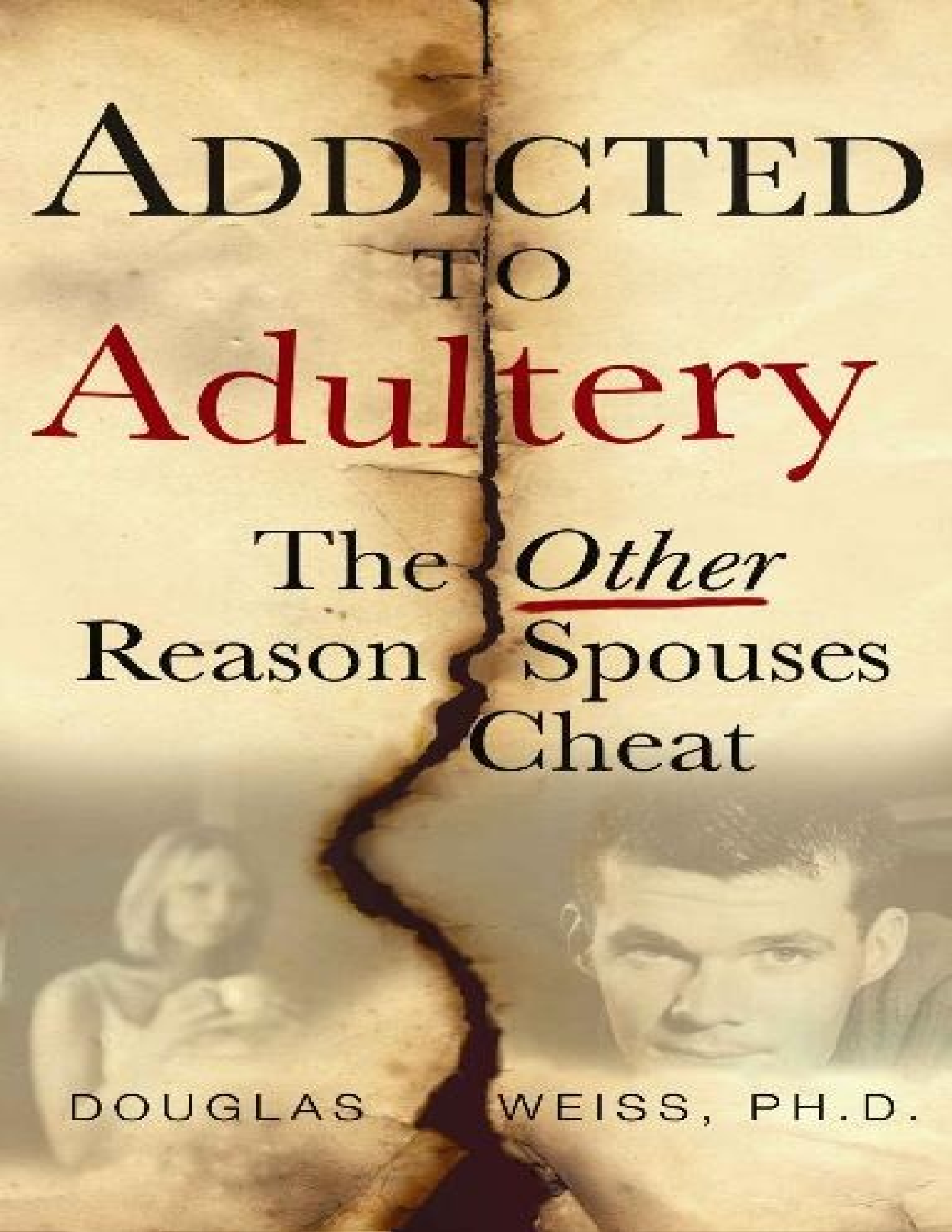
Addicted to Adultery

The *Other* Reason Spouses Cheat



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This book is dedicated to the hearts who have been hurt and those that have healed.
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Introduction

If you are opening this book, you most likely have had your life impacted by adultery or know someone who has. Millions of people are experiencing the near epidemic of cheating spouses.

The media is constantly reporting about the rich and famous, who seem to have it all yet are still impacted by adultery. It doesn't seem to make sense, as we think to ourselves, "If I was married to them, I certainly wouldn't cheat." So what is driving men and women to cheat? It's not always a bad marriage, incompatibility or the stresses of life.

The previous paradigms of understanding why a husband or wife cheats are mostly inadequate to explain why pastors, plumbers and politicians are experiencing the exact same problem. There's just not a simple answer, like more opportunities to cheat, since there has always been men and women living in community together.

Today, we know so much more about the neurochem-istry of sex, sexual addiction and the different reasons people

cheat on their spouses. The information you are about to read in the following chapters will be helpful whether you are the spouse, the person who cheated or just someone who wants to figure out this growing issue in our culture.

You will soon be introduced to several ideas addressing the influence of a cheater. Of course, he or she is still 100 percent responsible for choosing to cheat. However, as a counselor who has been treating those who cheat and their spouses for more than 20 years, I realize if I know the influences then there is a better chance to help.

Cheating doesn't have to be the end of a marriage. I have seen many marriages where it was just a painful start to a much more healthy, vibrant and intimate marriage.

Regardless of the reasons why you are reading through these pages, I know at the turn of the last page, you will feel like you have gleaned much from sitting in my office and having the experience of others opening their hearts with the hope of healing. Healing, by the way, is what I see regularly in my office.

You and those you care about deserve to understand what may have happened and why so that you can glean the most benefits from this experience. Keep an open mind as you open these pages, and you just might be able to help others down the road.

Chapter One

In a Day

Sue is an attractive woman who has everything going for her. She's smart and successful in her own business. Her husband has a very high-profile, corporate job. Her children attend private school and participate in private lessons in numerous extracurricular activities. They regularly attend a local church and plan several vacations every year. By anyone's standards, Sue has the American dream.

There is only one problem. She's telling this wonderful story to me in a counseling session. Most women who walk through my door are in the darkest moments of their marriage, and Sue was no exception to this. She had just recently discovered her husband was being sued for a large amount of money due to sexual harassment. This could cost her husband his career and also damage many other opportunities if this news spreads about both him and a low-level sales person who works in the same organization.

Sue had one of the longest nights of her life when Charlie, her husband of nineteen years, told her this dreaded news. She refers to this moment as her night of nightmares. At the time of disclosure, Charlie denied he was having an affair for two hours. Finally, he broke down and shared he was having an ongoing affair with this sales woman for several months.

Sue asked Charlie all the typical questions. When did it start? How old is she? Is she married? Does she have children? What does she look like, and, why, why, why? Charlie described how they met at an off-site corporate function and went through the entire story of the affair, crying the entire time. Somehow, his tears helped her process the information, but the pain still riveted through her body. She described it as lightening lava because of the surges of pain she was feeling as Charlie was begging her to stay.

At two o'clock in the morning, they agreed to sleep, because Charlie needed to meet with the legal department at his corporation early the next day. Sue could barely sleep a wink, as all kinds of random thoughts raced through her mind about her marriage, her children, and her decision whether to stay with him, divorce or beat Charlie while he was sleeping. She didn't know what to do.

That next day while Charlie was at the office, Sue called her sister crying, screaming and heaving while telling her the whole story. Her sister asked her a very simple question that pierced her entire being. "Sue, do you think she is the only one?" Her sister pointed out Charlie's regular out-of-town trips, good looks, smooth-talking abilities, as well as spoke of her girlfriend's experience when her husband was caught, and discovered it was just the tip of the iceberg. After she hung up, Sue couldn't shake that question. She started to recall Charlie's "emergency" meetings all over the country with a greater suspicion, as he often stayed later or went a day early to prepare for meetings. In her very core, she

knew there was more he wasn't telling her.

Charlie would have no idea what was going to hit him when he returned from work that evening. Fortunately, Sue prepared by having her sister watch the children. Sue was lit, and all her strength and intellect was aimed at one purpose, to know the entire truth.

When Charlie walked through the door that night, he was instantly hit with, "We need to talk, and I need the truth - no lies." Charlie became defensive and assured her it was only this one woman. Sue's intuition told her he was lying. She pounded him for six hours until he told her more of the story, and what she found out nearly broke her spirit.

Charlie began to talk about strip clubs, prostitutes, one-night stands in bars and six ongoing sexual relationships. Sue was numb. There was no more anger, no more anything. It was as if all the blood left her body. She couldn't respond to touch or sound, as if she was alone in her own body. She didn't know what she wanted or needed, who she was or who he was, but, mostly, what she should do. She was beyond stunned. She was missing in action, inside a war she didn't even know she was involved in.

That's when Sue knew this was more than just affairs. This was a problem with nightmare consequences. She had seen a talk show on sex addiction just weeks before, so she

went to her computer, typed a phrase into the search engine and saw a familiar face. Then, she called my office to schedule an appointment where she told me her story.

In the last 21 years counseling the wives of cheating husbands, the hardest thing I have to do is listen and feel the trauma through these women. It's like walking through a city that was bombed. You can see how amazing this city was before the bomb, but what sits in front of me is a woman, and occasionally a man, whose soul and life (past and future) have been devastated tragically by the person they love most, their spouse.

I have listened to thousands of women like "Sue" over many years of counseling. These are good women, trying to do life right. Most are attractive and intelligent. They are spiritually, emotionally and physically healthy. They love their husbands and are busy about their life when, wham, something happens that brings the big ugly monster of adultery into their life, threatening everything and everyone they hold dear.

These women are trying to solve the threat to their marriage as they seek professional counseling. Many are told all kinds of nonsense by well-meaning family, counselors, friends and pastors. "He's having a mid-life crisis." "Your marriage is bad." "If you would be more creative in bed, …" He's depressed."

“Maybe you should consider an open marriage. After all, monogamy is old fashioned.” These along with a lot of other ridiculous ideas are offered to try and explain why he cheated.

Regardless of whether it was the wife or the husband who has been cheated on, or if you are the one who cheated, all have tried to figure this out. I know many very intel

ligent men who have tried fruitlessly to figure out why they cheated on their awesome wife. Many husbands have answered “no” to the questions, “Was the sex better, would you marry the other woman, do you love the other woman?” Instead, the typical response is “No, it was just sex, Doc.”

So, what is driving these otherwise sensible men to do not only the unspeakable but the insane? It’s insane for Charlie to cheat on Sue. She’s amazing. It’s insane for him to visit prostitutes, have affairs with coworkers and risk his job and future.

Every week counseling couples during the 3-Day Intensive, it’s my job to explain this insanity. Within the following pages and chapters, I will do my best to explain how sexual addiction may be at the root of this insanity. An untreated sex addiction could very well lie at the root of this destructive event. Is everyone who cheats a sex addict? No, not everyone who cheats is a sex addict, and those that are not sex addicts are significantly different than the men and women who are sex addicts and cheat on their spouse.

