

Exploring the Issue of Sexual Addiction

Our lust often begins as an overpowering desire for pleasurable relief. We may be running from an inner pain, loneliness, emptiness, or an insecurity, and find that sex is the best way to cope. Lust, pornography, sex with ourselves or with others can briefly dissolve tension. It can momentarily relieve depression, resolve conflict, and even provide the means to escape from or deal with life's seemingly unbearable situations.

However, that pleasure often brings with it more tension, depression, rage, guilt, and even physical distress. The cycle continues as we try to relieve this new pain, leading to more sex, pornography and lust. We live in denial in order to avoid recognizing just how much our addiction controls our life. As we continue in our self destructive behaviors, sexual addiction jeopardizes our relationships, health, jobs, morals and values. Ultimately, sexual addiction takes the place of God in our lives as a coping mechanism to deal with life's hardships.

Characteristics of Someone Struggling with Sexual Addiction may include, but are not limited to:

- Engaged in promiscuity and illicit relationships.
- Engaged in sex with self, phone sex, cybersex, pornography, sex outside of marriage, hook ups
- Living a double life
- Jump from relationship to relationship
- Always looking for the "perfect" relationship to fulfill wants
- Use sexual acts as a way to cope or escape.
- Pursuit of sex has harmed or destroyed your marriage relationship
- Unable to limit or stop acting out
- Cannot resist sexual images
- Feel guilty after acting out
- Legal issues from a sexual offense
- Denies the sexual addiction is a problem
- Escalating tolerance for high risk behavior

How We Find Recovery

Through a relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Higher Power, and by working the 8 recovery principles and the Christ-centered 12 steps, we can find freedom from our hurts, hang ups and habits.

Characteristics of Someone in Recovery for Sexual Addiction may include, but are not limited to:

- Accept Jesus Christ as Higher Power
- Working the 12 step recover process diligently and consistently.
- Shifting our worship from our sexuality to God.
- Finding healthy coping mechanisms for negative feelings, emotions, and circumstances.
- Developing a healthy identity and positive self worth that comes from God, not our bodies or others.
- Learning to love ourselves as God loves us, so knowing we are worth the work it takes for Him to heal us.
- Emotionally connecting with God, self, and others, and developing safe relationships.
- Not engaging in sex with self, phone sex, cybersex, pornography, or a sexual relationship outside of marriage.
- Seeking a biblical definition of healthy sexuality.
- Become willing to experience, grief, forgiveness, and acceptance.
- Discerning the difference between physical "need" and "want"
- Avoid cross over addictions; i.e. food/alcohol/drugs/codependency
- Avoid people, places, and things that tempt us to act out.
- In our recovery, we become willing to be used by God to bring hope to others with similar struggles.