishment

SEXUAL REACTIVITY: numbing own sexual needs and wants, rarely feeling intimate during sex, making excuses not to be sexual, changing clothes out of sight of your partner

Therefore, when a co-addict thinks they are just trying to 'help' the addict they are believing the lie that they are 1) doing more good than harm and 2) that they don't have a problem, only the addict. Believing they can change the addict shows they don't understand the root of the addict's problem, nor do they understand their own motives and dependencies.

C. CAUSES OF -CO-ADDICTION

LIE: I CAN CHANGE HIM (It's all my fault).

TRUTH: No one can change anyone else, and if you think that is your responsibility and, since you haven't changed them, the problem is your fault, than that is a real problem you need to face.

Just as the addict's root cause is needing love, security and being fearful, so this is the root cause of the co-addict. We saw 4 lies the addict believes that are at the root cause of his problem. These are also true of the co-addict.

LIE 1: I'M NOT WORTHY

LIE 2: NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM

LIE 3: OTHERS NEVER MET MY NEEDS

LIE 4: SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED

| 1. I AM A BAD, UNWORTHY PERSON | 2. NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM | 3. OTHERS WILL NEVER MEET MY NEEDS | 4. SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED |
|--|---|--|--|
| <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts grow up in families in which their self-worth is in constant jeopardy. Feelings of inadequacy and failure parallel the addict's sense of unworthiness. Not believing there are any options, coaddicts tolerate abusive, humiliating and degrading behavior. Coaddicts are obsessed with sex since sex is the proof of love.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts in relationships reflect their basic distrust of others' love and care for them. To be in a relationship engages the three coaddictive fears: lose their identities in the relationship, forced to deny what they know to be true, and that meeting their needs would have a price. To tell others the painful 'secrets' would guarantee abandonment. To be honest with the addicts would sacrifice the safety of being self-righteous or compliant. Coaddicts, like addicts, assume that they are responsible for all the pain in loved ones.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts' desperate need for love and nurturing exceeds any one person's ability to respond. They make perfectionist demands on all aspects of the addicts' behavior in a misdirected attempt to guarantee satisfaction of all their needs. When they are disappointed by the addicts' failure to meet the impossible demands, rage becomes internalized, resulting in despair, self-pity, and resentment. These down times alternate with periodic hope and exhilaration that things will change. Coaddicts' conniving manipulation and criticism are based on the assumption that if the addicts met the high standards, needs would be met. Addicts become the coaddicts' source of self-worth and good feelings. The conviction that the coaddicts will have to pay for the love and care pervades all relationships. To be affirmed with no requirements goes beyond the coaddicts' experience.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts believe sexual attention proves they are lovable. Sex becomes a trade-off for love. Therefore, coaddicts have a great fear of being unattractive and sexually inadequate. When addicts are sexual with others, coaddicts feel total personal rejection, adding to their sense of unloveability. Given the stakes, coaddicts have difficulty exploring or enjoying their own sexuality. Exploitive experiences foster deep resentment and rage, which further validate all the coaddictive core beliefs.</p> |
| <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Self-righteous contempt often masks the coaddict's inferior fears. Aggressive, critical, controlling behavior switches with compliance and enabling. Either position shares a martyrdom role in which the coaddict is being 'victimized.'</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts go to extreme lengths to appear self-sufficient. They seem unaffected by any problems and will expend intense energy to conceal problems. In fact, they will take on many extra responsibilities, being all things to all people. In general, they often seek relationships in which they can dominate or nurture so they can be intimate with minimum risk. This self-sufficient exterior protects the family secrets. Also, the internal belief that the coaddicts are responsible for everything is acted out.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Martyrdom accompanies the coaddicts' systematic efforts to make themselves indispensable. In exchange, coaddicts expect addicts to furnish proof of care and love. Failure to do so results in further efforts to reform the addicts or in self-righteous punishment and rejection. Coaddicts do not communicate personal needs, only disappointment in unmet expectations. Preoccupation which addicts often results in the denial or tolerance of addicts' behavior. Coaddicts 'keep score' of what is owed in the relationship. The more coaddicts do for the addicts, the more they expect in return.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Because sex is a trade-off for love, coaddicts may find themselves being sexual when they do not wish to be or, worse, participating in sexual behavior that is degrading and humiliating. Coaddicts may also dress or act seductively to get attention. Efforts to control the addicts' sexual obsession include the use of sex to manipulate addicts to prevent them from being sexual with others. Sexual attitudes of the coaddicts can continue the external themes of self-sufficiency, self-righteousness and martyrdom.</p> |

| 1. I AM A BAD, UNWORTHY PERSON | 2. NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM | 3. OTHERS WILL NEVER MEET MY NEEDS | 4. SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED |
|--|--|---|---|
| <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts are in a self-serving double bind in the relationship. When coaddicts are critical and judgmental, addicts use this to justify abusive, compulsive behavior. When coaddicts are submissive and compliant, addicts feel burdened, exploited and critical. These feelings also serve as a rationale for addictive behavior.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts rely on coaddicts to pick up the pieces – especially as powerlessness and unmanageability increase. Yet addicts may start to be critical of coaddicts' efforts when they assume extra responsibility. Internally, addicts start to feel progressively more useless and without places in the coaddicts' lives. Addicts feel unneeded, especially when coaddicts are busy nurturing others, such as children. The coaddicts' involvements serve as further justification for compulsiveness.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts fail to perceive coaddict's needs. Partially, their failure stems from the addictive preoccupation and sexualization of all needs. The coaddicts' behavior, however, also obscures the issues in the relationship. Addicts grow resentful of the coaddicts' expectations, yet also feel a sense of failure for not meeting them – which no one person could do. Coaddictive judgments simply document what addicts already fear to be true. Yet addicts remain assured that coaddicts will not leave while they are coaddictively preoccupied – as long as they are still judging, they are still there.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts feel confused by the coaddicts' contradictory signals about sex. Often addicts misinterpret the coaddicts' need for relationship as sexual overtures and then totally fail to understand the coaddicts' feelings of being exploited. Addicts are ashamed when sexual feelings are not returned, since that confirms that their sexual intensity is bad. Also, there are feelings of resentment about the coaddicts' efforts to control and judge the addicts' sexual behavior, all of which perpetuates the3 addiction cycle of the addicts.</p> |

-From "Out of the Shadows" by Patrick Carnes

Like chemical dependency, sexual addiction is a family disease. Spouses of sex addicts, or "coaddicts," usually grew up in a dysfunctional family, where they acquired a set of core beliefs that resulted in low self-esteem and difficulty in relationships. They may believe that they are not worthwhile, that no one could love them for themselves, that they can control and are responsible for others, and that sex is the most important sign of love.

Spouses of sex addicts were often sexually abused in childhood and thus have fear or confusion about sex. They tend to be attracted to individuals who are needy, which describes most addicts. Coaddicts usually fear abandonment, often cannot imagine life without their partner, and are willing to accept behaviors that healthier persons may find unacceptable. For example, in a survey of 78 recovering coaddicts, (9) 52 (66%) said that they had participated in sexual activities that they found uncomfortable. These included viewing pornography, swapping sexual partners, and having sex in public places.

When a co-addict thinks they can change an addict they believe a lie that contributes to making the situation worse for them and for the one they are trying to help.

C. CONSEQUENCES OF CO-ADDICTION

LIE: I KNOW I CAN CHANGE HIM IF I JUST TRY HARDER.

TRUTH: No one change anyone else no matter how hard they try. It's not your responsibility to change anyone else.

Look at the symptoms we've seen at it becomes obvious that co-addicts don't 'help' addicts but actually enable them to stay in their addiction. They get caught up in it and it becomes their downfall as well. Then what's the cure for co-dependency?

D. CURE of co-addiction

LIE: HE'LL NEVER CHANGE!

TRUTH: A co-addict can change, and when the co-addict changes then there is hope for the addict to change

These things need to happen for the co-addict to change, thus allowing the addict to change.

- 1. LEARN TO LOVE WITHOUT INTERFERING WITH CONSEQUENCES** - don't intervene to protect, prevent or bail out mate from consequences of behavior – they must become responsible for their behavior and realize they are out of control and powerless
- 2. ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR OWN POWERLESSNESS OVER OBSESSION** – acknowledge you don't have control over mate's behavior, stop obsessing over or trying to control their behavior
- 3. ACKNOWLEDGE THE CONSEQUENCES OF CODEPENDENT BEHAVIOR** – admit what it has cost you to try to change them, accept your powerlessness,
- 4. DEFINE A CODEPENDENT'S SOBRIETY** – list which behaviors of yours are self-destructive and need to be stopped.
- 5. FIND HEALTHY WAYS TO MEET LEGITIMATE NEEDS FOR LOVE AND ACCEPTANCE** – the co-addict, too, must work through childhood issues of rejection and fear

There are numerous helpful support groups and sources of resources for co-addicts who want to learn more about their dysfunction and how to grow through it. Many of these are listed at the end of this document.

As the co-addict stops enabling the addict to stay in their sin, then the addict is challenged to face and work through his issues.

IV. CURE OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

A. FOR THE SPOUSE OF AN ADDICT (HOW TO HELP)

1. STARTING TO STOP

If you suspect that your partner is a sex addict, chances are you've already tried to change their behavior. Ultimately, though, no one can recover from an addiction unless they accept that they have a problem and want to change.

When you first found out you were more than likely paralyzed by fear. The lie "It will never be the same" started playing in your mind. While the process is painful, the truth is that now there is the potential for things to be far greater than they were in the past.

Feelings of being betrayed are also common. You wonder if you'll ever be able to trust them again – or to trust anyone for that matter. As you show anger and hostility or withdraw (or both) the addict feels compelled to turn to his addiction for 'help' all the more.

Being the partner of a sex addict is painful and confusing, but there's help available for you too. As well as individual therapy, there are a growing number of support groups. Get help: personal or group. Make sure you talk to someone that is qualified in this particular problem. Don't wait until you confront your mate – start counseling immediately.

If you feel there is a danger of STDs or AIDS then you have every right to stop sexual relations. Don't withdraw from the emotional relationship – that needs to be increased. You can withdraw from the physical relationship for your own protection, though.

Watch for feelings of guilt. "If I'd have" Is very common. You are not the primary cause of this, it started before you ever met. You are not the one to solve this – only the addict can do that. Still, it's good to seriously look at yourself and see where you may have contributed so you know what to change in your life.

Confronting your mate can be hard, for usually addicts are very controlling and dominating and marry people that can't and won't stand up to them. This is where your change needs to start.