Is sex addiction an excuse? No, and I will discuss this in greater detail. Everyone who cheats makes a choice, and that makes them responsible. However, understanding how somebody makes an insane decision can be helpful to give them tools to make better decisions in the future.

I have invested many years of my life with couples who seek help after his third or fourth round of getting caught. Had he known previously that he was a sex addict and treated it appropriately, he could have avoided putting his wife, family and himself through another decade of pain.

As a psychologist, if I can find the causes of a problem, whether it is physical, emotional, spiritual or any combi-nation of these, then I can create solutions or options for a person to take toward a path of growth. If, however, the person is oblivious to the causes of their behavior, they are most likely to repeat the behavior again in the future.

My heart in writing this particular book is of course not to imagine that I can end all adultery. Adultery has been going on for as long as man has existed. However, there are those that are committing adultery because of a sexual addiction, and that is why I called this book Addicted to Adultery.

Men, women and marriages have been riveted by adultery. If not treated,

adultery caused by a root of sexual addiction will mostly likely reoccur. These men and women are the ones who will benefit most from this book. It's already happened. Now, you're trying to figure out what happened, why it happened and how to prevent this in the future.

Is there hope? You might be asking this question before you invest your time reading the following chapters. Absolutely! If sex addiction is the cause, and the addicted spouse is motivated and willing to do the work of recovery, there is hope.

If, however, the spouse who cheated is a sex addict, and they choose to continue in the addiction, there is no hope. Addictions, regardless of type, are ugly, often progressive and painful to all who are close to the addict.

Be patient as you read through the next few chapters. It will appear that we will have to go backwards before we

go forward toward the solutions, but I find a good understanding of the problem makes for better future outcomes.

As far as Sue and Charlie are concerned, they both worked hard during their 3 Day Intensive, individually in on-going counseling, support groups and marital counseling. They are still happily married. Charlie is several years sober from his sex addiction and has not cheated since. They both had many choices to make. Yes, there were some pretty hard days, but their present-day life is healthy and much happier than it ever was before the addiction progressed into adultery.

Carly's Story

I didn't know what was wrong. I knew I loved my husband. I knew I loved my kids and my home. I was exhausted and drained all the time, and I chalked it up to being in this stage of my life (with a career and small children).

Sam and I had become roommates. We passed each other in the doorway. We were cordial. We were teammates, right? Our once very active love life had seen better days. I was always interested in being intimate with him, but he was always too busy or too tired.

I found my self sobbing in the shower at night where the water could drown out my sound. I felt the weight of the world on my shoulders, the kids, the house, the bills and now, seemingly, no love.

We went to counseling a couple of times but never

could connect the dots. Things would get better for a while. Then, like clockwork, the rage would come from one or both of us.

Shortly after the holidays, our spiral began. He was out of town on our anniversary and made excuses about how he was with friends. He was networking, and he couldn't take me out because we couldn't afford it. Then, he was gone on Valentine's Day, once again work-ing. There was always a promise

to make up for it when he got home, but it never came.

The day after my birthday, he had to go to the hospital for a minor surgery. He didn't want me to go. (Why? I'm a nurse.) He didn't want me to stay. (Why? Wouldn't he be lonely?) He refused drugs until I left the room. (Why? He was always such a funny chatter box in the past.) RED FLAG! Why didn't he want to talk in front of me? Why didn't he want me to take care of him? He didn't want me to take his personal belongings when he went to the operating room. (Why, oh God, why?) Sheer panic set in.

The nurse insisted I take his things, and he reluctantly handed them over. I walked to the waiting room with my heart in my throat, pounding in my ears and seemingly not enough oxygen in the room. My head spun. I opened his phone and found what I had dreaded. He had been texting and calling several other women. The texts were obscene, and the pictures that went with them, worse. I reeled in pain. I felt alone. I was so angry!

I dialed the numbers from his phone and heard loving greetings from the women who thought he was calling. I didn't know what to do or where to go. In a

complete fog, I walked to my office in an adjacent building where my team members greeted me, and I broke down.

It wasn't long before the nurses from the recovery room were calling me to pick up my husband. I wasn't sure what to do. I walked back in dread, heard half of the discharge instructions the doctor tried to give me and threw the cell phone at my husband's head. I went to get the car and drove him home in complete silence. He started to beg and cry. I packed up the kids and went to my parents' house.

The next few days and weeks were a blur. He swore they were friends, and I wanted to believe it, but after investigating the phone bill, I knew 800 text messages in 24 hours was more than just friends, and I knew that sending naked pictures of genitalia was not right. I wanted to believe him, so I did.

Days later after the dust settled, my mom gave me a Heart to Heart pamphlet and a video entitled, "Now that I know, what should I do?" I thought she was crazy. This was not OUR problem! Day after day, she asked if I had watched it. Day after day, I told her I was busy. One night while getting ready to take a shower, I turned the water on and with the intention of watching 30 seconds of this video to appease my mom, I turned it on. I found myself staring in disbelief. I felt myself slide to the floor in my bathrobe. Like a child, I sat on the carpet watching and hearing words that sounded like my life. It was as if someone had been watching us. I scheduled an appointment at Heart to Heart and with lots of coaching and support from my parents, I told my husband his attendance was not

optional. I kept the polygraph a secret. As the days got closer, I returned to denial. What if this was not his

problem? What if he hated me forever for setting him up?

Finally, we flew to Colorado. In my heart, I hoped to hear that the polygraph would prove he had told me the truth. I knew we needed help with the fact that he chose to talk to other women instead of me. I really looked at it as a retreat. Finally, some time alone with him. I missed him so much.

On the morning of our intensive, we arrived nervous. After a brief introduction, Doug asked us a series of questions. I began to cry, partially out of realization as to why I was there and completely out of relief that someone identified with what I had been living. Within minutes, Sam started to confess his infidelities. I was in the most excruciating pain of my life. I sobbed. I raged. I spit nails. I wanted him so badly, but I wanted to kill him even more. My life, as I knew it, was over.

Over the next 3 days, we cried on each other and fought. He begged, and I cried more. We didn't eat, we barely slept and we left exhausted, too exhausted to run away from what we had been told. He was a sex addict, involved in hours of pornography and masturbation every day. First, his infidelity was with three women, then four, then seven and, finally, too many to name. They were acquaintances, friends and complete strangers. They were blonde, brunette, short and tall. They were 20 to 48 years old. I could not wrap my head around it! We were both broken and, I feared, beyond repair.

That was 5 months ago.

I have continued to rage, cry and learn to forgive. He has begged and worked hard to earn a place in my

heart again. We have met many others like us, who we have leaned on for support. We are returning to Heart to Heart for followup care, as we are able. On bad days, we know they are only a phone call away.

Someone asked me once, "Now that you know, how can you stay?" My answer is this, "The person he is today does not even resemble the person who hurt me." Now, he is the spiritual leader and protector of our home. I have learned about my codependence and finally started taking care of myself. We have a long way to go, but we are rebuilding intimacy and trust that I would never have thought existed. Our hope is to repair our hearts and our marriage. Our dream is to stop this cycle in our family and to help others like us.

Chapter Two

From Brain to Pain

After you experience the trauma of adultery, the pain
can be tremendous. Like Sue, you may begin to

review the past in your thoughts, wondering when it happened and with whom. Was he unfaithful in the house? Was it while you were out of town? You'll then consider the pain of the present, as far as who now knows about this and who needs to know. What about the kids? Also, there's the pain of the future. What steps do I take? Where do I receive help? Will we make it through this? Once the adultery has been discovered, the questions go on and on for both of you.

This entire trauma is real. It's painful and will be part of your journey. One of the most common questions asked by many spouses is how did this happen, especially Sue, who discovered it wasn't a one-time event or even one person but many more. How do you begin to piece this together with the person you pledged "I do" and begin to

enjoy some really positive memories?

I want to take you out of the present and go back in time. This journey goes back before you met your spouse. What I am about to explain often began in the addict's early teen years and blossomed into the present.

Let me start this journey by first introducing you to the basics of sex and the brain. In a few pages from now, you will clearly understand that what I am going to share with you has a lot to do with the events that have happened to you.

The Brain

When anyone, man or woman, has an orgasm, they experience a positive feeling. That feeling is actually an overflow of endorphins and enkephalins flooding your brain. These chemicals are known as endogenous opiates, which simply mean that your body created these opiates.

These chemicals make a pleasure cocktail for your brain that provides more pleasure than anything else your body does. It has been suggested that these opiates would be about four times stronger than morphine. That's how powerful an orgasm is for your brain.

In addition to the "high" these chemicals offer, they hit on our amazing organ we call the brain. These chemicals hit the prefrontal cortex of your brain. The prefrontal cortex has several functions, including judgment, language, abstract reasoning, problem solving, planning and social interactions.

The prefrontal cortex is also a very interesting part of the

brain, as it is the only part of your brain that continues to grow from adolescence into your late twenties. This is important, because it makes this part of the brain like wet cement. What you do during these years can set in motion desired behaviors that can stay with you your entire adult life.

Another part of your brain that is very important to understand as it relates to sex is what occurs during the sexual release. When you have a sexual release, whatever is in your field of vision, real or imaginary, you literally glue to, hunger

for and crave. Remember Pavlov's dog? Ring the bell, the dog salivates. This positive reinforcement is a critical aspect to sex. You literally glue to what you look at during an orgasm.

Your brain, however, cannot distinguish between real or imaginary. So, if I hook up your brain, show you a football, and then have you close your eyes and imagine the football, your brain will light up in the same place.

To top this all off, your adrenal gland secretes peptin, a chemical that seals whatever image you are beholding into your brain. This allows the brain to recall this image as a very positive experience, and the brain will desire that image again. If you would like more detailed science regarding this, I provide this information in the American Association for Sex Addiction Therapists (AASAT) training, which is available online at www.aasat.org.

Quickly, let's review this information again before I explain what this has to do with your spouse's cheating.

1. The brain receives endorphins and enkephalins.
2. It hits the prefrontal cortex, which is responsible for judgment.
3. You glue to the image or person you are viewing.
4. You want to do this again.

Now, I want to take you into my office for a moment. For more than 20 years as a part of treating men and women with sex addictions, I have an intake process on my client's masturbation history. You see, your spouse was most likely masturbating way before he or she met you, literally gluing their brain to thousands of hits of something other than you.

