

Definition of Sex Addiction

DEFINITION OF SEX ADDICTION

Sexual Compulsivity that leads to consequences (divorce, loss of job, arrests, etc.)

Consistent patterns of sexual addiction closely resemble the patterns of alcoholics and drug-addicted clients, as well of compulsive gamblers. Patterns describe:

1. Loss of control
2. Continuing behavior despite adverse consequences
3. Preoccupation with obtaining, using or recovering from the behaviors.
4. Unsuccessful desires to stop, reduce, or control.

CHARACTERISTICS OF SEX ADDICTION

1. Genetic structure
2. Hx of family addictions
3. Lack of intimacy in relationships
4. Rigid and authoritarian family
5. Childhood abuse
6. Significant losses
7. Mental illness in family
8. Enmeshed relationships with primary caregivers
9. Exposure to sexual material

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CHARACTERISTICS OF SEX ADDICTION (CONT)

Based on research and clinical experience, 10 signs indicate the presence of sexual addiction:

1. Reoccurrence failure to resist sexual impulses in order to engage in specific sexual behaviors
2. Frequently engaging in those behaviors to a greater extent or over a longer period of time than intended
3. Persistent desire or unsuccessful efforts to stop, reduce, or control those behaviors
4. Inordinate amounts of time spent in obtaining sex, being sexual, or recovering from sexual experiences
5. Preoccupation with sexual behavior or preparatory activities
6. Frequently engaging in the behavior when expected to fulfill occupational, academic, domestic, or social obligations
7. Continuation of the behavior despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent social, financial, psychological, or physical problem that is caused or exacerbated by the behavior
8. The need to increase the intensity, frequency, number, or risk level of behaviors in order to achieve the desired effect; or diminished effect with continued behaviors at the same level of intensity, frequency, number, or risk
9. Giving up or limiting social, occupational, or recreational activities because of the behavior
10. Distress, anxiety, restlessness, or irritability if unable to engage in the behavior

1990 Carnes said sex addiction was a behavioral addiction with a pathological relationship to a mood-altering experience.

1991 Study by Carnes (253 men and 57 women)

97% emotional abuse | 81% sexual abuse | 72% physical abuse

SA not in DSM-5. Compulsive Sexual behavior disorder in ICD-11

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NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON INDIVIDUALS

1. Depression
2. Anxiety
3. Isolation and withdrawal
4. Unhealthy relationships
5. Inadequate coping skills
6. Lack of feelings (Numb)
7. Shame
8. Guilt
9. Emotional Disconnect
10. Short attention span
11. Impulsivity
12. Procrastination
13. Disorganization
14. Poor judgement
15. Lack of empathy, insight, and forward thinking

Sex addicts feel little to no trust in others, lack of connections, they feel unworthy, no one will like me if they really knew me, I cannot rely on others to meet my needs, and sex is my most important need.

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NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON SPOUSES

1. Porn usage negatively affects the marital relationship
2. Decreased satisfaction in the marital relationship
3. Betrayal Trauma
4. Decreased communication
5. Unrealistic expectations
6. Less commitment to the relationship

NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON FAMILIES

1. Decreased engagement with family
2. Decreased quality of relations with children

RECOVERY

1. Once the person chooses to abstain then help them remain sober
2. Manage shame
3. Triggers (HALT)
4. Establish an attachment
5. Regulating emotion
6. Healing brain
7. Learning connection

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ADDICTS STRUGGLE WITH:

1. Closeness
2. Honesty
3. Moderation
4. Boundaries
5. Anger
6. Interdependence

CYCLE OF ADDICTION

1. Pain/Despair/Shame
2. Preoccupation
3. Rituals
4. Acting out
5. Pain/Despair/Shame

SOBRIETY VS. RECOVERY

Shame Reduction, Attachment, Affect Regulation and Sexual Boundary Development

Clinical Management of Sex Addiction Edited by Carnes and Adams

Reclaiming Sexual Wholeness Edited by Todd Bowman

Sex Addiction as Affect Dysregulation by Alexandra Katehakis

The Porn Myth by Matt Fradd