Plan your confrontation carefully. What is your goal and purpose? If you just want to hurt them back you can certainly do that for their greatest fear is for your mate to find out. The shame and guilt will be overwhelming. Try to be honest and open, but also supportive and understanding. Lay a framework of trust and love. Remember, it's all about him, not you. Your time will come later with your counselor. Now you need to be more concerned about helping him than about getting revenge for the hurt he's caused you. It takes a lot of maturity to be willing to surrender your right to your own rights.

When you bring this up realize that you may only know the tip of the iceberg. The problem may be much bigger than you realized. You can't really be prepared for that, but you can be aware so you aren't surprised.

THE CONFRONTATION ITSELF It's best to plan when and how to intervene in your mate's addiction. Seek the advice of a qualified counselor or qualified pastor to plan this step. Make sure any children in the home are taken away and properly cared for. Having a respected and trusted authority figure present can be very helpful. Remember to keep the focus on his problem, not your hurt. Wait until you can talk without losing control of your emotions or getting carried away in anger.

If the addict admits to the problem and agrees to treatment do it immediately, don't wait. Plan your options before your confrontation. Many good options are listed at the end of this document.

If they won't admit to the seriousness of this, don't be surprised. Don't push but don't give in. Don't try to argue him into admitting it's a problem. The more loving and understanding the easier it will be for him to admit his failure and need. Give him time to think and respond. Continue the conversation later.

Don't be satisfied with his remorse, guilt, tears and promises to stop. He is like a child whose mother has caught him with his hands in the cookie jar. If he could stop he would have stopped long ago! He needs serious and qualified help to get to the root problem, heal and grow, and then stop. This won't happen until he takes a brutally honest look at his own heart and need so that he accepts and recognizes his own sin instead of blaming others.

Remember that sexual sin is not the problem; it is the symptom of a deeper problem which must be worked through. When the focus is just on the outer behavior the real cause is missed and things don't really change. At best he'll switch addictions, but he'll never be free to grow into the human being God created him to be.

2. STAYING STOPPED

Having initially realized the problem and gone through the first confrontation, it's important to stay focused and keep your eyes on the goal of working through his root problems. Thus counseling for each of you is essential. You must have your own individual counseling for you

have many issues to deal with if real intimacy is to be achieved. You have issues about your mate's addiction, about how that has hurt you, and about how you have contributed to his problem. These things won't go away on their own.

You can best help the addict by love and support – tough love as well. The issues involved must be faced and worked through. This is a long, painful process but well worth the effort. You can't do it for him; he must do it for himself. He needs someone else to hold him accountable, make sure he has someone in this role. Your role is to support him, to be his cheerleader. You cannot be his mother who patrols and checks up on him! Your love and support will fan the spark of what is right in him.

Of course, without God's help it is impossible to do these things. We can't really forgive, love, or show love without His presence in our lives working through us. Only God's supernatural presence in us by His Spirit will enable us to have love, joy, peace and all the fruit of the spirit which God promises to provide (Galatians 5:22-23).

That's a short summary of what you can do to help yourself and your addict mate. But what if you who are reading this is the addict, what can you do to help yourself?

B. FOR THE ADDICT HIMSELF

LIE: IF 'THEY' WERE DIFFERENT (It's Their Fault)

LIE: NOTHING WORKS FOR ME!

LIE: I'LL NEVER BE FREE FROM THIS!

LIE: I'LL ACT DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME.

TRUTH: There can be victory over sexual addiction but that freedom only comes from within the person himself when he is willing to pay the price to change.

1. STARTING TO STOP

No simple solution, but this A-B-C-D approach should really help.

1) . ADMIT THE PROBLEM

LIE: IF 'THEY' WERE DIFFERENT (It's Their Fault)

TRUTH: No one forces you with a gun to your head! Own responsibility, must admit it.

Addictive lust feeds on the darkness of denial. "I'm not an alcoholic. I just drink to sooth my nerves – or to feel more relaxed." "I may masturbate a lot, but doesn't everyone at one time or another?" "I know I work too late, but it's only until I get more settled in my job." **Deception** is the ally of lust in that it allows us to serve both mammon and God and make it look as if all is well. Deception makes the lies seem like truth.

It's hard to face the truth and shame in ones self, but that is the only path to freedom. As Jesus said, "The truth shall set you free." Until the addict admits it was their choice to sin and not the fault of someone else or some 'disease' there can be no healing. The 12-step programs all start with step 1, admitting that they are powerless over their compulsiveness and that their life has become unmanageable (Romans 7:17-18; Psalm 116:19; Jeremiah 9:23-24; II Corinthians 12:9).

Unlike Adam who blamed Eve and Eve who then blamed the serpent God had made (Genesis 3), we must acknowledge our own responsibility for our sin (Psalm 139:23-24). Only then can we confess it to God and be cleansed in His sight (I John 1:9) so we can begin to be healed

from our destructive patterns. Accepting God's forgiveness and forgiving ourselves follows, but isn't easy (Psalm 103).

Admitting the problem includes realizing one is using sex to substitute for a legitimate need. It is meeting a legitimate need in an illegitimate way. Thus the addict must be willing to part with his unhealthy patterns. It's more than wanting to be free from the pain, it means being willing to pay the price to get the final product of health and wholeness. Most addicts want to escape the negative consequences of their sin patterns but don't go far enough in recognizing the deep roots that need to be removed if real recovery is to take place.

The addict must be willing to endure emotional pain or anxiety instead of escaping or deadening it with sex. He must be willing to do without intimacy instead of substituting for it with sex. He must live with unmet needs, unmasked pain, boredom, and intense cravings for your sexual substitute. Freedom comes, but only when one is willing to pay the price (Matthew 5:29-30).

2) . BELIEVE THE TRUTH (not lies)

LIE: I'LL NEVER BE FREE FROM THIS!

TRUTH: You can be free from this – many others have been freed from worse than you!

SEX ITSELF IS NOT SINFUL Just like money (I Tim 6:10), sex itself is not sinful. It is our attitude to it and use of it, the place it plays in our life. It, too, is a God-given gift to serve us, but nothing for us to serve. Adam and Eve were naked and not ashamed, for sin hadn't entered (Genesis 2:22-25). Godly sex in marriage is pure and good (Heb 13:4; Song of Solomon 7:1-11) and God watches and approves of a husband-wife sexual relationship (Song of Solomon 5:1). Sex not with one's mate is what is sinful (Ex 20:14; Dt 5:18; Lev 20:10; Prov 6:20-28).

SIN STARTS IN THE MIND Sexual thoughts of anyone other than one's wife are wrong and forbidden. Entertaining them leads to adultery (James 1:13-16) and in fact is itself adultery (Mt 5:27-28). Once one starts down a greased sliding board stopping is almost impossible. Sexual sin must be defeated when the first thought enters (II Cor 10:5). Knowing when they usually hit helps, too. It may be after a fight with ones wife, completing a successful business deal, feeling alone, when anxiety strikes, etc. Knowing what triggers the thought pattern is very helpful.

These lies must be recognized for what they are: *lies!* They must be replaced with the truth.

LIE 1: I'M NOT WORTHY

TRUTH: God has created me as equal to all others, worthy in His sight

LIE 2: NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM

TRUTH: I am lovable by God and others just as I am

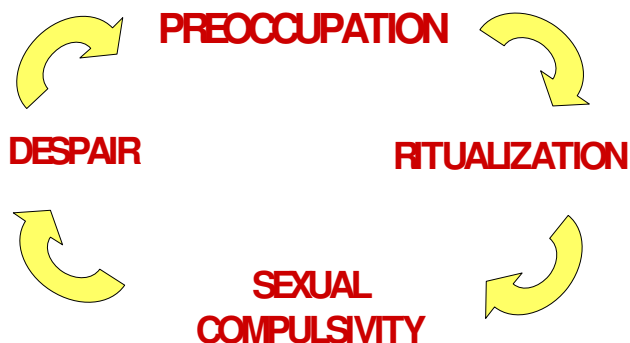
LIE 3: OTHERS NEVER MET MY NEEDS

TRUTH: Perhaps key people in my life have failed me, but others can and do meet my needs

LIE 4: SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED

TRUTH: Intimacy, love and acceptance is my most important need

It's also important to believe that the addiction cycle can be broken. It must be broken at the first part; the preoccupation that leads to ritualization must be stopped. Identify triggers and lies associated with this cycle and then replace them with healthy coping strategies and tools. Plan in times of strength for times of weakness. Professional counseling can help with this process.



SPIRITUAL ELEMENT

Deeply imbedded within every man's soul are two intensely related passions that demand fulfillment – sexuality and spirituality. God created sex to be a source of pleasure as well as a deeply spiritual expression of marital love. Thus a Christian's relationship with God is often equated with a husband/wife relationship (Hosea 1-2; Ephesians 5, Revelation 21).

Mankind is created to worship; to look for something to put in first place in their lives and turn to in order to have their needs met. In the case of sex addicts it is sex that becomes their idol, what they turn to. There is a 'hole' in each of our hearts that only God can fill. The addict tries to fill it with their addiction, but it never works so they feel driven deeper and deeper into their sin to find what they are looking for.

Many stay defeated by their addiction because they don't believe they can ever have victory over their sin. In their own strength they can't. God doesn't remove our lust but He gives us power to overcome it. We are a new creation (Rom 6:1-7) and have a power greater than sin within us to help us (Romans 6:8-14) if we let him. That is our free will choice. In order to have victory, though, often demonic footholds must be broken. They can come from sexual sins our fathers or grandfathers committed (Exodus 20:5), or from sexual unions we formed in the past (1 Cor 6:16). In either case those openings must be put under the blood of Jesus.

So the second step in recover is to believe the truth, not lies. Faulty beliefs must be replaced with healthy ones. Good, solid, mutually fulfilling intimate relationships are possible and can be built. This is more than a change in behavior, though. It means an inner change; a change in heart is needed.

3) . CHANGE YOUR HEART

LIE: I'LL ACT DIFFERENTLY NEXT TIME.

TRUTH: Meeting legitimate inner needs in a healthy way brings healing, not changing external behavior.

Change your heart; don't just try to change your actions! White knuckling it doesn't work with any addiction: drinking, smoking, drugs, gambling, etc., and it won't work with sex, either. The addict must allow himself to process and grieve past losses and hurts. Many people need to be forgiven, including one's self.

Ask yourself: What significant current or past wounds am I ignoring in my struggles with lust? Many times a lust problem is easier to bear than a deep wound that seems impossible to erase. For example, Craig found that he often gave in to sexual fantasies after phone conversations with his critical and demanding father. His sexual addiction masked the lonely wounds and anger related to his parent. Honesty and repentance are crucial to change. The ultimate antidote to lust, however, is love. It is very, very difficult to destructively lust after someone you love.