I call her "boo boo mommy" for the guys who do this, and they know exactly what I mean. Let's say an adolescent boy creates a fantasy object, most choose women, some might choose men. Boo boo mommy is always available, wants to have sex 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and she is never tired. She has no needs. She makes no requests for help with the kids or house, and she's absolutely free, including no emotional expense to use her.

Boo boo mommy has the shape of a real woman, but she is in no way real. She changes shape and color, does exactly what he wants, when he wants, and how he wants, and she sometimes brings her friends. She's not real to you, but she is to your spouse.

He has masturbated thousands of times to her or him. He is glued to the imaginary woman and married her chemically way before he met you. In their brain, this is really their first spouse, and you are really the second spouse. Sadly, most of my clients who have cheated brought their

imaginary first spouse, pornography and other enhancements into the bedroom even before their first sexual encounter with their spouse.

Now, after years of positive chemical reinforcement, your husband or wife has a huge neuropathway in their brain attached to the other world. If you have noticed he often closes his eyes during sex, this is to recreate these fantasies in his head.

Most of you reading this are having “relational” sex with your spouse. However, the sex addict is most likely having “object” sex. Object sex is having sex with an “it” in their mind and not a person. Each time he or she is having object sex with “it” in their mind, they are positively reinforcing sex with someone or something else outside the marriage and receiving rewards with no consequences.

You may have even naively encouraged pornography and masturbation without realizing this is something they were attaching to, providing them the highest chemical reward while having sex with others. It’s like telling your kids stealing is wrong but actually paying them a thousand dollars 3 to 5 times a week to steal. Stealing is being positively reinforced, so they will eventually desire to steal, and then rationalize to themselves and others that stealing is okay as long as they don’t get caught.

Let me tell you a true story. Matt was a 35-year-old computer programmer. He had three children and a blonde-haired, blue-eyed wife. Matt had been masturbating since he was 14 years old. For twenty years, he masturbated an average of three times a week. In two decades, he has received 3,120 sexual hits (3 times a week x 52 weeks x 20 years).

Matt had a very specific fantasy. He fantasized about a tall, busty brunette who liked sex (female sex addict). Year after year, unbeknownst to his wife, Matt’s masturbation/fantasy/porn addiction was just blossoming. One day at the office, a new woman joined Matt’s team. She was a tall, busty brunette and a female sex addict. Within two weeks, he was having sex with her and thinking about leaving his wife when he came to see me. He felt sex with this woman was intoxicating. When I explained he had sex with this woman since he was 14 years old for more than 3,000 times, it made perfect sense why he was so triggered by her and had no moral dilemma about having sex with her. He is still responsible for his choice, but understanding he was repeatedly, chemically influenced helped him take responsibility for his recovery from sexual addiction that blossomed into cheating.

So, if your spouse who has cheated has been masturbating to fantasy or pornography for 1 to 5 decades, you can see how neurologically speaking this ring the bell, feed the dog was working against him in this process. Are they still responsible for this? Yes.

When someone goes into the fantasy world with boo boo mommy, they

disconnect emotionally, morally and spiritually. They leave this world and go to another place where they are in control, and it's also all about them. Clinically, this is called an altered state. This altered state is very real for addicts.

When in this altered state, they disconnect from reality, relationships and responsibilities. Many women have asked their husbands, "What were you thinking?" Honestly, they weren't thinking. They went into this altered

state. Many men report when they "come through it," the guilt, shame and insanity hits. Then, they feel awful, which sets up a cycle where they feel the need to medicate, utilizing the sex addiction.

You see, your spouse was sick way before you met him. Unknowingly, he was destroying his future marriage way before he met you. After meeting you, he kept his first spouse (fantasy, porn or others) a secret. You thought you were marrying a normal person, but you didn't. You married a sex addict.

Now, I hope you see that his brain was part of the problem. This problem didn't have anything to do with you not being pretty, sexy or young enough whatsoever.

You are enough. He has just been too drunk to see and experience you. I tell men who complain about their wife not being enough, "How would you know? You are stunted emotionally, spiritually, morally and neurologically. You're not capable of a mature sex life. You are the problem, not your wife." Yes, I actually say this to addicts early on, because they want to blame instead of taking full responsibility for their actions.

I hope this little journey back in time can help you piece together some of the influence that was working against your spouse and influencing him or her to choose such reckless behavior. These influences predated your marriage. This cancer was being fed by your spouse regularly over many years. They had no clue that this secret world would culminate in adultery. They are responsible for cultivating the culmination into adultery and the recovery process from their sexual addiction. In the next chapter, I will cover some other influences as well, so you can have a better understanding of the influences that assisted in your spouse's bad choice to cheat on you.

Chapter Three

Still Responsible

In this chapter, I want to share with you some of the
other influences that exist for many of the men and
women who cheat. Cheating is an event, but often, there are several steps leading up to the event.

Before we begin, I want to be painstakingly clear the person who cheats made a choice, or a series of choices, that they are entirely responsible for. I

clearly understand there is no reason for a person to cheat, absolutely none. At this point, I hope I am clear about that. A cheater, even a sex addict, is still entirely responsible for his or her behavior.

Immaturity

When an addiction becomes active in a person's life, it shuts down their development in three major areas. When the sex addict started using their sexuality in an addictive manner, he stopped maturing in several areas. In essence, you

would have an adolescent emotionally, spiritually and morally.

Let's walk through this for a little bit. Emotionally, an adolescent is underdeveloped. The comments "um", "huh" or "don't know" are normal. Regardless if a sex addict is 30, 40 or 60 years of age, he is a teenager emotionally and is usually what I call emotionally constipated. He stuffs his feelings, then blows up and, eventually, may be able to tell you kind of what was going on with himself later, sometimes much later.

Logically, it makes sense. In the past as an adolescent, when having an emotional conflict, he would go to boo boo mommy, ejaculate, feel better and go to sleep. He didn't have to do the hard work of identifying his feelings, communicating a feeling, identifying his needs and taking responsibility to meet those needs. He just ejaculated or had an orgasm to medicate himself and didn't mature one iota. Year after year for decades, he medicated his emotions in this manner, so the emotional development was arrested at adolescence. That's why so many spouses of sex addicts state their addicted spouse is similar to having an extra child instead of an adult.

His emotional immaturity, combined with having sex with others (real, imaginary or pornography) as a medicine, sets the stage for ongoing emotional coping by ejaculating. When relational, financial or other life stressors occur, he stays in this underdeveloped state of avoiding maturity by ejaculating. This is not an excuse to cheat but rather a precursor of poor development and the continuation of keeping the sex addict emotionally immature.

Spiritual immaturity is a little trickier. Many of the men and women who cheat that have come to my office arereligious, whether they are a pastor, priest, rabbi, medicine man, Muslim, Hindu or devoted to New Age beliefs. Some have religious understanding but are void of intimacy with God or a Higher Power and are unable to integrate spiritual truth into a consistent lifestyle within their spiritual belief system.

A spiritually immature person, say age 14, is truly capable of great incongruence of belief and behavior. They are ruled by emotions and the present opportunity, not principles and consequences. This immaturity is also a factor in

how someone may appear to be a physical adult, yet make such bizarre and immature choices.

Another type of spiritual immaturity involves those whose sex addiction really is their spirituality. Boo boo mommy is unconditional love, acceptance and there to ease the pain of life. Therefore, no God is needed, sought after or pursued. This person's spiritual immaturity is significant and will be addressed as they move forward in their recovery.

Moral development is important for the sex addict. If they are stuck at age 14, 15 or 16, they have the moral development that says, "If I get caught, that would be bad." They lack the reality that their behavior is wrong anytime, all the time, under any circumstances, like a moral adult.

Most spouses of the addict are morally adults and have no way of fathoming how their spouse could make such a selfish and destructive choice to cheat. If you remove the moral development, place them at 14 years old and ask how they could cheat on a girlfriend, it helps to make

sense of it, because that's the decision process they were making even though they are now married.

Trauma

Many sex addicts are also survivors of various types of trauma. Many have experienced physical or emotional abuse in their family of origin. This type of abuse affects them developmentally along with their beliefs about themselves and their value by others. Often they feel they were treated as objects during this trauma so seeing them and others as objects would be very common.

Most research that has been done pertaining to sex addicts reveals on average about 80% experienced sexual abuse. Clinically, I can tell you many spouses of sex addicts didn't find out about their husband's past abuse until after the disclosure of an affair.

After revealing three affairs, Harry shared how a pastor sexually abused him. After several homosexual affairs, Vicky told her husband about ongoing homosexual abuse when she was a child. Lane, a Canadian man, was sexually abused by a neighbor for 3 years and didn't share this with his spouse until after his adultery was disclosed.

Sexual abuse is a common factor of sexual addiction. Again, this doesn't make them any less responsible for their choice in cheating. Their souls are in pain, and they medicate that pain with sex. The trauma is sometimes reenacted out exactly in their affair, although some change and identify with the perpetrator and act out those scenarios. The trauma doesn't make the choice. It just sets up the pain, which becomes a factor in the addict making the choice.

Deprivation

Arnie is a typical male sex addict, sitting in my office for a 3-Day Intensive. He recently disclosed a 3-year affair with someone he met at a bar, as well as many one night stands. Like so many of these addicts, he has a great wife, children and career.

Arnie was not sexually abused. However, he did have a long history of masturbation with pornography, involving sleazy-type women, which his wife was not. During our sessions, I asked Arnie, “What do you do for fun?” “Fun, well uh, I don’t really do anything now. It used to be going to clubs and hunting for women.” Arnie is a typical sex addict. He lives a lifestyle of deprivation that leads to the entitlement to fill that need.

In my book, The Final Freedom: Pioneering Sexual Addiction Recovery, I highlight several aspects of an addict’s life, which can lead them toward deprivation if the needs are not met. The areas in their life that need to be maintained are social, spiritual, sexual, fun, love, intimacy, physical and financial.

Deprivation in an addict’s life is the unseen precursor for addicts feeling entitled to act out. It’s like the overeater who doesn’t eat lunch and now feels entitled to the huge dessert after dinner. They starve themselves and then binge. Addicts have lifestyles of deprivation that can become another influence to make the choice to cheat. Does deprivation excuse them? Absolutely not! They are entirely responsible for their choice.

Deprivation is an enemy in the battle of recovery that, at some point, needs to be addressed. This same cycle of cre

ating deprivation (overworking, no exercise, no intimacy and creating debt) moves them to pain and entitlement to medicate. Again, understanding influences doesn’t make them less responsible, but it can lead to insight on future prevention of this cycle in their life.

Culture

This is just one other influence that can play into the poor decision to cheat again. In no way is it a legitimate reason to make such a decision. The addict is entirely responsible for their choice to cheat on their spouse.

