

Exploring the Issue of Love and Relationship Addiction

For most women with unhealthy love and relationship addiction, we are dealing with depression, isolation, and a lack of trust. Unhealthy use of love and relationships is used as a means of achieving worth.

Characteristics of Someone Struggling with Love and Relationship Addiction may include, but are not limited to:

- Lack of nurturing and attention when young
- Feeling isolated, detached from parents and family
- Mistake intensity for intimacy
- Hidden pain
- Seek to avoid rejection and abandonment at all cost
- Afraid to trust anyone in a relationship
- Inner rage over lack of nurturing, early abandonment
- Depressed
- Manipulative and controlling of others
- Perceive attraction, attachment, and sex as basic human needs, as with food and water
- Sense of worthlessness
- Escalating tolerance for high-risk behavior
- Presence of other addictive or compulsive problems
- Using others to alter mood or relieve pain
- Existence of secret “double life”
- Defining “wants” as “needs”
- Use fantasy or unhealthy relationships to escape painful feelings or reality
- Unrealistic or unhealthy expectations with our spouse

How We Find Recovery

Through a relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Higher Power, and by working through 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 Love and Relationship Addiction may include, but are not limited to:

- Accept Jesus Christ as Higher Power
- Working the 12 step recovery 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.
- Identify difference between healthy and unhealthy relationships with others.
- Not engaging in sex with self, phone sex, cyber sex, pornography, fantasy, 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
- Identify triggers
- 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.