TAKE A STAND FOR PURITY IN YOUR THOUGHTS AND ACTIONS Starting in our mind we must make sure all our thoughts are pure (Phil 4:8-9). We must commit ourselves to keep unhealthy sexual thoughts out (Job 31:1). We can't just remove what is wrong, we must replace it with what is right. Pure thoughts must replace impure. Listen to Christian music or tapes of the Bible. Memorize scripture verses (Ps. 25:3-4; 101:2-3; 119:9-11; Mt. 4:4; 18:3-11; Jn. 17:19; Eph. 6:10-16; Heb. 2:12; I Jn. 3:8; 4:4). In order to really purify our thoughts it is often necessary to get to the root cause and work through the childhood pain which keeps us from real intimacy so we need the false intimacy that sexual sin seems to provide. Ask God to show you what you need to remember. Get insight into how that affects you today. Forgive those in the past who have hurt you. Pray for god to heal, forgive and restore.

The fourth and final step to victory is to remove the roadblocks to real intimacy. This is risky for those who have been hurt but totally essential to complete healing and restoration.

4) . DEVELOP REAL INTIMACY

LIE: NOTHING WORKS FOR ME!

TRUTH: That's an excuse to stay in sin – you're not worse than others or beyond help!

Recovery from sexual addiction is essentially a journey from enslavement to lies & isolation. Instead that is replaced with the promised land of true intimacy with self, God and others. The ultimate antidote to lust, however, is love. It is very, very difficult to destructively lust after someone you love. It is very hard to lust after something that does damage to someone you love. Lust is a consuming and absorbing possession of someone in order to dull our own pain rather than a delighting in and enhancing of another.

An engaged couple may look at one another with enormous passion and keen anticipation of their merger as one flesh, but if love prevails, then they would refuse to do anything that would mar their individual or corporate beauty. In the same way, a man and woman who work together may enjoy one another's physical or personal beauty, but if love prevails, then each will long to increase one another's beauty rather than stain it by the violation of destructive lust.

LEARN TO DEVELOP TRUE INTIMACY WITH YOUR WIFE/MATE By developing true intimacy the need for the false substitute will lessen. This takes total openness and honesty, being vulnerable to hurt and rejection. Accept your wife as she is and ask for God's love for her. Pray that your sexual needs would be met with her (Prov 5:15-19). Enjoy her body as God intended it (see article 4 in this series). Spend lots of good time with her, relating and loving her as God wants you to do. Learn from her how to be intimate emotionally and spiritually.

DEVELOP A CLOSE, SOLID RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD Without the wisdom and power of God's Spirit we cannot understand and defeat sin. Only an intimate relationship with God can meet our needs so we don't have the same pull to meet them with a substitute like sexual sin. Jesus was tempted in all ways we are and overcame by depending on God (Heb 4:15).

Again, counseling with a mature, qualified Christian counselor is essential to fully develop these things in life. Yes, changing is hard but not impossible. After the initial motivation to change comes the even harder part – continuing on when stress and difficulties arise. Many make the commitment to stop and change, but find themselves unable to stick with it.

2 . STAYING STOPPED

LIE: I'LL NEVER BE FREE FROM THIS!

TRUTH: Freedom is available for all who are willing

GOAL: sexually pure when no sexual gratification comes from anything or anyone but mate (in a way mutually satisfying and healthy for both)

Like other types of addicts, some sexual addicts may never be "cured." Sexual addicts achieve a state of recovery, but maintaining that recovery can be a lifelong, day-by-day process. The Twelve Step treatment approach teaches addicts to take their recovery "one day at a time" - concentrating on the present, not the future.

VARIOUS OPTIONS If you recognize you have a problem with sexuality there are various options available to you.

12-Step Programs such as Sexaholics Anonymous, apply principles similar to those used in other addiction programs, such as Alcoholics Anonymous & Narcotics Anonymous. However, unlike AA, where the goal is complete abstinence from all alcohol, SA pursues abstinence only from compulsive, destructive sexual behavior. By admitting powerlessness over their addictions, seeking the help of God or a higher power, following the required steps, seeking a sponsor & regularly attending meetings, many addicts have been able to regain intimacy in their personal relationships.

Strengths of 12 step programs include acceptance from others who also are overcoming guilt and shame, support and accountability and a resource to help relearn and educate in healthy ways of living. Negatives of 12 step programs include trying to bring about these changes by ones own strength because God Himself isn't directly referred to and included. Often the goal is just to stop the addictive behavior ("36 days sober!") instead of getting at the root problem and working through it so a healthy life can replace what was.

Treatment Programs, either inpatient or outpatient, for up to 6 months are available and often have a high cure rate. They can be helpful because one is outside his normal environment where everything is controlled and his source for meeting his addiction is unavailable. By focusing on the problem all day every day great headway can be made. Still, it isn't always possible to go away for 6 months. Financially that can be very difficult.

Other Support Groups abound, both secular and religious. Many are listed in the pages at the end of this document.

Individual Counseling can be very helpful. In fact, most experts say a combination of personal counseling and group support meetings are essential for a sex addict to be freed from his addiction.

RELAPSE TRAPS

Watch for the traps that lead an addict back into his addiction. The habit of turning to the addictive behavior ('acting out') to meet inner needs, especially in times of stress or fear, is very strong.

Watch for feelings of **entitlement** – feeling you deserve or need reward because of the struggle you are going through. “I deserve something nice and this is what I deserve” is a lie to be avoided at all costs. A similar trap is allowing **resentment** for past or present hurts take over. They lead to self-pity and then entitlement.

Self-reliance (“I can handle this.”) after a time of victory causes one to let their guard down. Falling back into sin is the usual result.

Also, watch for **stress triggers** – those things that cause you to start being preoccupied with sexual thoughts. Ask yourself what you are trying to escape, what is causing you insecurity or fear.

There are many and various traps that lead back to bondage. Watch for them. Learn to identify which are your greatest threats and what to do when they start to appear.

ACCOUNTABILITY TO OTHERS

Having victory all alone is very difficult if not impossible. One can stop but staying with it is very difficult. Often it is our pride which keeps us from forming accountability relationships. This pride issue keeps us in bondage to the sin. While we have all kinds of blocks against this, finding a godly person to support, encourage and hold us accountable is very important (James 5:16). Our fear of exposure and rejection, male pride and ego which tells us we don't need any help and ignorance of intimacy combine to keep us from reaching out to someone else. Individual personal counseling is a must as is attending a support group. Either in these formats or elsewhere an accountability partner is important. This cannot be ones' mate. A mate must build up and encourage, not ask the tough questions. It is too easy to fool a mate for they want to believe the best. They have too much riding on this to be objective and tough. If I can help anyone in this area please contact me and I'll gladly do what I can. Contact me at Jerry Schmoyer, jerry@schmoyer.net, 215-3438-8086, 215 W. State Street, Doylestown, PA 18901.

James 5:16 says “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

Part of this is **blocking explicit sites on your computer**. Several good options are suggested at the end of the paper. Covenant Eyes is excellent for use with an accountability partner. I subscribe to this and have my sons on it as well. It is an excellent way for us to hold each other accountable. Also, make sure your computer is in a main living area where everyone can see what you are doing and never log on when you are alone!

TV is another source that must be blocked. Dropping cable in your home and when you stay in a hotel is a good idea. The addict needs to get really tough to keep from being easily tempted to return to their addiction.

MY METHOD, which I teach to those I minister to, is initialed 'CB.' The **C** stands for CONNECT. I must connect with Jesus at the very start of every day for if my intimacy with Him isn't strong and healthy I won't be able to withstand that which comes my way during the day. I must start each day with a quiet time of prayer, reflection/meditation and Bible reading. The **B** then stands for

BOUNCE. Throughout the day I must bounce every wrong sexual thought that comes into my mind or picture that comes into my line of sight or memory. I think of it as a bouncy ball or ping pong ball and can't let it stick or stop but must keep it moving and quickly replace it with wholesome thoughts. Quoting Bible verses that pertain to the situation are important ways to accomplish this. When Jesus was tempted He resisted Satan by quoting Bible verses. If He needed to do that to have victory so do we! This is the opposite of how a sex addicts mind has been working for years. It's not an easy transition but a very important one. Try my CB strategy and see if it doesn't help. It isn't the final cure for the addict still needs to work through their intimacy issues, but it can certainly help us to stay stopped.

PREVENTION HELPS

GUARDRAILS Just as dangerous roads have guardrails to protect drivers from plunging over the edge, so God has provided guardrails for Christian men to be able to safely navigate the curves and dangerous portions of life. These can keep us from plunging into sexual destruction.

1. A Strong Relationship with the Father is the first guardrail (Prov 5:1-2). A solid spiritual relationship with God is the surest protection against destruction. Invite God to examine your thoughts (Phil 4:8-9). Take captive any thoughts that aren't pure (II Cor 10:5) before they grow. Study and memorize Bible verses to help with the battle over lust (I Thes 4:3-8; Job 31:1; Prov 6:27; Mk 9:42-47; Eph 5:3-7; II Tim 2:22; II Cor 10:5; Psalm 139:23-24).

2. An Extreme Caution with Other Women is the next safeguard. Do whatever is necessary to keep yourself from being tempted in action or thought (Matt 5:29-30). Don't even allow yourself to look at another woman and lust (Job 31:1). Be careful, too, of any relationship with a woman where you enjoy and look forward to her company. Sexual relationships start as good friendships, but any male-female relationship that isn't totally brother-sister in all aspects can easily lead to sin.

3. A Wide-open Relationship with Our Brothers is another guardrail. We all need someone who loves us enough to challenge us to total purity (James 5:16). We need accountability, encouragement and prayer support which can only come from a close brother in the Lord who understands and cares.

4. A fulfilling Relationship with Our Wife is the final essential ingredient (Prov 5:15-19). If your relationship with your wife isn't what you'd like, it's up to you as the man to change that. Be the husband you need to be no matter how she responds. Pray and fast for her to be the wife you need. Pray daily for God to give you a love for her like you had in the past. Treat her as if you have that love, and God will quickly put it in your heart. Learn to develop a close intimacy with her. The grass always looks greener, but never is.

Billy Graham says "There must be firm control of the sex impulse. This God-given instinct has been dragged through the gutter by modern thinking, and we have made a cheap toy out of the most sacred gifts God has ever given to man. Our procreative powers need to be dedicated to Christ."

Be careful when the world, the flesh or the devil try feeding you some salt water. It may seem initially invigorating and refreshing, but it leads to death. Control your thirst for sexual things. Drink of the water God has provided (Prove 5:15-19) and don't even think about any other. Make that commitment now. Job says "I made a covenant with my eyes not to look lustfully at a girl" (31:1). Let's all make and keep that same commitment ourselves. Let's not wait until it is too late, like Samson. Let's do it NOW.