In my practice of more than 20 years, I have counseled people from various cultures around the world, as well as the various cultures within the United States. I have heard about cultures that value cheating for men and even have positive names for men who cheat.

I have talked to men whose dads, for generations, would introduce their sons to sex with a prostitute and even after marriage are encouraged to go to strip clubs, visit prostitutes and have affairs as a way of being in the real man’s world. These are insane strategies to foster strong marriages.

Our American media culture is also pitiful in its presentation of sexuality. Several popular shows reveal men and women cheating, such as Desperate Housewives, Sex in the City and countless others. Weekly, the characters justify their adulterous lifestyles in millions of people's homes. Men are continuously betrayed as scoundrels and womanizers, who have no value for fidelity, their marriage vows or their children.

All of this also plays as an influence in a person's decision-

making process. Consider this alongside the biological aspects of addiction, rewarding wrong behavior, abuse, self imposed deprivation and immaturity, and you can easily see how irrational and destructive this can be toward a healthy marriage.

Let's review for a moment. Your spouse grows up chemically rewarding his brain for having sex with a fantasy person thousands of times and hijacks the pleasure center of his brain to really desire sex with others. He stays morally, spiritually and emotionally 14 years of age, keeping his skills to deal with adult stressors and relationships very limited. He most likely has trauma of some kind aggravating his soul on a regular basis. He keeps his life out of balance, so he is also in pain daily and lives in a culture promoting an adulterous lifestyle as a legitimate option for happiness. All of this would contribute to the weak soul, moving toward a poor decision-making process.

Are they still entirely responsible for the poor decision? Yes. However, in moving forward, knowing these past influences can help determine a treatment plan to minimize these risks in the future.

If an addict has a psychological reward for object sex, this can be addressed. The abuses he or she incurred in their family of origin or sexual trauma can be aggressively dealt with in therapy. Plans to avoid deprivation can be created by the cheating spouse, as well as tools to start developing spiritually, emotionally and morally.

Thousands of times in my practice and around the world, I have seen the miracle of recovery. I am living proof that someone can be sober for more than 22 years now. My

sobriety is assessed by a polygraph regularly, so it's a fact. I have seen these hurt, addicted and immature men and women who cheat recover and become intimate, mature and monogamous.

In the last week at my office, three men came for their followup polygraph. All three of these men had multiple affairs in their past. The first man came to a 3-Day Intensive with his wife 3 months ago, and he was totally clean, not even masturbation. The second man came in a year ago, and he passed his polygraph. The third man came in 3 years ago and lives in a foreign country. He was also

totally clean the entire 3 years. They were changed men who were happier with more self-esteem and maturity. They were making better decisions, in love with their wives and grateful for the opportunity to live a life in remission from sex addiction.

For more than 20 years, I've seen this miracle of recovery every week. If your spouse is willing to heal, there can be hope. They are responsible for their choices, and they can be responsible for their recovery. In later chapters, I will outline what some of this looks like, but for now, I just want to give you some hope. At moments, the pain you are in can eclipse hope, yet I have seen and experienced recovery. If your spouse will accept the responsibility of recovery and do the work, you both are candidates for what I call the miracle of recovery.

Chapter Four

The Prototype Problem

I want to take you on an excursion into a world that may or may not be familiar to you. This is the world of a man I met years ago. His name is Terry, and he owned a manufacturing company that manufactures a specific type of emergency vehicle.

His company is well-known around the world for creating the best of this particular type of vehicle. Once, Terry took a vacation, and his work team decided to take advantage of the time while Terry was on vacation to work on a new prototype for production.

A prototype is what this company designs to implement new and better features than the previous model had. When Terry came back, the prototype was ready, and after some changes, it went into production. I am telling you about prototypes for a reason, because so many of the men and women I have met who have cheated on their spouses have prototypes.

These prototypes are created by the addict early in their addicted process. For some, this prototype of what the fantasy person provides is purely physical. For some, it's emotional, and for others, it is purely a fetish, whether it is an object or a sexual scenario.

A prototype for a sexual addict is a very specific object of affection. I'll explain to you more about this through some very real examples addicts have created for themselves as prototypes of their sexual desire.

Among the three types of prototypes, the physical prototype is the easiest to discuss. The addict is simply focused on a specific physical characteristic or a group of physical characteristics. For example, tall or short, big or small busted, a particular race, certain age category or a specific hair or eye color. The prototype becomes consistently reinforced by the addict and becomes the object

of desire. Notice I said object of desire, not person of desire. The addict is gluing to a specific object, not a soul.

The most classic example is the curvaceous blond. For whatever reason, the addict focuses on this prototype. It might be a neighbor, a first love, a first sex partner or just a porn image. The addict is locked on a type. Sometimes, they marry their type, but most often, they don't. In the event where the addict marries their type, you would be magically favored by the sex addict, because you are the prototype.

In a scenario where you do not fit the type, you will most likely feel you are not enough and even eventually feel more tolerated than loved. For example, Mike, a 42 year old fireman, masturbated to blondes but married an energetic

and beautiful Italian woman with dark brown eyes and black hair. She felt undesired by Mike her entire marriage. If they were at a restaurant and a dark haired woman walked by, Mike barely noticed. However, if a blonde walked by, no matter what age, Mike's head would turn, and he would know how she was dressed and how well it fit. She would constantly be reminded of Mike's attraction to a certain prototype.

You see, since 12 years old, Mike had masturbated to pictures of blondes. Remember our conversation about the brain and rewarding itself for a certain stimulus, like Pavlov's dog? Mike's brain was stimulated neurologically, like Pavlov's dog. Every time he saw a blonde, he would salivate. The way his wife and so many other wives experience this event is painful. "While we were at a restaurant talking, a certain person (prototype) walked by, and it's as if my husband just left. He's gone. It's like he went somewhere else, just gone. Then, a minute or so later, he comes back into the conversation totally unaware he left and wonders why I am upset."

You see, the addict went into an altered state where he was unaware of time or reality. He disconnected. When he comes back, it's as if he never left. Sometimes, he is aware he left, however oftentimes, he is not. So many couples have endless dialogues about this which are more pointless rather than constructive, because the addict has already disconnected when the prototype walked by.

As we talk about physical prototypes, there are addicts who have masturbated to so many physical features that they have a thousand triggers. The person they lust after may fit

simple categories like male or female. I've known addicts where it didn't even matter what gender their prototype was. They had come to the point where they pretty much sexualized almost anyone. As a spouse of this type of person, you will experience the disconnection regularly.

The addict's emotional prototype can be endless. A sex addict can smell emotional energy, similar to a shark smelling blood. Many of the addicts themselves are unaware of the emotional prototype they are attached to.

Many sex addicts want the easy victim. Most victims of the addict are women with low self esteem, abuse survivors or someone with significant psychological or financial issues. The prototype is the weak victim where the addict can be the hero or good guy. The prototype is someone who will appreciate them as they are since they desire to be worshiped or adored.

The emotional prototype of controlling others or being controlled is also an emotional trigger. Those that want to be controlled are attracted to the prostitute who does dominant techniques called a dominatrix. Others want to totally control the other person, and they are often attracted to prostitutes that do what you tell them to do.

The hardest emotional prototype is the opportunist. They are totally aroused by willingness or perceived willingness. For most, it doesn't matter what the other person looks like, even their gender or age, but their willingness is intoxicating. This prototype seems totally insane for the spouse of the addict, because the willing person may work at McDonalds or may be a corporate executive. The only thing they have in common is their willingness.

Carl is a 52-year-old man, who has been married for 30 years. His wife is very fit, plays tennis and is extremely active. Carl was having an affair with a fast-food counter worker. When his wife went to see this woman, she was 40 years old and at least 100 pounds overweight and didn't take care of herself at all. However, this woman was a female sex addict, and willing was his emotional prototype.

To understand this attraction, the emotional prototype would have to be understood. The addict who has emotional prototypes working in their life will have behavior that will make no sense at all to those who know them.

The fetish prototype will seem bizarre, but with what you now understand about sex and the brain, you can probably make sense of it. The fetish prototype is connected to an object or a scenario. These fetishes could include a sex toy, cross dressing, having their sex partner act out a particular scenario or wear a certain clothing item to make them sexually aroused.

I met a couple where the man confessed to masturbating to women wearing fishnet pantyhose. In his first marriage, his wife went along with this, so his fetish was able to be reinforced. After the divorce, he would regularly hire prostitutes to wear fishnet pantyhose. He married a great woman who was sexually healthy, and she didn't mind fishnet periodically. However, when he insisted on her wearing fishnets every time, she felt sex was no longer about

connection. She was feeling empty after sex, not closer. This fishnet fetish then became a conflict, not because of her, but because this became object sex, not relational sex. In therapy, the husband learned intimate sexuality, and they were able to negotiate the fishnet stock

ing issue as adults.

The fetish prototype can also be a scenario the sex addict desires. I had a married client who was an addict, having sex regularly. He had a fetish prototype of a dominatrix controlling him, having him serve a man sexually while she watched. This is a very specific fetish prototype. For years, he acted this out through fantasy, porn and masturbation to this fetish prototype. He destroyed his marriage because of a prototype to this specific fetish.

After decades of reinforcement, I have seen both men and women have specific fetishes that move them to act. If the fetish involves another person (directly or indirectly) watching them do the behavior, they will feel influenced to cheat.

I met a couple, both were very successful multimillionaires. They built a great company and had a moderately happy marriage. She didn't know he had a fetish of being spanked. She tried it with him a couple times and had no desire to participate in spanking him. As the years went by, he continued to masturbate to the fantasy. He searched on the Internet and found some prostitutes willing to participate sexually and spank him. He got caught and had the option of recovery. However, once his fetish became realized, he was so addicted and hooked that he left his wife and company just so he could be spanked.

Prototypes are unique to each person. Some addicts only have one. In that case, it might just be a simple physical feature, emotional or fetish prototype. However, in some cases, the addict has a collage of prototypes. This means a wide variety of physical, emotional or fetish prototypes

can trigger or stimulate them to activate their addictive process. Again, the addict is responsible for continuing their reinforce- ment. They are also responsible for their acting-out behaviors outside the marriage.

Similar to other chapters, I hope you can understand the influences going on inside the addict. In most cases, these prototypes have been well established way before he married you. He may not have known reinforcing these prototypes would create a neurological or emotional reward that would pressure him to violate this vows. Also, he didn't necessarily know the reinforcement this private sexual behavior would have to potentially destroy his marriage and family in the future.

Chapter Five

Addicted Not in Love

Marlene was a very fit, brown-haired woman with
green eyes. She has been married 23 years.
She was a competent doctor, a good mother and had significant interest in her faith. She found out about John's 5-year relationships with a 23-year-old stripper, several prostitutes, porn and masturbation.

