

Porn & Sex Addiction: Some Basic Facts for Partners



... along with a few reassurances to help you right now

7 Warning Signs Your Partner Is Addicted To Sex

There are behavioral “red flags” that you can look for to help you see if your partner is having a problem with sexually compulsive behavior:

1. He may spend a lot of “private” time on his computer, his phone, or at work. Working long hours could be a cover for compulsive viewing of porn. When you notice your partner is on the computer, he may turn it off or flip to another page. He may set up secret or hidden email accounts. He may hide his cell phone to avoid your detection of his phone calls or text messages.
2. In general, his demeanor may change. You may notice that he’s acting differently. He may become more secretive, private, unreliable, critical, or irritable. He might not be as social as he used to be. There may be unexplained absences. You may feel like you just don’t get straight answers anymore.
3. You may experience a lack of connection and intimacy. Your partner may not seem available to you. You may feel he’s avoiding you. He may seem “tuned out” or lost.

Continued on page 2

Is This You?

You may have become aware of your partner's sexual acting out in one horrible instant of discovery, or maybe the understanding crept up in a series of small awakenings.

You may have voiced suspicions that were repeatedly denied, but that over time added up to your certainty.

You may feel shocked, numb, hurt, ashamed, afraid, angry. This is normal.

You don't have to go through this time alone.

4. Your sexual interactions with your partner may change. Your partner may become uncharacteristically demanding or rough sexually. He may require more and more stimulation. Or he may become unresponsive sexually and cease initiating sex. He may develop a preference for masturbation.
5. His relationship to his body may change. He may become overly concerned with his penis — with caring for, touching, adjusting his pants, or exposing his anatomy.
6. Money might become an issue in your relationship. If he is spending money on porn, prostitutes, or other illicit sexual activities there may be a lack of funds or unexplained expenses.
7. He may be sexually unfaithful. Not every sexual betrayal is a sign of sexual addiction. However if your partner is engaging sexually with another or others and is not stopping, even if he says he wants to, he probably has an issue with sexual compulsivity.

Here's the bottom line: if your partner's sexual behaviors are causing stress to your relationship, to his connection to friends and loved ones, or to his work, then there is a problem.

If his instinctive desire for sexual activity is overriding his capacity to regulate those impulses in a way that is preventing connection and intimacy, then there is a problem. The difficulty with any addictive behavior is that ultimately it does not provide the desired relief or reward. The addiction creates an internal war. Life does not work. **You can never get enough of what won't, what can't ever, satisfy you.**

If you suspect (*or know*) that your partner has turned attention from you to porn, sexual addiction, or any sort of acting out sexually, we care about what this is doing to you. You may be facing heartbreak, fear, and/or anxiety. We get it. You don't have to go through this time alone.

7 Reassurances for Partners You Didn't Cause This —You Can't Cure It

1. Your partner's sexually addictive actions are not an indication that he does not love you.
2. There is hope. Your relationship isn't necessarily doomed because your partner has an issue with sexual compulsion.
3. You don't have to decide on the future of your relationship right now.
4. You are not weak or damaged because you want to stay with your partner and rebuild your relationship.

Continued on page 3

5. On the other hand, you're also not weak, damaged, or mean because you want to leave your relationship right now.
6. You don't have to force yourself to trust your partner right now. It is normal to feel angry, upset, and mistrusting.
7. You don't need to go through this time alone. Reach out to friends, family, and other support systems.

Some Basic Facts About Sexual Addiction

Sex addiction is a compulsive urge to engage in sexual activities, thoughts, or fantasies in a way that is detrimental to the individual, his family, his friends, and/or his work. It blocks the development of true intimacy in relationship.

For someone caught by sexual compulsion, sex has become something other than an intimate expression of loving connectedness. The pleasure that is inherently present in orgasm or connection with another has been altered and is being used as a balm, an escape, a distraction, rather than being enjoyed for what it does offer.

The sexually compulsive individual may know that his secret sex life is keeping him from the connection he wants to have. He just doesn't know how to limit (and stop) the sexual behaviors that are getting in the way of intimacy with his partner.

The natural urge for sex, the way sex is used for marketing purposes, and the explosion of porn on the Internet have created a "perfect storm" of conditions that lead to sex addiction.

To understand how sex addiction can become a problem, it helps to understand the impulses and motivations that drive the behavior. Gaining understanding about these influences, it is possible to work with the urges and impulses as they arise.

We're here to help you. We personally answer all phone calls.
If we don't pick up, leave your number and we'll call back right away.

925-932-0201