WRITE

Keep a treatment autobiography – write down what learning, how feel, insights, etc. daily

Write out your sexual history

Dates, events, sexual development, social, psychological and spiritual development, events & memories which significantly impacted you in these areas

-focus on what developed you sexually

More details on handouts

1. Break up history into segments (0-10 yrs old, 10-20, etc)
2. Include how you felt about your development
3. Include positive and negative events or memories
4. Record spiritual/religious influences on you sexuality, positive or negative
5. Include parental/family messages or attitudes about sex and specifically about your development... They may be overt or subtle and implied.
6. Describe your parents and families sexual values and beliefs
7. Describe any compulsive behavior in your family
8. Did you experience any abuse or neglect?
9. Describe your sexual education process: when and how you learned
10. Do you remember being held, touched and nurtured as a child?
11. What feelings could or couldn't be expressed in your family? How did these affect your sexual development?
12. Are you aware of any way you have used sexual activities to avoid relational pain?
13. How have you substituted sex for real intimacy?

PATIENTLY PERSEVERE

Think of your polluted mind as a pot filled to the brim with black coffee. Sitting beside the coffeepot is a huge bowl of crystal-clear ice, which represents the Word of God. Your goal is to purify the contents in the pot by adding ice cubes to it. Every cube displaces some of the coffee and dilutes the rest, making it a little purer. You can only putting one or two cubes a day, soothe process seems futile at first. But over the course of time the water begins to look less and less polluted and the taste and smell of coffee is greatly diminished. The process continues to work provided you don't add more coffee grounds.

PREVENTING SEX ADDICTION IN OUR CHILDREN

Children always watching, learn from us

Create an environment where your child can share desires safely

Use appropriate physical touch

Model positive intimate relationships

Model masculinity and femininity

Set appropriate intimacy boundaries

Be prudent; not all adults have pure motives

Provide sex education at an appropriate age

Show unconditional love

Always have an open line for dialogue so that any subjects can be talked about at any time

DEALING WITH SEXUAL TEMPTATION

CAUGHT IN SEXUAL SIN BUT HARD TIME GETTING OUT

1. Ask for grace and strength to immediately stop, leave
2. Flee the area (Joseph)
3. Avoid situation in future
4. Confess
5. Accountability partner

IF AWARE WILL BE GOING INTO TEMPTING SITUATION because of work, away from wife

1. Fast and pray
2. Develop plan of action to follow
3. Ask others to pray for you
4. Set up and talk with accountability partner

VICTIMIZED BY INCEST

1. Seek qualified Christian counseling
2. Ask God for wisdom, healing, peace

TEMPTED TO MASTURBATE

1. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit, take control of all, esp. mind
2. Recognize you are dead to sin, resist the devil (James 4:7)
3. Pray and read Bible daily
4. Healing from stress, anxieties, show you what is behind this
5. Remove anything that could cause wrong thoughts
6. Keep away from opportunities
7. Accountability, prayer partner
8. Go for a run or exercise

CYBERSEX TEMPTATION

1. Turn computer off immediately
2. Resist, reckon dead, and flee
3. Screen on computer, keep in family room
4. Get rid on internet access or of computer

IMPURE THOUGHTS CAUSED BY WORLD – watching movie, see girl in office

1. Turn off TV, close eyes in movie, turn back to girl
2. Quote scripture or sing praise song to get mind on God

IMPURE THOUGHTS BY DEMONIC FORCES – thoughts pop into mind

1. Quote and obey James 4:7 submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
2. Resist, rebuke in prayer, and reject thoughts
3. Picture yourself dead to sin on the cross
4. If necessary, confess thoughts you hung onto, fed
5. Quote scripture or sing hymn – God inhabits our praise Ps 22:3
6. If necessary, call friend for prayer support

WHO A CHRISTIAN IS IN CHRIST

| | |
|-----------------------|--|
| | I am accepted... |
| John 1:12 | I am God's child. |
| John 15:15 | As a disciple, I am a friend of Jesus Christ. |
| Romans 5:1 | I have been justified. |
| 1 Corinthians 6:17 | I am united with the Lord, and I am one with Him in spirit. |
| 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 | I have been bought with a price and I belong to God. |
| 1 Corinthians 12:27 | I am a member of Christ's body. |
| Ephesians 1:3-8 | I have been chosen by God and adopted as His child. |
| Colossians 1:13-14 | I have been redeemed and forgiven of all my sins. |
| Colossians 2:9-10 | I am complete in Christ. |
| Hebrews 4:14-16 | I have direct access to the throne of grace through Jesus Christ. |
| | I am secure... |
| Romans 8:1-2 | I am free from condemnation. |
| Romans 8:28 | I am assured that God works for my good in all circumstances. |
| Romans 8:31-39 | I am free from any condemnation brought against me and I cannot be separated from the love of God. |
| 2 Corinthians 1:21-22 | I have been established, anointed and sealed by God. |
| Colossians 3:1-4 | I am hidden with Christ in God. |
| Philippians 1:6 | I am confident that God will complete the good work He started in me. |
| Philippians 3:20 | I am a citizen of heaven. |
| 2 Timothy 1:7 | I have not been given a spirit of fear but of power, love and a sound mind. |
| 1 John 5:18 | I am born of God and the evil one cannot touch me. |
| | I am significant... |
| John 15:5 | I am a branch of Jesus Christ, the true vine, and a channel of His life. |
| John 15:16 | I have been chosen and appointed to bear fruit. |
| 1 Corinthians 3:16 | I am God's temple. |
| 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 | I am a minister of reconciliation for God. |
| Ephesians 2:6 | I am seated with Jesus Christ in the heavenly realm. |
| Ephesians 2:10 | I am God's workmanship. |
| Ephesians 3:12 | I may approach God with freedom and confidence. |
| Philippians 4:13 | I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me. |

JOHN NEWTON: SEXUAL OPPRESSION

John Newton was a tremendous man of God, greatly used by Him to spread His message of grace and salvation. John's life wasn't always that way, though. He himself is a prime example of God's grace. He's best known for writing the hymn "Amazing Grace." John, however, had much trouble with sexual temptation and sin. It was only by God's grace that he was delivered. That grace is available for us today, too.

JOHN'S EARLY LIFE John was born July 24, 1725, in London, England. He had a godly mother who taught him the Bible and prayed for him. In fact, she wanted him to be trained as a preacher, but she was sickly and died when he was 7. His father was away a lot for he was a sea captain. He remarried and started taking John to sea with him when John was 11. John quickly fell into gross sin. Several times he tried to reform his life but failed.

Although he spent much time at sea, his heart wasn't in being a seaman for he had a girl, Polly, whom he wanted to marry and spend time with. Irresponsibility and carelessness caused him to end up on a British Naval vessel fighting France. He worked his way up to being an officer but lost it when he went AWOL to see Polly. He was flogged and put on a ship going on a 5-year tour of duty. John was sure Polly would be married by the time he returned. He was such a detriment to the ship that they traded him to a slave ship for another sailor.

SEXUAL BONDAGE BEGINS At 19 years of age John had free access to any slave woman he wanted. He went wild! "I rejoiced that I now might be as abandoned as I pleased, without any restraint. I not only sinned with a high hand myself but made it my study to tempt and seduce others upon every occasion." As a sailor he was so bad that the slave ship wanted to trade him back to the British Navy and John didn't want that. As soon as he could, he left the ship to manage a slave warehouse in Africa.

As manager of the slave warehouse, John had unlimited access to the women there. However he became so sick he almost died and ended up in slavery himself. He had a terrible master who caused him much suffering, but before too long was traded to a new owner who liked him. Again he was able to constantly sleep with African women. He was so engrossed in his sinful life style that he didn't want to leave Africa. It was only the thought of Polly that pulled him home.

SALVATION BY GRACE Again John was unwelcome on the ship that took him home because of his filthy language, awful morals, drunkenness, and anti-Christian attacks. He constantly mocked the gospel and Jesus. He had a reputation as one of the most vulgar and blasphemous of men, worse than most of the pirates he associated with. Then it all changed.

On March 21, 1748, at 22 years of age, John turned his life over to Jesus. The day before he had been reading Thomas A Kempis's Imitation of Christ and read "Life is short and uncertain. Today a man is vigorous and tomorrow he is cut down, withered and gone." He came under deep conviction. That same night a terrible storm hit the ship and it seemed they would sink. The ship was severely damaged and only barely managed to stay afloat. John found himself calling out to God for mercy -- if such a sinner as he could find mercy! Only Bible verses about judgment came to mind, but he humbled himself and found God's mercy. "I see no reason why the Lord singled me out for mercy, unless it was to show, by one astonishing instance, that with Him 'nothing is impossible.'"

SEXUAL STRUGGLES CONTINUE John apologized to his father and stepped up his courtship of Polly. His whole life changed and he reveled in his new-found forgiveness and peace. Spiritually he was on fire and grew as a Christian. He got a job as first mate of a slave ship, though, and a few weeks after sailing found he was as bad as ever before. He stopped reading his Bible and

praying and had no Christian fellowship. He was unable to resist the sexual temptations and sunk right into sexual sin again. "I was almost as bad as before. The enemy prepared a train of temptations and I became his easy prey. For about a month, he lulled me asleep in a course of evil, of which a few months before I could not have supposed myself any longer capable." Although he tried resisting, he was helpless to have any victory. "I was fast bound in chains; I had little desire and no power to free myself." He had first choice of the women on the slave ship. Today we would say he was addicted to sex. "If I attempted to struggle, it was in vain." How many men can identify with that bondage and misery!

GOD'S GRACE BRINGS DELIVERANCE Again John got so sick he almost died. He had no hope of mercy or forgiveness. He realized he could not change and was helpless in his sin. He stopped making promises or commitments about "next time" and "never again." He threw himself upon God's mercy, a broken and totally defeated man. "I made no more resolves, but cast myself upon the Lord to do with me as He should please." With that came forgiveness, and peace returned. In fact, he never sunk to those same depths again. "Though I have often grieved His Spirit and foolishly wandered from him since (when, alas, shall I be more wise?), His powerful grace has preserved me from such black declensions as this I have last recorded."

Eventually he got out of the slave trade entirely and entered the ministry. God used him in a small town to faithfully spread His message. As John's own testimony spread, so did his influence. Many found hope and deliverance through John's message of grace.

LESSONS FROM THE LIFE OF JOHN NEWTON What lessons can we learn from John? First and foremost, victory over any sin only comes by God's grace. Sometimes He removes the temptation at salvation, but often it just seems to get worse. Dormant for periods of time, it again and again raises its ugly head to bring sin, guilt and misery. It was only when John realized that he couldn't defeat it, no matter how hard he tried, that he was able to see God's victory in his life. There is no program, no strategy, no magic formula to bring victory -- it is only by God's grace. Any pride in ourselves or our ability to change (Prov. 16:18). God did discipline him when he sinned to get his attention: twice he was so sick he almost died. By his own admission, a fine wife to honor and be worthy of was also a help to keep him from slipping back into sexual sin. On a later voyage he wrote to Polly: "I was once no less eager after their pleasures than they (the crew members) are now. But you have so refined my taste since, that nothing short of yourself can thoroughly please me." That should be our prayer, too.