Marlene was absolutely devastated. She worked hard, actually making almost three times as much as John. She loved him, and they had sex regularly. Other than a busy on call schedule once a month, she made plenty of time for John and her family. After disclosure, John agreed to take a polygraph. Marlene and I had some time to process her trauma of living with a sex addict, who she still really loved.

She started to discuss how hard she worked at staying fit, making money, being a creative lover and good friend.

She was trying to do what many trauma survivors do, blame themselves. After a while, she was able to see, like so many wives, that John was sick way before they met. His behavior had nothing to do with her. He would have done this no matter who he married. Since she was a doctor, she could understand how a disease can become progressively worse.

After about 40 minutes into our session, she began to calm down. John finished the first round of his polygraph, and there were no new disclosures. She sat back in her chair in my office, and she closed her eyes. She began to breathe in and out, in and out, as if she was in her yoga class. You could tell she was just trying to get grounded. Then, she became silent, and I learned to just let her process her pain in her own way. For about 3 to 5 minutes, she was totally silent.

Then her eyes opened, as if she just came out of a coma. "Dr. Weiss, I have to know one thing to go through this and come out the other side. Does he love me? Does he love her?" I said to Marlene, "That's actually two things." We both smiled, and the tension left the room, but she wanted to know the answer, or should I say answers. I sat back and said, "This is going to take a while to explain, but I can answer both of your questions." So, she relaxed and was willing to hear me explain these answers to her.

If you are reading this book, you may be a lot like Marlene. Regardless of whether you are a man or a woman, you've most likely been faithful and tried your best to make your marriage work. Now, the trauma of sex addiction has impacted your life. Maybe like Marlene, after a difficult disclosure has occurred, you have had some time to think,

and you also have those two very basic questions as well.

I want to share some principles I have learned in working with sex addiction. After discussing these ideas, I will walk you through a checklist that can help

you determine whether you are loved or the addiction is loved.

Does He Love Me?

1. Believe Behavior

The principle of believing behavior will significantly help you to determine what is loved, you or the addiction. Behavior is always the truth.

In the Partners Recovery Guide: 100 Empowering Exercises, I have an exercise called verbal reality. Verbal reality is what addicts do to themselves and others. If they say something, it then becomes true to them. If they say it with emotional conviction, it's really true. They don't believe they have to follow through with the reality of the behavior. It just becomes true because they said it. So, just because they say they want to recover, work on the marriage or they love you, it doesn't mean it's actually true.

It takes some time to measure whether an addict loves his spouse. The acting-out addict just wants the picture of "normal" and still be able to do whatever he pleases. For you to be in reality, you can look at his behavior. Let me make this concrete for you. The addict says, "I want to recover from my sex addiction." They attends 12-step groups, has a sponsor, makes calls, works the steps and follows through with homework from therapy. Then, and only then, should you believe he wants to be free from his addiction.

2. Protection

This is a principle worth exploring a little bit here. What a person loves, they protect. Stop for a moment and really let that sink into your heart. What a person loves, they protect. I can tell which way an addict is going by the direction of their sword, so to speak.

If I hear an addict being honest, bumping into triggers and making plans to protect themselves against the addiction, I know the sword is against the addiction, exposing it and planning its defeat. If the sword is against the addiction, they most likely love you.

However, if the addict continues to lie, he or she is protecting the addict. If the addict is sneaky and still trying to get away with some behaviors, the sword is unfortunately toward you. He or she is in love with the addiction and willing to sacrifice you or the relationship with you for the fix.

Let me make this very practical. We were just in my office with Marlene and John, remember? John was given the opportunity to slay the addiction's power of secrecy, verify there are no more secrets and then build a foundation of honesty to start a measurable reality they could both build upon. John's response, "If that will help kill this thing, I'm in." John already disclosed everything, so he had no fears. This is a guy who hates the addiction and the pain it caused everyone. Truly, at that moment, he was demonstrating love toward Marlene.

If John would have made excuses like, “You just need to trust me. I’m not going to be treated like a criminal. I’m not going to have a marriage based on a polygraph.” Then, he

would have been protecting the addiction. Every one of the addicts who had lines like these were ABSOLUTELY lying. How do I know? Often, the next day they end up taking the polygraph. One affair becomes six, and it wasn’t 3 months ago, it was 3 days ago. It wasn’t a one-night stand. Instead, it was a 2-year relationship. In this example, the person’s sword, so to speak, was first protecting the addiction and then was moved against the addiction. The person in this example, who absolutely refuses to take the polygraph, states, “It’s too invasive.” Yet, isn’t sleeping around with other people and risking their spouse’s health invasive? Give me a break. They are protecting the addiction with a vengeance and love the addiction significantly more than their spouse.

3. Two Boxes

The two boxes is an idea I have had to try to explain to spouses, the rationalization process of addicts. The two boxes is a relatively simple way to understand rationalization. There are two boxes. Let’s call them Box X and Box Z. A person is faced with a choice, choose Box X or choose Box Z. Let’s say Box X is taking a new job, and Box Z is keeping the same job. The person might vacillate for a while, assessing more money but with travel away from the family, or the same money and more time with the family. Once a person makes a decision either way, then their resources will move to support and rationalize why this decision was better and why the other decision was not the best idea for them.

This same simple principle is true of addicts and the decisions an addict is making. Although they can change their decisions in the future, their rationalizations will

tell you where they are at the moment. If the addict is criticizing their spouse, making irrational statements to get away, be alone or be unaccountable for their time or money, they are moving toward the box of addiction. If they are stating how crazy they were to even think about not being with you, praising you, then you’re probably the choice they are making.

4. Motivation

I love working with addicts. They are usually highly intelligent and resourceful beings. Addicts come equipped with high levels of motivation. If you’re the spouse of an addict or an addict yourself, just think about this for a moment. If the addict really wants to do something, do you have to push, remind, shove or provide any stimulation? They get online, get the books, talk to the experts, get the best equipment and have a laundry list as to why and how

this idea should happen.

Usually, they are highly motivated people. They were motivated in their addiction. They could rearrange schedules, drive places, meet people, create lies and move monies, all without any outside source for the motivation. This principle is very helpful to tell what the addict wants.

If a spouse has to remind the addict about his therapy, 12-step group or reading materials, this would be a symptom of someone not motivated to change and loves the addiction more. The motivated addict calls to make his own appointments, reads books, makes calls to his sponsor, completes his exercises in his workbooks and really tries hard to get his work for recovery done. If that is your addict, he most likely loves you and wants to be sober.

5. Humility

One characteristic I have seen as a tale-tell sign of the direction the addict is going is humility. The addict, who has been able to hit bottom, has been traumatized by their own behavior. They have seen the enemy, as it was them. They aren't blaming, yelling or manipulating the spouse, but instead, something has truly broken inside of them. They are not complaining about their spouse, but there is a sense of genuine gratefulness. They are not sad about getting caught. They are sad about who they are. This kind of person is more capable of love than the arrogant addict.

The arrogant addict still has the edge of entitlement. They want the focus of therapy to include their spouse. After all, it can't be "all about me." This type of addict is critical. The therapist, the groups and the process, it's all not right, not for them. This addict has resentment that he has to do the work of recovery or be loaded down with all this recovery. This kind of addict is still in love with the addiction.

Checklist: Does the Addict Love Me?

1. Behavior

___ Is the addict's behavior congruent with a desire to recover?

___ Is the addict completing their workbooks, attending groups or therapy?

2. Protection

___ Is the addict exposing the addiction?

___ Is the addict being honest about smaller relapses?

___ Is the addict willing to take ongoing poly- graphs?

3. Boxes

___ Are their rationalizations positive about you?

___ Is the addict discovering the positive sides of recovery?

4. Motivation

___ Do you see the addict being creative to get recovery done?

___ Do you see the addict increasing in their knowledge about recovery?

___ Do you see the addict involving others in their recovery?

5. Humility

___ Do you see attitudes of accepting responsi bility for their actions?

___ Do you see genuine gratefulness sustained over time?

If you answered yes to most of these questions, it's most likely they love you and are trying to recover. This person would still have emotional, spiritual and moral immaturity. They still have an addiction and have to mature. In this case, I would say that someone can be sick with an \

addiction, be immature and still love. As they recover, love can mature, and they probably love you.

Checklist: Does the Addict Love the Addiction?

1. Behavior

___ Does the addict have excuses (too busy) not to follow a plan for recovery?

___ Does the addict still lie?

___ Is the addict sneaky and unaccountable to anyone?

2. Protection

___ Is the addict unwilling to take a polygraph?

___ Will the addict only tell you when they get caught?

___ Is the addict participating in some behav iors, such as masturbation or pornography, with no concern?

3. Boxes

___ Does the addict rationalize how their other life could have been better?

___ Does the addict still talk about the other person or persons?

___ Does the grief of losing the addiction cause greater pain than the devastation to their life?

4. Motivation

___ Does the addict skip group and therapy appointments?

___ Does the addict get angry about the in convenience recovery work is having on their life?

5. Humility

___ Is the addict still arrogant?

___ Does the addict talk more about their own pain due to being with you?

___ Does the addict still have significant en titlement?

If the answer to most of these questions is yes, they still love the addiction. They are married to it, and you are dispensable. You will feel outside of their world. You might see a change, but if this way of being stays consistent, they are negotiating with you how much of the addiction they can have and still have the

benefits of marriage. In most cases, this person has not hit bottom, so expect further lies and future relapses.

Do they love the other person?

Before I go on to answer this question directly, let's go back to my office. The walls of my office have had some of the most honest conversations humans can have. I want to let you into a few of these conversations with sex addicts in regards to loving the other person.

Brad was a 50-something corporate guy. He had plenty of gray hair, a gut and was not very attractive. He has been married for 32 years to a very pleasant woman, who anybody would have wanted to be their mom. Brad was caught in an affair with another woman, and he has been regularly having sex with the other woman twice a week.

The woman he was having sex with lived in a trailer park, was on some kind of disability income. By Brad's description, she didn't take good care of herself. He was rarely having sex with his wife. This was his fourth time getting caught in a sexual relationship with this woman.

In my first session alone with Brad, after the couple's session on their first day of their 3-day intensive, I asked Brad, "Do you love this other woman?" He looked at me straight in the eyes, "No way." I questioned back, "No way?" "It's just sex, Doc. She stinks. I wouldn't even take her out to eat." I asked, "So why do you keep going back to her?" He said, "Because I can." It was that simple for Brad, free sex. The woman didn't even have enough value to eat dinner with him. He really didn't even like or respect the other woman. I have had this type of conversation many times.