It's all by grace, nothing we can do or deserve. Falling on God's mercy is our only recourse. Promises of change, punishing ourselves for past failures, trying our hardest, all these fail for the flesh (sin nature) cannot control the flesh. Only the Spirit can control the flesh, and only when we 100% come to the end of our rope and throw ourselves upon His mercy. Have you done that, or are you still struggling on your own? Learn from John Newton. It's only by God's grace and mercy that victory comes. That's no excuse to sin, but it does give us hope no matter how bad things are. It also shows us our total need of Him -- which is something we all, like John Newton, need to learn.

SEXUAL ANOREXIA

They suffer silently, consumed by a dread of sexual pleasure and filled with fear and sexual self-doubt. They feel profoundly at odds with a culture that tirelessly promotes sex but is strangely unconscious about sexuality. It is not inhibited sexual desire they are experiencing, although often they possess a naiveté, an innocence, or even a prejudice against sex. It is not sexual dysfunction, although their suffering often wears the mask of physical problems that affect sex. It is not about being cold and unresponsive although that certainly is a way in which they protect themselves against the hurt. It is not about religious belief, although religious sexual oppression may have been a place to hide. It is not about guilt and shame, although those feelings are powerfully experienced. Nor is it about sexual betrayal or risk or rejection, although those are common themes. It is simply the emptiness of profound deprivation, a silent suffering called sexual anorexia.

Sexual anorexia is an obsessive state in which the physical, mental, and emotional task of avoiding sex dominates one's life. Like self-starvation with food or compulsive dieting or hoarding with money, deprivation with sex can make one feel powerful and defended against all hurts. As with any other altered state of consciousness, such as those brought on by chemical use, compulsive gambling or eating, or any other addiction process, the preoccupation with the avoidance of sex can seem to obliterate one's life problems. The obsession can then become a way to cope with all stress and all life difficulties. Yet, as with other addictions and compulsions, the costs are great. In this case, sex becomes a furtive enemy to be continually kept at bay, even at the price of annihilating a part of oneself.

The word anorexia comes from the Greek word orexis, meaning appetite. An-orexis, then, means the denial of appetite. When referring to food appetite, anorexia means the obsessive state of food avoidance that translates into self-starvation. Weight concerns and fear of fat transform into a hatred of food and a hatred of the body because the body demands the nurturance of food. Food anorexics perceive bodily cravings for sustenance as a failure of self-discipline. The refusal to eat also becomes a way for food anorexics to reassert power against others, particularly those who may be perceived as trying to control the anorexic, trying in some manner to prevent the anorexic from being his or her "true" self. Ironically, many food anorexics are driven by a powerful need to meet unreal cultural standards about the attractiveness of being thin. A terror of sexual rejection rules their thoughts and behaviors and is a primary force behind this striving for thinness. The irony here is that sexual anorexics share precisely the same terror.

Specialists in sexual medicine have long noted the close parallels between food disorders and sexual disorders. Many professionals have observed how food anorexia and sexual anorexia share common characteristics. In both cases, the sufferers starve themselves in the midst of plenty. Both types of anorexia feature the essential loss of self, the same distortions of thought, and the agonizing struggle for control over the self and others. Both share the same extreme self-hatred and sense of profound alienation. But while the food anorexic is obsessed with the self-denial of physical nourishment, the sexual anorexic focuses his or her anxiety on sex. As a result, the sexual anorexic will typically experience the following:

- a dread of sexual pleasure
- a morbid and persistent fear of sexual contact
- obsession and hyper vigilance around sexual matters

- avoidance of anything connected with sex
- preoccupation with others being sexual
- distortions of body appearance
- extreme loathing of body functions
- obsessional self-doubt about sexual adequacy
- rigid, judgmental attitudes about sexual
- excessive fear and preoccupation with sexual diseases
- obsessive concern or worry about the sexual activity of others
- shame and self-loathing over sexual experiences
- depression about sexual adequacy and functioning
- intimacy avoidance because of sexual fear
- self-destructive behavior to limit, stop, or avoid sex

Sexual anorexics can be men as well as women. Their personal histories often include sexual exploitation or some form of severely traumatic sexual rejection-or both. Experiences of childhood sexual abuse are common with sexual anorexics, often accompanied by other forms of childhood abuse and neglect. As a result of these traumas, they may tend to carry dark secrets and maintain seemingly insane loyalties that have never been disclosed. In fact, sexual anorexics are for the most part not conscious of the hidden dynamics driving them. Although obsessed with sexual avoidance, they are nonetheless also prone to sexual bingeing, occasional periods of extreme sexual promiscuity, or "acting out in much the way that bulimics will binge with compulsive overeating and then purge by self-induced vomiting. Sexual anorexics may also compensate with other extreme behaviors such as chemical or behavioral addictions, codependency, or deprivation behaviors like dieting, hoarding, saving, cleaning, or various phobic responses. The families of sexual anorexics may also present extreme patterns of behavior and thought. Finally, the sexual anorexic is likely to have been deeply influenced by a cultural, social, or religious group that views sex negatively and supports sexual oppression and repression.

Sexual anorexia, therefore, can wear many masks. Consider the sexual trauma victim who takes care of her pain by compulsively overeating. People focus on her obesity, not noticing the hidden anorexic agenda of avoiding being desirable to anyone. Or think of the alcoholic who has never been sexual except when drinking. The prospect of being sexual while sober is so intimidating that a broader "abstinence" is embraced. For most sexual anorexics, however, a complex array of extremes exists. When a person's appetites are excessive we use words like addiction or compulsion. But excesses are often accompanied by extreme deprivations for which we use terms like anorexia or obsession. In fact, these seemingly mutually exclusive states can exist simultaneously within a person and within a family. Consider the case of a sexually addicted alcoholic heterosexual male. The further his drinking and sexual behavior get out of control, the harder and more compulsively his wife works (the more she behaves hyper responsibly), and the more she shuts down sexually (anorexia). These disorders are not occurring in isolation. But the end result is that the problem of sexual anorexia is not likely to get addressed because it lacks the clarity and drama of the drinking, the sexual acting out, and the workaholism.

People minimize the problem of sexual anorexia. After all, whoever died of a lack of sex? Yet, as we shall see in this book, the physical and psychological consequences of sexual anorexia are severe, and the problem is central to understanding the entire mosaic of extreme behaviors.

SCRIPTURE TO USE AGAINST LUST LIES

“Lust is no big deal.”

Job 31:11-12 For that would have been shameful, a sin to be judged. 12 It is a fire that burns to Destruction; it would have uprooted my harvest.

“A little sinful fantasizing won’t hurt.”

Romans 8:6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life & peace;

Galatians 6:7-8 Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. 8 The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life.

Romans 13:14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

“Taking radical action against sin isn’t necessary.”

Matthew 5:29-30 If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to be thrown into hell. 30 And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and throw it away. It is better for you to lose one part of your body than for your whole body to go into hell.

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

“God won’t mind a little compromise.”

Colossians 3:5-6 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming.

Ephesians 5:3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.

“It’s my body, I can do what I want with it.”

1 Corinthians 6:18-20 Flee from sexual immorality. All other sins a man commits are outside his body, but he who sins sexually sins against his own body. 19 Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; 20 you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

“I can’t control my sex drive.”

1 Thessalonians 4:3-6 It is God's will that you should be sanctified: that you should avoid sexual immorality; 4 that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, 5 not in passionate lust like the heathen, who do not know God; 6 and that in this matter no one should wrong his brother or take advantage of him. The Lord will punish men for all such sins, as we have already told you and warned you.

“Looking at a few pornographic pictures won’t effect me.”

Proverbs 6:25-27 Do not lust in your heart after her beauty or let her captivate you with her eyes, 26 for the prostitute reduces you to a loaf of bread, and the adulteress preys upon your very life. 27 Can a man scoop fire into his lap without his clothes being burned?

Psalms 101:3 I will set before my eyes no vile thing. The deeds of faithless men I hate; they will not cling to me.

“I won’t experience any consequences for indulging in my lust.”

Romans 14:12 So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Hebrews 12:6 because the Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes everyone he accepts as a son.”

James 1:15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

“People get away with adultery.”

Proverbs 5:3-5 For the lips of an adulteress drip honey, and her speech is smoother than oil; 4 but in the end she is bitter as gall, sharp as a double-edged sword. 5 Her feet go down to death; her steps lead straight to the grave.

Proverbs 5:8-11 Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house, 9 lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel, 10 lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house. 11 At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent.

“God is keeping something good from me.”

Psalms 84:10-12 Better is one day in your courts than a thousand elsewhere; I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than dwell in the tents of the wicked. 11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield; the LORD bestows favor and honor; no good thing does he withhold from those whose walk is blameless. O LORD Almighty, blessed is the man who trusts in you.

“The pleasure lust promises is better and more real than God’s pleasure.”

Psalms 16:11 You have made known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

“Fulfilling my lust will satisfy me.”

Lamentations 3:24-26 I say to myself, "The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him." 25 The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; 26 it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD.

Proverbs 19:23 The fear of the LORD leads to life:

“Too much purity will keep me from seeing and enjoying beauty.”

Matthew 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Psalms 11:7 For the LORD is righteous, he loves justice; upright men will see his face.

Isaiah 33:17 Your eyes will see the king in his beauty and view a land that stretches afar.

VERSES TO MEMORIZE

Accountability

Hebrews 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another — and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

James 5:16 Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

Attitude

Romans 13:13-14 Let us behave decently, as in the daytime, not in orgies and drunkenness, not in sexual immorality and debauchery, not in dissension and jealousy. 14 Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature.

Colossians 3:5-7 Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. 7 You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived.

Consequences

Proverbs 5:7-14 Now then, my sons, listen to me; do not turn aside from what I say. 8 Keep to a path far from her, do not go near the door of her house, 9 lest you give your best strength to others and your years to one who is cruel, 10 lest strangers feast on your wealth and your toil enrich another man's house. 11 At the end of your life you will groan, when your flesh and body are spent. 12 You will say, "How I hated discipline! How my heart spurned correction! 13 I would not obey my teachers or listen to my instructors. 14 I have come to the brink of utter ruin in the midst of the whole assembly."

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders 10 nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. 11 And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage should be honored by all, and the marriage bed kept pure, for God will judge the adulterer and all the sexually immoral.

Flee sexual sin

Genesis 39:12 She caught him by his cloak and said, "Come to bed with me!" But he left his cloak in her hand and ran out of the house.