Sheila is an attractive 37-year-old soccer mom. She has had several affairs with men. Recently, she was caught again by her husband with a dad of one of their child's friends. I asked her if she loved the other guy. "Hell no, I love the sex, not him." She loved being pursued and having a secret in her life. "He's just a tool." This shocking objectification from a woman is common among female sex addicts.

Mark was 64-year-old man, semi-retired from his own

business. He's married to a woman he says he loves and has been his best friend for more than 40 years. He has been in and out of an affair with a woman of a different race for more than 30 years. For most of their marriage, he has had sex with this woman a few times a month. I asked if he loved her. He replied, "No, I'm her sugar daddy. I give her some extra money here and there. We always knew if she became serious about someone, it would end, but she never did. We both liked the sex, but we don't love each other. It's just understood."

People who have affairs do it for so many reasons. Addicts, however, rarely

love their victims. They see people as objects. They might prefer one object over another. Also, the addiction leaves them intoxicated and somewhat insane, like any addiction does. Remember, an addict is emotionally, spiritually and morally immature. They have a limited ability to love. Even if they choose the other person, it may not be for love.

Could they love the other person? It's possible. Will they do the work of recovery for that person? I've not seen that. They will usually pick the other person, because the other person will let them stay sick. I don't call that love. The addict, however, if they move toward the box with the other person, will say things like, "I love them. I don't love you anymore." or "I never have loved you."

These are extremely hard things for a faithful spouse, who wants to work on their marriage, to hear. As a spouse of a sex addict, not being chosen may be a major part of your grief recovery work. On the other side, I have seen good women and men forced into a divorce and later meet as a much healthier person who could love them.

Chapter Six

Cheating Heart

I count myself very fortunate to be able to do what I do.
Day after day, people open up their lives, hearts and
processes to me. I have learned volumes from my clients. In my office, honesty is critical for the miracle of recovery to happen. Without honesty, the person addicted to adultery is doomed, and they cannot heal.

I often tell the spouse of a sex addict a simple truth I have learned about men and people in general, "What a man loves, he protects." If a man, or woman for that matter, is not being completely honest, and I don't mean not sharing details, they will hurt the spouse in order to protect the addiction. If, however, a person is openly disclosing and not protecting the addiction, it is a sign they are, at the moment, trying to love and protect the spouse.

It's in these private moments within my office after the addict's disclosure where I have seen how the addict thinks

and feels inside. The heart is different for every addict and may even be different at different times for the same addict. So, please join me as we enter the cave of the cheating heart. If you're the addict, be careful. You might run into some familiar territory.

The Hunter Cheater

It is the cheating heart, who is very intentional about his behavior, that I term "The Hunter." This addict is mostly looking for participants in his game. This could take place at weddings, their child's birthday party or even on their

honeymoon where they are cruising for victims. They are looking for the weak, needy or another sex addict for a quick hit. They tend to have pickup lines or a clear modus operandi to capture their prey. The hunter rarely is looking for an equal, because an equal could hurt them. This could be a doctor or lawyer whose prey is the secretary, waitress or woman at a bar. I often have to highlight for hunters they are really picking up wounded sparrows, not hunting for eagles. They tend to be the smart, successful, smooth-talking guy who exudes a certain sexual or narcissistic energy. It's all about them and their needs. The stench of entitlement is also present in the hunter's heart.

Hero/Nice Guy Cheater

Ken is the nice guy at work. He does his job and seems to make time for chitchat. He gravitates to the females at work. He asks about their work load, their husbands or if they need help with a project, even a home project, especially if the woman is divorced. He is always quick with a compliment on how a woman is dressed and knows when to tell a slightly off-colored joke or two. As a woman, you will

always feel special around Ken.

This is the person who "wants to help." They can see a victim's need a mile away, and they want to rescue the maiden in distress, so to speak. This person wants to be a friend to their victim, talk about the victim's life, marriage, kids or job. This nice guy wants you, the victim, to know he really cares.

The hero/nice guy's adulterous heart is quick to praise, quick to appreciate and quick to pick up on cues as to whether you are starting to trust them. They get excited when the victim trusts them, because they are close to the kill. Even after sex, they want to be seen by the victim and themselves as a nice person. This addict will victimize a woman, engage in several sexual encounters and will exit the relationship, because he loves his kids or thinks the victim should give her husband another chance. Even after victimizing the other person, they want to be thought of by everyone as the nice person they need to believe they are. It takes a little while to see themselves as perpetrators, because they really want to hang on to the image of a hero or nice person. Honestly, heroes and nice people don't cheat. It's that simple.

This is the person who is most likely to tell the victim they care for them, love them and tell them they're special or that they have a future together. They don't really mean it, but it does make them feel better as to why they are cheating.

Hurt/Wounded Cheater

Max is depressed, a little overweight, enjoys video games and goes to the sports bar. He seems like a loner. He's

attractive but acts shy. If approached, he lights up and is quick to tell you about his parents dying, the last job he lost or his feelings about the last team that lost. He looks like a lost, little puppy that with just a little love from the right kind of woman could make a man out of him.

The hurt or wounded cheater is exactly opposite of the others we have discussed so far. This man plays the victim role. His spouse doesn't love him, appreciate him or have sex with him. This is the person who is looking for someone, anyone to help him in life. He is the person you feel sorry for. That is his way of reeling in his victims. The addict wants the victim to feel like she is helping him, and that she is significant, respected and valued by him.

This person tends to underachieve in life and, in relationships, just can't seem to get it right until his victim comes into his life. He is constantly looking to be saved, helped or delivered from his circumstances or current bad marriage. He attracts victims by his neediness.

Oftentimes, this type of cheater doesn't want to grow up. He wants others to do the hard work of life and be responsible. If he grew up, he wouldn't know how to attract victims since this has been his method of acting out for so long.

I remember a female sex addict and I discussed her hurt, wounded, cheating heart. She said something like, "I go out to the bar, act like I need help, tell them how my overweight husband won't have sex with me, and it works every time." She was able to see that she was the predator, and her lure was this hurt, wounded girl who needed to be

rescued from a lack of sex. Unfortunately, neither she nor her husband chose recovery, and she continued acting out.

Opportunist Cheater

Sharlene is a 35-year-old, never married, southern bell. She talks like she's from the South, wears tight clothes and has an amazing smile. She spends a lot of time in public places, looking for that smile to be returned. She's quick to say hello and asks a few questions, needing some advice from men regularly. She is always touching men on their arms or shoulders and giving that look wondering, "Do you like what you see?" She's had sex with six married men in just a month, and she really likes each one.

This cheating heart is the trickiest to detect. She don't necessarily have a victim profile at all. The victims are any shape, age and socioeconomic class. This heart is looking for the magic look of interest or energy. The other person could be twenty years older or younger, fat or skinny, rich or poor. This heart is exhilarated by being wanted or desired. It's as if their heart has a gas tank of "want me," and anyone who does want them lights the match and wham. It doesn't matter what the package is, be it the cleaning woman, nanny, pool boy,

secretary or dog groomer. It only matters that there is an opportunity.

These people don't even make sense to themselves. They can't see the opportunist theme until you point it out to them. Then voila, it makes sense why any shape, size or personality doesn't matter. These people eventually snag a crazy person that can create real havoc in their life.

Professional Cheater

Richard is a CEO of an American arm of a huge international company. He is a six-foot-six, sharp-looking man in great shape and has a commanding intellect. Richard has an attractive wife, two adult children and three homes. Richard is known to travel regularly to the same three locations: China, Brazil and Germany. When he is on his trip, he has arranged for sexual services as part of his trip. He knows exactly what days he will have available, and in two of the three locations, he has had the same women for three years.

This type of cheater is typically a man. Often, this guy is also a sexual or intimacy anorexic. He is not looking for love, nor does he care about the other person's wants, needs or what they think of him. He wants to be serviced. He may or may not have a specific type of service in mind. He believes he is paying for the confidentiality of their sexual acts.

This person tends to have stashes of cash that nobody is aware of. They want to look normal to themselves. They have the nice wife, kids and regular vacations, but they want to be bad when they want to be bad. They rationalize, "Nobody knows, nobody gets hurt." They don't see their disconnectedness as a problem but as strength. If they do engage someone who is not a prostitute or stripper, then they will often control the other person with money. When they feel safe with an arrangement, they might stick to one person, because safety is more important than variety.

Fetish Cheater

Anthony has a corporate job in a major city. He has been married to Lynn for nine years. They don't have any

children, and truth be known, they have little sex. Anthony states his overtime is to prove himself, so he can be promoted. Lynn feels alone, unwanted, like a roommate and has gained 15 extra pounds since being married to Anthony. Anthony is a cross-dresser. He likes to go out in public as a woman, and then have sex with another cross-dresser. His cross-dressing partner keeps his female clothes close by his office. He likes to go to a coffee shop or restaurant, have some food and go to his partner's apartment and have sex a couple times a week.

This is a very specific cheater. They only want one flavor of ice cream. Their fetish is usually very restrictive. Oddly enough, they will pass up other available

sexual opportunities outside their fetish appetite. This cheater is about one thing, the fix. It's rarely relational. It's about doing, watching or participating in a very specific sexual act.

This cheater will go to great lengths and, sometimes, great risk to receive a very specific fix. This cheating heart is also compartmentalized and often has a sense of entitlement. My experience with the fetish cheater is that, many times, they are intimacy and sexually anorexic in their marriage as well.

I hope walking through this cavern of the cheating heart has been helpful. If you're the addict, you probably saw your heart in one of these profiles. If you're the spouse, you may have learned something new or have simply been given a language to communicate what you have been feeling all along.

The addict's heart has to adapt. The addict has to rationalize and create systems to achieve the end goal, which is to

act out in some manner. When someone's sex addiction includes adultery, their system has to include engaging the victim, victimizing the victim and exiting from the crime.

Most of us want to see ourselves as good people.This is a big step for the addict, when they can see themselves as the perpetrator of the pain, not just in their marriage but in the life of their victims as well. Those addicted to adultery have elaborate systems, which portray perpetrating people as acceptable or even good.

In recovery, their ability to see others as souls reemerges, as well as their emotional, spiritual and moral development. Regardless of the type of heart, if the addict pursues healing and is willing to expose the addiction, not protect it, and work hard in recovery, they can have the miracle of a changed heart.

I would be remiss if I didn't tell you what I have seen over my twenty plus years of counseling. I have seen both men and women sex addicts of every age, color, religion and socioeconomic class recover from sex addiction. These once hardened hearts begin to pulsate with health, a love for honesty, responsibility, clear boundaries and appropriate empathy.

Honestly, if I didn't see this miracle every week in my intensives and followup phone counseling, I wouldn't do this work, but this miracle of recovery is so amazing. I am so proud of those who fought the fight and won. I also honor all the effort a spouse has to do to heal herself and rebuild a marriage after this devastation.

Because of these brave souls, my pen and practice do not stop. Their courage, strength and transformation motivate

me to continue to be part of the miracle of recovery.

Charlotte's Story

Happily ever after, or so I thought, I believed I had found every girl's dream, to grow up and marry my one true love. A very charming young man certainly had swept me off my feet. I fell head over heals for someone who was everything I wasn't. He was very self assured, able to take risks at the blink of an eye and an overall fun-loving, free-spirit.

I had determined early that I would not marry an addict. I had grown up with an alcoholic father. David had never had a drop of alcohol, and I respected him for that. I knew nothing of the sexual wounds David had suppressed that would bolster him into a full-blown sexual addiction.

We had both broken off long-term relationships in order to begin dating each other. He pursued me aggressively, which I loved. I was raised in a God-fearing home. I valued my virginity and saw it as a gift I would give only to my husband. David had been sexual with a handful of girls before me. He pressured me often to give into his sexual desires. I lost respect for him when he would pressure me, and at the same time, I felt valued by his pursuit. David and I had somewhat of an on-again, off-again dating relationship, but I saw David as my "one true love" that I wanted to marry. We were sexual just before our marriage. I see that now as my way to assure David that I wanted him. The ring I had accepted didn't seem to make my commitment solid enough. We had both

developed insecurities in our relationship and had both come to believe that sex equaled love.

My insecurities didn't end when I said, "I do." In fact, they increased. I consistently compared myself to other women, especially those I knew David had been in sexual relationships with.

In our first year of marriage, I was untrusting. I questioned David often, and this only aggravated him. I really desired validation and to know that I was enough. Being "enough" sexually was a challenge. David's appetite for sex was increasingly insatiable. I was aware that he was masturbating but never questioned him. This act fostered more unspoken insecurities in me.

I seemed to fall short of his expectations in many areas. I soon felt as though I was walking on eggshells, as his anger became a common occurrence. The distance between us grew farther and farther apart.

I thought certain things might fix our marriage. I coped by trying to do everything "right," ignoring the obvious, denying my emotions and needs, praying more, staying busy or not talking. I was really good at staying busy. That way I didn't have to think about our relational problems or FEEL anything. If I didn't feel, I didn't hurt. I was losing myself without even knowing it.

I was also unaware of the silent killer (sexual addiction) raging in my husband. His addiction was fueled by the installation of the internet, which we

installed just a few months after our marriage. There were certainly signs that are now more clear to me but, at the time, not enough that I could put my finger on any one thing. I knew he was into internet gaming, which soon after disc

covery became obsessive. I knew he was spending hours upon hours on the computer. This caused many argu-ments. On one occasion, I found a history of pornography, and David said he just happened into it. “The pictures just kept popping up all over the screen,” he explained to me. He apologized and totally wiped out everything on our computer to have a fresh start. However, what went on from there were more sexual secrets and a second life that took David farther away from me and our children.

He began joining secret chat rooms, hiding email accounts and portraying himself on internet matching service websites where he was advertising himself as “available” and pursuing women for sexual encounters. He was pursuing sex with any willing woman he might come into contact with, on the prowl, taking any opportunity that presented itself to him. All the time, he was hiding this secret world from me and covering his tracks in very manipulative ways. He could somehow turn any situation around to where the problem was obviously ME. These behaviors progressed over a six year period with some periods of time being worse than others.

David was ultimately found-out when another woman’s husband called our house and exposed David for being in an affair with his wife. This man stated very clearly that he had proof of the internet conversations between his wife and my husband, and the fact that they had recently been sexually involved.

This news was the most devastating news I had ever heard, and yet, it made so many things become instantly clear. I was in a state of unbelief and total belief at the same time. I really couldn’t believe David could be

capable of doing such things to me. He was the man who had wept tears of joy while saying our wedding vows. And yet, he had also become an angry, insensitive, shell of a man from the man I had married. I told David to leave the house the same night the phone call had come, and he did.

Over the next few days and weeks, David continued to puke out pieces of truth to me, all of which were torturously painful. I felt like a stab-wound victim left for dead and with every new piece of information I received, another cut, another blow to so many already gaping wounds. I soon became aware there were multiple affairs, occurring over the entire six years of our marriage.

I filed for divorce within one week of the phone call I received. I knew our marriage was over. The betrayal was more than I could bear. I saw nothing in our marriage worth saving.

Even though our marriage was dead, I was determined to not die with it.

Don’t get me wrong, I mourned for six weeks straight night and day, unable to work and only able to carry on with the very basic tasks for our kids’ sake. During this time, I also refused to lay my eyes on David. The thought of seeing him made my stomach churn and sent me into violent, profane rages.

Beyond this, however, I finally made a decision to get help for myself. Truthfully, David was getting help for himself and really starting to make changes for the better. Seeing him get better only made me jealous and angrier. How dare he get help and be okay! I was the one really damaged here. I deserved to heal. His exposure

was a huge awakening for me. I cried out to God a lot. I began seeking help from others instead of isolating in my pain. I traveled to attend a five-day workshop where I met other women who had experienced the same kind of pain I had in being in relationship with a sex addict. This intensive therapy allowed me to want to heal and begin to forgive my husband.

Only two weeks before our divorce was final, I agreed to attend a three-day intensive with my husband in Colorado Springs to see Doug Weiss. I figured I didn’t have too much more to lose. I knew in my heart that I would heal and move on with or without my marriage. I witnessed amazing changes in my husband, a new honesty factor that was very refreshing, as well as a humbleness that was unmistakable.

The last day of our intensive, I decided to stay in my marriage. David had passed his polygraph, showing he had five months of sobriety. I felt like I was going home with a new man, and I was. I knew I would never return to the life we had lived before. Once I had taken the steps out of the insanity, I had a new awareness of what a healthy relationship was and what I longed for.

I decided to find a 12-step support group. I attended meetings three times a week between two different groups that were available in my area. After finishing a lot of my own hard recovery work, I decided to lead a Partner’s group for other women who find themselves in shoes much like mine. I believe in the power of being REAL and having a safe place to do that. I couldn’t have healed if other women in my life had not shared their stories and been as sweetly vulnerable to me.

My husband and I both lead recovery groups and have been doing so for over two years. We certainly aren’t perfect but have learned tools to get through the hard stuff and have people in our lives to hold us accountable. I can say the life I am living now is a dream come true, or maybe more a miracle into fruition.

David’s Story

Charlotte and I married in March of 1999. We were excited newlyweds, adjusting to living with one another. I was in love with Charlotte and knew I

would be faithful to her. However, Charlotte and I had different ways to communicate, and we had different sexual desires. I assumed this was normal for any newly married couple. Anyone looking at us would say we were happily married. However, our marriage wasn't one built on vigorous honesty. Some things you just keep to yourself.

I discovered masturbation at the young age of eight by way of another boy. After becoming sexual with my girlfriend and wanting more of that feeling, I would use masturbation for those times when I hadn't engaged in intercourse. It became more habitual as I became older. When I was in a relationship, I sought sex. My first sexual relationship was at the age of sixteen. My relationships were mostly long term, and sex became conditional. I based a girl's love for me on whether or not she slept with me, and usually when she did, I immediately began losing respect for her. I would break up with her and quickly move on to the next girl, thus the dysfunction continued. I did experience some rejection, which was painful. So, I learned to just let women pursue me.

With Charlotte, I was seeking someone who was interested in family and marriage. I was tired of the emptiness I felt in my other relationships. Charlotte was different and worth it. I knew in marriage we would have all the sex I was used to having, only it would be with the love of my life.

In our first year of marriage, I had a lot of time home alone. I bought a computer and ordered internet service. I was learning to play the guitar and played an online game with friends from work. I was inadvertently reintroduced to pornography. Prior to the internet, I had not used porn but had been exposed to it several times. I clicked on a seductive picture of a woman and up popped several pornographic web sites. Each time I tried to close a site, another would open. Finally, I just pulled the plug out of the wall. I wasn't looking at porn and didn't want Charlotte to think of me that way. After several weeks had gone by and guilt gave way to interest, I went online looking for a porn site I heard about at work. I learned how to hide the trail of where I had been surfing, to hide the cookies and delete the history of my internet usage. I told myself I'm never going back there.

Weeks later, Charlotte felt I was spending too much time on the computer playing games. So, I put aside the game but discovered that you could "chat" online. I was taken by the ability to be talking to people in other parts of the country and world. One woman asked me to go into a private room to chat, and in an instant, we were having cybersex. I was dumbfounded that I was on the internet, engaging in sexual fantasies with strangers. I was guilt ridden and disgusted myself for violating my marriage vows. I shut off the computer and began tell-

ing my family and friends how despicable the internet was, and it truly was a World Wide Web. I was caught in that web.

No one knew, especially my wife. I would say to myself, “I’m no pervert,” and yet, I couldn’t tell her about my struggle. Telling her would devastate her, and I didn’t want her to think of me that way. I began pursing Charlotte more, but she wasn’t responding. I was very frustrated our sex life hadn’t become more satisfying. I thought because of what I had experienced in life and on the internet that I was entitled to a better sex life. It was so easy, so why wasn’t my sexual relationship with my wife as easy?

I was never good at telling Charlotte how I felt about our sexual relationship. I didn’t know how to share my feelings or expectations. I thought our problems and our sex life were two separate issues and shouldn’t interfere with one another. My craving for sex overwhelmed my desires to connect with Charlotte. She was not responding to me sexually. With that immature perspective, I returned to the porn, masturbation and chat rooms to meet the sexual need I craved. I thought if Charlotte couldn’t meet my sexual need, I would take care of myself. I knew this was a problem but thought I wasn’t hurting anyone other than myself. So, it was worth it. What a lie!

By 2005, we had been married for six years, and we had two children. I was working four different jobs to pay for a boat, Jet Ski, new truck and motorcycle. I was more comfortable away from home. At home, I enjoyed being a husband and father immensely. However, I felt

my needs weren’t being met. The further I went into porn, the deeper into debt and the more isolated I was from my wife. I became more selfish.

In returning to the chat rooms, I discovered they had become more sophisticated, and I could talk to women in my own city. The climate of the rooms was still sexual, but now, the members were sharing photos. I spent hours going into the chat rooms to meet women and arranged several sexual encounters. My life became one big lie.