2 Timothy 2:22 Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

Forgiveness Ps 32; Psalm 51;

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

Resist the devil

Matthew 4:10 Jesus said to him, "Away from me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only.'"

James 4:7-8 Submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. 8 Come near to God and he will come near to you. Wash your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded.

Restoration from sin

Psalms 51:10 Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Luke 22:31-32 "Simon, Simon, Satan has asked to sift you as wheat. 32 But I have prayed for you, Simon, that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers."

Spiritual Warfare

1 Peter 2:11 Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.

Revelation 12:17 Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring — those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Temptation

Luke 4:13 When the devil had finished all this tempting, he left him until an opportune time.

1 Corinthians 10:13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

James 1:13-15 When tempted, no one should say, "God is tempting me." For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; 14 but each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed. 15 Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.

Thoughts

Romans 8:5-7 Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires. 6 The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace; 7 the sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so.

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.

Colossians 3:1-2 Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things.

INTERNET RESOURCES

www.pureintimacy.org – Focus on the Family’s website (Dr. James Dobson) – much great information about intimacy, sexual addiction and sexuality in general

www.newlife.com – New Life Ministries site, workshops, seminars, podcasts, online counseling, support groups, resources, bookstore, links (Christian perspective)

www.settingcaptivesfree.com – Pure Life Ministry’s website, free courses and resources to help gain freedom from sexual and other addictions

www.everymansbattle.com – New Life’s website, workshops, resources, chat rooms, downloads, weekly newsletter all to help sexual addicts from a Christian perspective

www.purelifeministries.org – Pure Life Ministries website, live-in and at home program, weekend events, help for wives, articles, links and resources (Christian perspective)

<http://www.promisekeepers.org/alli16> - much good information from a Christian perspective on understanding and defeating sex, alcohol and other addictions, links to organizations and groups that can help

www.sexaddict.com – Heart to Heart Ministries website, telephone and on-site counseling, spousal help, links and resources (Christian perspective)

www.sexhelp.com – online tests for sexual addiction and other information

<http://healthy mind.com/s-index.html> - by an Virginia doctor, contains information on what sexual addiction is, links to 12-step groups and links to professional counselors

<http://www.christiananswers.net/love/supportgroups.html> - many good resources and links from a Christian perspective for addicts, wives, friends, abuse victims and anyone battling with sexual issues

<http://www.porn-free.org/> - stories, articles and links about pornography and sexual addiction for Christians as well as non-Christians, info for addicts, spouses, family and friends

http://www.porn-free.org/support_groups.htm - list of links to many local and national support groups for sexual addicts or those who care about them

<http://www.thisisawar.com/AddictionSex.htm> - signs and characteristics of sex and love addicts, list of 12 step programs and other links

FILTERS & ACCOUNTABILITY SOFTWARE

www.besafehome.com – Friends and Family Program software, Internet filter, keeps pornographers, hackers, viruses, trojans and spammers from invading your home.

http://www.covenanteyes.com/ - excellent and affordable web site that records every web site, chat room, etc., your computer visits and sends a weekly list of sites that seem 'dangerous' to an accountability partner. It's like having a friend watching over your shoulder every minute you are on the computer.

http://www.pkfamily.com/ PK Family is a Nationwide Internet Service Provider specifically designed to offer its subscribers fast, reliable access to everything on the Internet, except the inappropriate R and X-rated material.

http://www.filterreview.com/ this site reviews and tells about all filters available.

MOVIE, GAMES & MUSIC REVIEW

http://www.christiananswers.net/spotlight

http://www.screenit.com

http://www.gospelcom.net/preview/

RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT CENTERS:

Stonegate,

Larkspur, Colorado

Dr, Henry Schaumburg (author of "False Intimacy")

10 day intensive counseling program

\$4200 per person/couple; \$4800 for unmarried or divorced (2 rooms)

www.stonegateresources.com

Bethesda

(based on "Faithful and true"

Woodmont Hills Church

Nashville, Tenn

4 day intensive counseling program \$1675

www.bethesdaworkshops.org

New Liberty

New Life Ministries, Dr Steven Arterburn (author of "Everyman's Battle")

10 day intensive counseling program, \$4,000 plus food

www.everymansbattle.com

Pure Life Ministries

Steve Gallagher (author "At the Altar of Sexual Idolatry," "Out of the Depths of Sexual Sin")

6-12 month program \$650 with \$150 refundable upon completion

www.purelifeministries.org

ORGANIZATIONS FOR SEX ADDICTS

12 STEPS TO VICTORY OVER SEXUAL ADDICTION (based on 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous)

1. Admitted I am powerless over my compulsiveness and that my life had become unmanageable (Rom 7:17-18; Ps 116:1-9; Jeremiah 9:23-24; II Cor 12:9)
2. Come to believe that Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit could restore me to sanity (Phil 2:13; Prov 28:26; Rom 5:8; Ps 30:2-3; Mt 8:1-3; Mk 9:24)
3. Made a decision to turn my will and life over to the care of Jesus Christ (Rom 12:1; Prov 3:5-6; Gal 2:19-20; Ps 40; Mt 11:28-30)
4. Made a searching & fearless moral inventory of myself. (Lam 3:40-41; Ps 139:23; Mt 7:1-5)
5. Admitted to Jesus Christ, to ourselves and another human being the exact nature of my wrongs. (James 5:16; I Jn 1:9; Ps 32:1-5; Gal 6:2-3)
6. Am entirely ready to have Jesus Christ remove these defects of character. (James 4:7-10; Jer 10:23; Heb 12:1-2; Hosea 10:12; Micah 7:18-20)
7. Humbly ask Jesus Christ to remove my shortcomings and sins. (I Jn 1:9; Isa 1:18-19; Isa 66:2; Ps 32:1-2)
8. Make a list of all persons I had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all. (Luke 6:31; Mt 5:23-24; 6:14-15)
9. Made direct amends to them all except when to do so would injure them or others. (Mt 5:23-24; Mk 11:24; Heb 12:1; II Cor 5:19; Col 1:20-21)
10. Continue to take personal inventory and, when I am wrong, promptly admitted it. (I Cor 10:12, Ps 19:12, I Cor 10:12; Ps 26:2-3; Gal 6:4-5; I Tim 1:19)
11. Seek through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with Jesus Christ, praying for the knowledge of His will for me and the power to carry that out. (Col 3:16; Prov 2:3-5; Ps 1:2; James 5:13; Rom 8:26; Col 3:16)
12. Have a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps and try to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all of life (Gal 6:1; I Pt 3:15; Isa 61:1; Ps 96:1-4; Gal 6:1; II Cor 1:3-4)

which 12 step group is best for me (or my partner)?

Approximately 20 years ago a number of people in different areas of the country had the same idea at roughly the same time, namely: "My sexual behaviors are out of control, and I wish there were some 12-Step meetings like AA where I could go for sexual recovery. I know, I'll just start one!" This explains why we now have 5 separate 12-Step group programs for sex addicts (SA, SAA, SLAA, SCA, SRA). There are 3 organizations for partners of sex addicts (S-Anon, COSA, Co-SLAA), two for couples (RCA, SA-Couples), and one for sex workers). The following is a guide for making your way through the thicket of possible resources.

SA—Sexaholics Anonymous (Website: www.sa.org). This 12-Step program is the strictest in its definition of sexual sobriety. Masturbation is discouraged, as is homosexual sex. Sobriety is defined as "No sexual behavior outside of a committed marital relationship between a man and a woman." Members are primarily heterosexual men, along with some heterosexual women. Sexual offenders often discover that the strict boundaries of SA are helpful for their recovery. SA is most popular in Southern California and throughout the southern United States. Lists of meetings and other information may be obtained by contacting: SA International Central Office: PO Box 111910, Nashville, TN 37222. Telephone: 615-331-6230, fax: 615-331-6901, email: saico@sa.org.

The partner program to SA is **S-Anon** (as Al-Anon is to AA) for mates and families

SAA--Sex Addicts Anonymous (www.sexaa.org). This program is open to both heterosexual and homosexual men and women who want to learn to abstain from self-defined "bottom-line behaviors" such as compulsive Internet sex, use of prostitutes, massage parlors, and the like. Masturbation is optional, as SAA members are encouraged to develop their own abstinence plan with feedback from sponsors and group members. SAA began in the Minneapolis area, although the headquarters are now located in Houston. So if you live in the Midwest or Texas, SAA might be your first place to start looking for a meeting. SAA meetings are also common in California. SAA International Service Organization: 713-869-4902; PO Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270. The 12-Step partner program for SAA is **COSA** (see Organizations for wife or family members)>

SLAA—Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (www.slaafws.org). This program is similar to SAA in that both heterosexual and homosexual men and women are welcome to attend. More women tend to attend SLAA because of the emphasis on "love addiction," defined as a pattern of painful or obsessive romantic relationships. Members are encouraged to set appropriate behavioral boundaries with the help of sponsors and group members. This program is helpful for both sex addicts and those who consistently involve themselves in abusive, non-nurturing relationships. SLAA is popular on the East Coast of the United States, especially in New England and Pennsylvania. SLAA meetings are also commonly found in the San Francisco area, in the Pacific Northwest, and in Southern California.; SLAA National Organization: 781-255-8825; PO Box 338, Norwood, MA 02062-0338. The partner program to SLAA is **Co-SLAA**. (see Organizations for wife or family members)

SCA—Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (www.sca-recovery.org). This 12-Step program is primarily attended by gay and bisexual men and some women. In a fashion similar to SAA and SLAA, SCA members develop their own sexual abstinence plans, with group support and guidance from sponsors. There is no formal partners program connected to SCA. SCA meetings are most commonly found in Los Angeles, New York, and Atlanta. SCA National Organization: 800-977-HEAL; PO Box 1585, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10011

SRA—Sexual Recovery Anonymous (www.sexualrecovery.org). This 12-Step program began in Canada during the last decade and from there became popular in the New York area and elsewhere. SRA has a strict definition of abstinence for sex addicts (no masturbation), which is similar to Sexaholics Anonymous (SA). However, SRA is considered to be much more "gay-friendly" than SA, and defines healthy sex as that which occurs between committed partners who are abstaining from self-destructive sexual patterns. SRA National Organization: 212-340-4650; PO Box 73, Planetarium Station, New York, NY 10024 SRA, in Canada: 604-290-9382, or write: PO Box 72044, Burnaby, BC V5H4PQ SRA for partners has some meetings in the New York Area (<http://sexualrecovery.org/sra-anon.htm>).

ORGANIZATIONS FOR COUPLES

SA for Couples. Similar to RCA, with an emphasis on heterosexual couples healing from their intimacy struggles in accordance with the more strict SA sexual guidelines. Contact S-ANON in your local area for possible meetings, especially in Los Angeles and in Tennessee/Georgia.

RCA—Recovering Couples Anonymous (www.recovering-couples.org). Both members of a couple attend these 12-Step meetings. Both heterosexual and homosexual couples are welcome: "The only requirement for membership is that you are a couple seeking to restore a caring, committed and intimate relationship. RCA National Headquarters: 314-830-2600; PO Box 11872, St. Louis, MO 63105

ORGANIZATIONS FOR WIFE OR FAMILY MEMBERS

The 12-Step partner program for SAA is **COSA** (Codependents of Sex Addicts). The National contact number for COSA is 763-537-6904. Or write to: COSA National Service Organization; Post Office Box 14537; Minneapolis, MN 55414; Website: www.cosa-recovery.org; Email: info@cosa-recovery.org

The partner program to SA is **S-Anon** (as Al-Anon is to AA). S-Anon helps wives and other family members to learn how to set appropriate boundaries, and to focus on their own issues while supporting one another. For information about existing meetings or how to start a new meeting, contact: S-Anon International Central Office; PO Box 111242, Nashville, TN 37222; 615-833-3152; Email: sanon@sanon.org Web site: www.sanon.org; S-Anon (national): 615-833-3152 (www.sanon.org); S-Anon (CA): 818-973-2235

The partner program to SLAA is **Co-SLAA**. There are Co-SLAA meetings available in the Boston, Philadelphia, and San Francisco metropolitan areas, but not in Los Angeles.

RCA—Recovering Couples Anonymous (www.recovering-couples.org). Both members of a couple attend these 12-Step meetings. Both heterosexual and homosexual couples are welcome: "The only requirement for membership is that you are a couple seeking to restore a caring, committed and intimate relationship. RCA National Headquarters: 314-830-2600; PO Box 11872, St. Louis, MO 63105

LOCAL PROFESSIONAL COUNSELORS

Counseling Associates (Christ Centered Counseling)
Professional counselors
1-800-304-HELP (215-997-7770; 610-282-2575)
Offices in Coopersburg and Montgomeryville

Randy & Marsha Hicks
Counseling office is in Main Street Baptist Church
(215) 766-1716 RandallBH@aol.com

LOCAL SUPPORT GROUPS

Calvary Church – Souderton

Doug Rohrman, 215-723-0963

Excellent groups for addicts and also for wives of addicts

Confidential mailbox to leave messages: 215-723-1653 ext 176

Calvary Chapel – Chalfont

150 E Butler Ave - (215) 822-4012

talk to David Moore

meetings are Thursdays 7 PM

Friendship Ministry

Men's Purity Ministry – sponsored by New Hope Community Church

Meetings Thursday, 7 PM, at the Life Abundant office, 156 Green St, Doylestown, PA

www.newhopechurchpa.org/friendshipministries

contact Mel Everson 215-862-3876

Faithful and True

Church on the Move, Allentown, PA

Drew Taylor, 610-428-7980 or leave message at 610-434-3117 ext 47

This is perhaps the most effective and experienced support group in the area. They also have groups for spouses of sex addicts (wives)

ANA – National Association of Recovered Addicts and Alcoholics

Main Street Baptist Church, 57 S Main St, Doylestown

730 PM Mondays

Contact info: Heather MacInnes 215-350-9357

Counseling Associates (Christ Centered Counseling)

Professional counselors

1-800-304-HELP (215-997-7770; 610-282-2575)

Offices in Coopersburg and Montgomeryville

Living In Freedom Everyday

To find a group <http://www.freedomeveryday.org/men/groups/pennsylvania.html>

Lancaster - For more information contact Earl at (717) 394-4760 or email.

Paoli - For more information contact Sandy at (610) 812-5229.

Wexford - For more information contact Jack at (412) 803-4127 or email.

OTHER RESOURCES

Rev. Jerry Schmoyer

215-348-8086 jerry@schmoyer.net

Main Street Baptist Church, 57 S Main Street, Doylestown, PA 18901

free consultation and counseling for addicts or those who care about them

<http://www.mainstreetbaptist.org/>

ABUSE CHECKLIST

Behind each line write the age you were abused, who did it and how often

SEXUAL ABUSE

Suggestive flirtatiousness

Propositioning

Inappropriate holding, kissing

Fondling of sexual parts

Masturbation

Oral sex

Forceful sexual activity

Other

PHYSICAL ABUSE

Shoving

Slapping, hitting

Scratches, bruises

Burns

Cuts, wounds

Broken bones, fractures

Damage to organs

Permanent injury

Other

EMOTIONAL ABUSE

Neglect

Harassment, malicious tricks

Blackmail

Unfair punishments

Cruel or degrading tasks

Cruel confinement

Abandonment

other

WARNING SIGNS OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

Dr Patrick Carnes, one of the world's leading experts in sexual addiction, suggests there are ten possible **warning signs**:

Feeling that your behavior is out of control.

Being aware that there may be severe consequences if you continue.

Feeling unable to stop your behavior, despite knowing the consequences.

Persistently pursuing destructive and/or high-risk activities.

Wanting to stop or control what you're doing & taking active steps to limit your activities.

Using sexual fantasies as a way of coping with difficult feelings or situations.

Needing more and more sexual activity in order to experience the same high.

Suffering from intense mood swings around sexual activity.

Spending an increasing amount of time planning, engaging in or regretting and recovering from sexual activities.

Neglecting important social, occupational or recreational activities for sexual behaviour.

Compulsive masturbation that may recur several times a day. The pleasure of orgasmic release is often used to alleviate mental symptoms like anxiety, depression or stress-related fatigue.

Compulsive collecting of erotic and pornographic magazines, videos and Internet material and their constant use as a source for sexual arousal.

Constant, uncontrollable use of electric sex services as a source of sexual arousal.

These include sex phone lines and sex services in the Internet.

Constant changing of sexual partners, being on a constant lookout for new partners.

Relationships last only for a short period of time and are focused on sexual, self-centered pleasure, not on the relationship itself.

Compulsive, recurring sex with prostitutes.

Recurring anonymous sex: sex with a stranger in some unusual place such as in a public lavatory or the parking lot.

Having dangerous sex. For example, a married person may have several simultaneous affairs and finds the possibility of getting caught sexually arousing.

Attending sex bars, clubs or erotic massage parlours constantly.

Compulsive sexual peeping with the intention of becoming aroused, sometimes also simultaneous masturbation.

Recurring flashing with the intention of becoming aroused. Flashing may entail direct exposure of body parts or exceptionally revealing clothing.

Touching strangers or acquaintances with the intention of becoming aroused. The physical contact is staged to look accidental.

Recurring sexual violence, such as rape.

You or your friends and family feel that you are too concerned with or even compulsive about your sexual desires.

You feel compelled to have sex when you are stressed, anxious or depressed.

After a compulsive sex experience the feelings of pleasure and satisfaction last for a very short time and you soon feel the need to repeat your actions.

Your sexual experiences have led to serious problems (e.g. the threat of break-up, divorce, venereal diseases, other mental problems or sexual violence).

STRONGHOLDS OF ADDICTION

| STRONGHOLD | DESCRIPTION | THE LIE | THE TRUTH |
|-------------------|--|---|---|
| HOPELESS | Loss of self-esteem No purpose or direction Total loss of hope that things will ever change sense of inadequacy | <i>I am a victim & helpless</i> <i>I will never change, its hopeless</i> <i>I am different & so is my problem, so it won't work for me</i> | I am a victor in Christ I am the righteousness of God in Christ The trust sets you free regardless of the problem or person |
| GUILT | Depressed and bitter Discontented & grieved Sense of worthlessness Denial & dishonesty | <i>I deserve to be punished & condemned</i> <i>I cannot face the awful truth about myself</i> <i>I am a product of my past</i> | There is no judgment in Christ In Christ I am a new creation I am a product of the cross |
| SELF-HELP | Behavior oriented Judgmental Weary and tired Trying to earn acceptance through performance | <i>If it is going to be it is up to me</i> <i>God helps those who help themselves</i> <i>If I change my behavior, it will change me as a person</i> | Only God can change me God helps those who give up and trust Him If I change my beliefs, it will change my behavior |
| INSECURITY | Worried and anxious Feels forsaken and without support Absence of meaningful relationships Unable to receive love & avoids intimacy | <i>I am unworthy to be loved & accepted</i> <i>I need someone to validate me as a person</i> <i>I need someone or something to be secure</i> | I am loved and accepted by God I am one with Christ., He is in me and I am in Christ I am eternally secure in Christ who will never forsake me. |

**CORE BELIEF 1: SELF IMAGE: I AM BASICALLY A BAD,
UNWORTHY PERSON**

| SEXUAL ADDICT | COADDICT | 12 STEP PROGRAMS |
|--|---|---|
| <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts conclude from their family experiences that they are not worthwhile persons. Feelings of inadequacy and failure predominate. Addicts often see humiliation and degradation as justified or deserved. The desperate struggle around sexual compulsivity absolutely confirms this belief and enhances feelings of low self-worth. Addicts are committed to hiding the secret reality of their addiction at all costs because of their unworthiness. Yet the addiction guides almost all behavior and decisions.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts grow up in families in which their self-worth is in constant jeopardy. Feelings of inadequacy and failure parallel the addict's sense of unworthiness. Not believing there are any options, coaddicts tolerate abusive, humiliating and degrading behavior. Coaddicts are obsessed with sex since sex is the proof of love.</p> | <p>FOR ADDICT & COADDICT The program provides the understanding that each member is basically a good person. All learn to separate themselves as individuals from their addiction which is destroying their lives. When addicts and coaddicts admit the addiction's power, hope emerges from connecting with others and with a Higher Power.</p> |
| <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Addicts create a front of 'normalcy' to hide their sense of inadequacy. They may even appear grandiose and full of exaggerated self-importance. As consequences to behaviors emerge, the front contrasts with actions that seem to be degrading or self-defeating or both. Others see decisions or behaviors as irrational, incomprehensible, or even self-destructive, but not 'normal.'</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Self-righteous contempt often masks the coaddict's inferior fears. Aggressive, critical, controlling behavior switches with compliance and enabling. Either position shares a martyrdom role in which the coaddict is being 'victimized.'</p> | <p>NEW BELIEF I am a worthwhile person deserving of pride.</p> <p>KEY STEPS 1,2,3</p> |
| <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS Close friends and family members become angry and frustrated with the addicts' egocentricity, especially when there is insensitivity to others. Not knowing the interior world of an addict, they are troubled by what looks like destructive or curious behavior that does not fit the image the addicts project.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts are in a self-serving double bind in the relationship. When coaddicts are critical and judgmental, addicts use this to justify abusive, compulsive behavior. When coaddicts are submissive and compliant, addicts feel burdened, exploited and critical. These feelings also serve as a rationale for addictive behavior.</p> | <p>INTEGRATED WORLD Addicts and coaddicts have a new sense of pride. Power of the secret world is broken. Identity and integrity return. They no longer need to hide and can become open to each other and to others.</p> |

-From "Out of the Shadows" by Patrick Carnes

CORE BELIEF 2: RELATIONSHIPS: NO ONE WOULD LOVE ME AS I AM

| SEXUAL ADDICT | COADDICT | 12 STEP PROGRAMS |
|--|---|---|
| <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts believe that everyone would abandon them if the truth were known. They have a constant fear of being dependent on others. Addicts perceive their sexual behavior as so bad that everyone becomes their 'fault.' Addicts assume responsibility for all the pain in loved ones. Honest guilt and remorse cannot be expressed because that would require honesty about behavior. Addicts become progressively more isolated.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts in relationships reflect their basic distrust of others' love and care for them. To be in a relationship engages the three coaddictive fears: lose their identities in the relationship, forced to deny what they know to be true, and that meeting their needs would have a price. To tell others the painful 'secrets' would guarantee abandonment. To be honest with the addicts would sacrifice the safety of being self-righteous or compliant. Coaddicts, like addicts, assume that they are responsible for all the pain in loved ones.</p> | <p>FOR ADDICT & COADDICT The fellowship of the program surrounds participants with people who have suffered in the same way. They no longer feel unique. They trust and are trusted with personal secrets. They have the opportunity to assess their strengths and weaknesses, as well as to take stock of their own values and behavior. Their new vulnerability allows them the hope of depending on others outside the program. They rediscover the fundamental human processes for restoring relationships through amends and forgiveness.</p> |
| <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Addicts create the image of being in charge of life and in no need of help. They appear unaffected by any problem, but will often do extreme or indulgent things as if making up for something. No explanation is offered, however. Some addicts may continue to be charming and sociable, but all addicts become 'unreachable' personally as they close off all avenues of vulnerability.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts go to extreme lengths to appear self-sufficient. They seem unaffected by any problems and will expend intense energy to conceal problems. In fact, they will take on many extra responsibilities, being all things to all people. In general, they often seek relationships in which they can dominate or nurture so they can be intimate with minimum risk. This self-sufficient exterior protects the family secrets. Also, the internal belief that the coaddicts are responsible for everything is acted out.</p> | <p>NEW BELIEF I am loved and accepted by people who know me as I am.</p> <p>KEY STEPS 4,5,8,9</p> |
| <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS Significant persons in the addicts' lives start to feel pushed away, useless, neglected and unnecessary. They become confused at seemingly generous gestures, but in the absence of any personal warmth or presence. Anger and hurt accumulate with a sense of abandonment in reaction to the addicts' contradictory behavior.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts rely on coaddicts to pick up the pieces – especially as powerlessness and unmanageability increase. Yet addicts may start to be critical of coaddicts' efforts when they assume extra responsibility. Internally, addicts start to feel progressively more useless and without places in the coaddicts' lives. Addicts feel unneeded, especially when coaddicts are busy nurturing others, such as children. The coaddicts' involvements serve as further justification for compulsiveness.</p> | <p>INTEGRATED WORLD Addicts and coaddicts develop a realistic sense of their strengths and weaknesses, of their personal self-worth, and of the limits of their impact on others. They take a new responsibility for their behaviors, their behavior becomes more and congruent with their values. They learn that mistakes can be accepted, amends made, and forgiveness received. Addicts and coaddicts can become responsive and responsible members of the human community.</p> |

-From "Out of the Shadows" by Patrick Carnes

**CORE BELIEF 3: NEEDS: MY NEEDS ARE NEVER GOING TO BE MET IF I
HAVE TO DEPEND ON OTHERS**

| SEXUAL ADDICT | COADDICT | 12 STEP PROGRAMS |
|--|--|---|
| <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts feel unloved and unlovable, which means other people cannot be depended on to love them, so their needs will not be met. The resulting rage becomes internalized as depression, resentment, self-pity; and even suicidal feelings. Because they have no confidence in others' love, addicts become calculating, strategizing, manipulative and ruthless. Rules and laws are made for people who are lovable. Those who are unlovable survive in other ways.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts' desperate need for love and nurturing exceeds any one person's ability to respond. They make perfectionist demands on all aspects of the addicts' behavior in a misdirected attempt to guarantee satisfaction of all their needs. When they are disappointed by the addicts' failure to meet the impossible demands, rage becomes internalized, resulting in despair, self-pity, and resentment. These down times alternate with periodic hope and exhilaration that things will change. Coaddicts' conniving manipulation and criticism are based on the assumption that if the addicts met the high standards, needs would be met. Addicts become the coaddicts' source of self-worth and good feelings. The conviction that the coaddicts will have to pay for the love and care pervades all relationships. To be affirmed with no requirements goes beyond the coaddicts' experience.</p> | <p>S</p> |
| <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Addicts rage about unmet needs in the past prevents the possibility of expressing needs now because they anticipate being rejected. Addicts appear not to want or need anything. They are purposely unclear about their intentions in relationships and are thus seductive in behavior, i.e., they try to be affirmed or cared for without expressing that they need it so they will not risk rejection. Addicts make extensive efforts to show how respectable and law-abiding they are.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Martyrdom accompanies the coaddicts' systematic efforts to make themselves indispensable. In exchange, coaddicts expect addicts to furnish proof of care and love. Failure to do so results in further efforts to reform the addicts or in self-righteous punishment and rejection. Coaddicts do not communicate personal needs, only disappointment in unmet expectations. Preoccupation which addicts often results in the denial or tolerance of addicts' behavior. Coaddicts 'keep score' of what is owed in the relationship. The more coaddicts do for the addicts, the more they expect in return.</p> | <p>NEW BELIEF My needs can be met by others if I let them know what I need.</p> <p>KEY STEPS 6,7</p> |
| <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS Those who are close start to see the double life, the Jekyll and Hyde, in the addicts' worlds. The addicts' ups and downs remain difficult to understand. Worse, distrust and disbelief in the addicts begin. Things appear to be so smooth, yet the intuition is that they are not. Inconsistencies between the addicts' public and private lives confirm these intuitions.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts fail to perceive coaddict's needs. Partially, their failure stems from the addictive preoccupation and sexualization of all needs. The coaddicts' behavior, however, also obscures the issues in the relationship. Addicts grow resentful of the coaddicts' expectations, yet also feel a sense of failure for not meeting them – which no one person could do. Coaddictive judgments simply document what addicts already fear to be true. Yet addicts remain assured that coaddicts will not leave while they are coaddictively preoccupied – as long as they are still judging, they are still there.</p> | <p>INTEGRATED WORLD By taking more responsibility for themselves, addicts and coaddicts see their roles in having their needs met. Addiction or coaddiction is unnecessary for dealing with anxiety or pain. To be dependent on others is acceptable. When disappointed, appropriate anger invites further human connection, as opposed to rage, which keeps others out.</p> |

-From "Out of the Shadows" by Patrick Carnes

CORE BELIEF 4: SEXUALITY: SEX IS MY MOST IMPORTANT NEED

| SEXUAL ADDICT | COADDICT | 12 STEP PROGRAMS |
|--|---|---|
| <p>INTERIOR WORLD Addicts confuse nurturing and sex. Support, care, affirmation and love are all sexualized. Absolute terror of life without sex combines with feelings of unworthiness for such intense sexual desires. Sexual activity never meets the need for love and care, but continues to be seen as the only avenue to meeting those needs. Addicts have a high need to control all situations in an effort to guarantee sex. Yet there is a secret fear of being sexually out of control. Addicts promise themselves to stop or limit sexual behavior because of this fear.</p> | <p>INTERIOR WORLD Coaddicts believe sexual attention proves they are lovable. Sex becomes a trade-off for love. Therefore, coaddicts have a great fear of being unattractive and sexually inadequate. When addicts are sexual with others, coaddicts feel total personal rejection, adding to their sense of unloveability. Given the stakes, coaddicts have difficulty exploring or enjoying their own sexuality. Exploitive experiences foster deep resentment and rage, which further validate all the coaddictive core beliefs.</p> | <p>FOR ADDICT & COADDICT Addicts and coaddicts learn the power the addiction had in their lives. They discover they do not need the addiction to survive, but they do need the program consistently because of the addicton's power. By recognizing their powerlessness and unmanageability, addicts and coaddicts start tolive new lives that focus on human relationships as opposed to sex. Program members continue to learn about this process through teaching others.</p> |
| <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Sexual obsession pervades lifestyle and behavior. Addicts make maximum effort to ensure all possible sexual opportunities. Addicts at all levels of behavior feel the need to control sexual access, protect their 'supply.' Seeking degrading or humiliating sexual experiences simply extends internal feelings of unworthiness. Addicts publicly profess extreme sexual propriety, however about some sexual matters. Cover-ups, lies, and deceptions are made to conceal personal sexual behavior.</p> | <p>EXTERIOR WORLD Because sex is a trade-off for love, coaddicts may find themselves being sexual when they do not wish to be or, worse, participating in sexual behavior that is degrading and humiliating,. Coaddicts may also dress or act seductively to get attention. Efforts to control the addicts' sexual obsession include the use of sex to manipulate addicts to prevent them from being sexual with others. Sexual attitudes of the coaddicts can continue the external themes of self-sufficiency, self-righteousness and martyrdom.</p> | <p>NEW BELIEF Sex is but one expression of my need and care for others.</p> <p>KEY STEPS 10,11,12</p> |
| <p>FAMILY & FRIENDS The addicts' protestations of high sexual morality obscure the impact of sexual obsession on friends and families. Close family and friends tend to reject suspicions of sexual compulsivity because of the addicts' 'values.' As evidence of powerlessness over behavior and unmanageability mounts, these persons become confused, not knowing what to believe. In addition, they do not wish to intervene in something so personal. Since they don't feel close enough to become involved, they choose the other option, which is to withdraw.</p> | <p>ADDICT RESPONSE TO COADDICT Addicts feel confused by the coaddicts' contradictory signals about sex. Often addicts misinterpret the coaddicts' need for relationship as sexual overtures and then totally fail to understand the coaddicts' feelings of being exploited., Addicts are ashamed when sexual feelings are not returned, since that confirms that their sexual intensity is bad. Also, there are feelings of resentment about the coaddicts' efforts to control and judge the addicts' sexual behavior, all of which perpetuates the3 addiction cycle of the addicts.</p> | <p>INTEGRATED WORLD Addicts and coaddicts find what their obsession could never discover: a deep and personal sense of self-worth and value. They can be affirmed and loved, as well as loving and affirming. They learn that rewarding and varied sexual experience within the context of significant relationships adds nurturing to one's life. Living the program assures them that sexual obsession does not direct their lives.</p> |

-From "Out of the Shadows" by Patrick Carne