One night, Charlotte received a phone call from the husband of a woman I had just slept with. I was caught. I lied to Charlotte and said someone was using my name and email and not to worry about it. During my drive home, I began bargaining with God, telling him that this was the last time. Before I walked into the house that night, I heard God’s voice say, “Lie and this world is no longer for you.” When I walked into my home that night, I fell to the ground and started crying. I knew I had to come clean. I was tired of my life being so out of sorts, tired of hiding my lies, covering my tracks and supporting my habit. I was broken. Charlotte was seeing the truth for the first time. She told me to leave that night, and three days later, I was served with divorce papers. What had I done?

My father-in-law was the first person to speak to me with clarity. He told me I was sick and needed to receive help for sexual addiction. Sexual addiction, what's that? I'm not that! I read a few books on the subject. Yes I am! I began seeing a lifetime of pain and medication. I learned about feelings of abandonment, rejection and loneliness. I learned about behaviors I used, turning inward

instead of outward. I could see what I had been doing to my life. I found sobriety and clarity in thought and emotion.

Charlotte agreed to go with me to see Doug for a marriage intensive. She was going there to divorce me. In her mind, she had to divorce me to separate herself from the person I was, and there had to be consequences for my infidelity. In recovery, I began telling the truth at all cost. Part of my intensive therapy was to take a polygraph test. I wanted my words to be trusted. However, I couldn't realistically expect that Charlotte would trust me, because I told her that I was telling her the truth. I passed the polygraph!

As the intensive came to an end, Doug said, "Charlotte has something she wants to tell you." I prepared myself, because I knew Charlotte had done everything she could in her heart to save our marriage, and it wasn't enough. In just two weeks, our divorce would be final. Charlotte said, "I forgive you, and we are going home together." That was the most powerful moment of our marriage. How could she forgive me for such horrible violations, why? God used Charlotte that day. We will never forget.

Today I am 1,728 days sober, one day at a time. I choose to die to myself everyday. I trust that if I do, temptation will be minimal. The tools I have learned in recovery are like weapons of war, unleashed as shock and awe. Recovery is hard work. It takes great courage, accountability and discipline. I know it has been the greatest challenge in my life and the highest priority yet to date. If I don't continue recovery, the battle for my life will be

lost.

Our marriage has been refined by the fire and hammered by the blacksmith. No matter the difficulty, we can now share everything. Our time is spent building intimacy, which I used to think was a feminine word. I know when to speak and when to listen. I'm not always right, nor do I want to be. Still learning and still trusting, we walk into each day with expectation instead of fear. We turn toward one another instead of away. Each day in recovery brings new life to our marriage. I now know the woman I took out on our first date has become the best friend any person could ever hope to have. Charlotte and I just returned from a week long trip to New York's Time Square and Washington D.C., celebrating our tenth anniversary! What could have easily and rightfully ended

in divorce has blossomed into full and great joy!

Chapter Seven

Losses

If you are reading this book, you have most likely experienced many losses. Each loss is unique, the loss of a loved one, health losses or relationship losses. Regardless of the losses most of us experience as we mature, nothing can quite prepare you for the accumulation of losses due to a spouse's adultery. In spite of the cheating spouse having a sex addiction, the trauma of adultery is its own specific trauma.

Neither the addict nor the spouse of the sex addict is prepared for this disclosure. In many cases, the addict is not any more ready to have their secret world exposed than the spouse was prepared to find out about the cheating of their spouse. Both the addict and spouse are unprepared to go through the losses as a result of adultery.

These losses for both spouses are the subject on which I will need to discuss here. Experiencing these losses is

going to happen regardless of who you are or how strong you think you are. Grief happens. I remember when my step-father died. I was working on my master's degree in counseling. I could identify the stages of grief, but I couldn't stop the grief from occurring. However, I did find some comfort in the fact that I knew I wasn't crazy, and what I was going through was normal.

I want to impart to you the path on which you will most likely travel through your losses. You, however, will travel this path at your own pace. For whatever reason, you may camp out on one loss much longer than another. You may also experience compounded grief, depending on your set of losses and the changes in your life due to the trauma of adultery, resulting from your spouse's sex addiction.

In the last 22 years, I have seen so many addicts and their spouses go through the various combinations of losses due to the addiction. This week, I was talking to a woman who just two months ago found out her church-going husband was having sex with men and women outside of their marriage. He was also cross-dressing. She chose to stay in the marriage. He just moved back into the house, so she was committed to the marriage. She, however, was past shock and denial, but she was still bargaining about his addiction. "It just doesn't make sense." When we began to process this, it came down to the fact that it wasn't fair this pain was happening to her. She was a good person. After reassuring her that her pain from these losses was not only normal and it was good to grieve, she seemed to be relieved. She more lightheartedly said, "You mean I'm normal? That's great!"

The addict also goes through a process of loss as well.

The addiction grew up with the addict and has meant a lot to him. Sometimes, both the addict and the spouse misinterpret the grief of losing the addiction to missing the person or persons they had the affair with. This is very common. In most cases, the addict is grieving the loss of the addiction, not the one they had an affair with.

Grief is due to the painful reality that brings loss to a person. I will discuss more about grief in the next chapter. In the case of an addict committing adultery, whether a one-time act or ongoing adultery, the losses are huge for both the spouse and the addict. I want to walk though only some of the losses in this situation to give you both a framework to understand each other's losses in this process.

The Spouse's Losses

By far, most of the spouses I have worked with are women. I have worked with male spouses occasionally, but my experience is that most men divorce a wife who cheats. Generally speaking, if the spouse is willing to do the work, women are more likely to try to salvage the marriage and family.

Safety

Feeling safe for a woman is probably one of her highest needs and desires. She desires safety spiritually, emotionally, physically, sexually, financially and socially. She loves that secure feeling of stability and the sameness that comes with all things being the way they should.

Adultery, regardless of the reason, shatters every area of safety. Spiritually, that's almost a joke. When he is

being sexual with others, she finds it difficult to realize her spouse is spiritual or has spiritual values. The loss of sacredness is felt by most women. The adultery can also cause so many spiritual questions for the spouse, which she never had before, threatening her own belief system.

Emotionally

The sharing of one's heart and being authentic is also valuable for a woman. In many cases, she not only has the emotional damage from the adultery, she now has a huge emotional dilemma as well. She is faced with keeping the secret. In some cases, the spouse's adultery could affect their livelihood. The other dilemma is anyone she tells will feel pain too, and she doesn't want to do that. So, she doesn't know who to tell or who she can trust. The magnitude of this situation, and feeling totally bottled up to deal with this, is a real threat to emotional safety and sanity. On top of all this, her one true friend is her perpetrator of the pain, so it can take significant time and work to reestablish emotional safety inside of the marriage. This may be why a large percentage of

spouses have several symptoms of major depression.

Physically

Today, like no other time in world history, adultery brings with it another viable threat to the spouse. Their body can be physically damaged due to their spouse's sexual behavior outside the marriage. The threat of sexually transmitted diseases is real. Almost every wife within a short time of disclosure realizes, "You could have given me AIDS." That physical threat is factual, as well as many other diseases. In our book, Partners:

Healing from His Addiction, we report statistically that 23 percent of spouses of sex addicts have contracted one STD and 5 percent contracted two STDs. The possible physical lack of safety is real. I recommend both partners be tested regularly to validate any physical consequences due to the adultery.

The other physical threat is that not all the women the husband has had sex with are sane, especially when they engage in sex with a female sex addict, prostitute, stripper or someone with a borderline personality disorder. Some of these women, when rejected, get extremely offended and threaten the wife or family. In those cases, the wife feels her physical safety is threatened.

Sexually

The losses sexually are also huge for the spouse. For some women, the images of him with other people and the endless comparing of their body parts and sexual performance is part of the grief. The loss of the sacredness or respect for their sexuality can also be a loss. The feeling that someone else has been in her bedroom with her husband is a loss most women will have to process.

Financially

Depending on the situation, financial losses are not only grieved, they are real. The man who lost his job due to an affair, the business partner who lost their ownership, the doctor, lawyer or therapist who has lost their license and can no longer practice their profession is also a loss.

If her husband chooses the addiction lifestyle, continuing the other relationship and leaning toward divorce, this

radically changes the wife's financial safety. If she hasn't worked, there will be changes in her parenting. Her social status is a real threat to her feelings of safety.

Socially

The losses socially for this spouse can be significant as well. If he cheated with a friend or neighbor, that can cut her out of a social group. Also, if he cheated with a coworker that she knows, this also impacts her socially. If he cheated with a family member on her side, like a sister, that can damage her socially for a lifetime.

The other social damage is the feeling of isolation she experiences because of the “secret” of his behavior. She doesn’t feel like she can be honest with just anybody. In those relationships where she chooses not to tell, she may feel dishonest. Socially, losses are unique to each situation, but they are very real.

Past, Present and Future

This loss of the past, present and future are felt by almost every spouse, female or male. The loss of what you thought your past was together is almost immediate, including the piecing together of this trip, that acting out, the placement of his acting out while you were pregnant, children were being born and birthdays. I had a woman whose husband last acted out with another woman on Mother’s Day, forever ruining that day for her.

Who you thought you were to the addicted spouse is shattered. The past is tainted now with questions, doubts, anger and a real sense of loss for what was.

The present is also a loss. No matter if you’re at the stage before children, you have young children, adult children or you are retired, you didn’t ever in your wildest dreams think you’d be dealing with this. You didn’t do anything wrong.

You don’t deserve this pain, but now you have to work to get beyond the betrayal. Your present is sprinkled with thoughts of him with other people. The fears of disease and social embarrassment are daily occurrences. You never thought you’d be depressed and not want to face the day, when in the past, you used to love life. The present has so many losses for each spouse, a book could be written about it alone.

The future also has losses. Some spouses have had to relocate because of their spouse acting out at work. Looking into the future, the reality of him choosing his addiction over you is also a real loss. There is damage to the children and extended family when they find out about the addicts behavior and the losses that go along with that. The holidays can be affected, as well as other social activities, if you no longer can do them. I do have to add a note of hope here. If both work on recovery, there can be a brighter future.

Innocence

The loss of innocence varies from spouse to spouse. For the spouse who is really naive or innocent about the sexual dark side, this loss is significant. She didn’t know about female sex addicts, prostitutes, books stores, massage parlors, Craigslist and so on. This loss ties into our basic existential existence. The belief that the world is safe,

people are good and life has meaning is all challenged.

The spouse doesn’t know who is safe or if the women or people she knows are good, including her spouse. The question of life being purposeful also is

challenged, so this loss of innocence and feelings of existential security is a loss for most spouses of sex addicts.

Being Enough

Everyone wants to be enough for their spouse. This is a basic feeling most of us like to believe when we marry, knowing our sex is enough, our love is enough, our family is enough and our marriage is enough to protect us from the wiles of the outside world.

The addict is unable to truly see who you are and fully experience due to the addiction. It's not that you're not enough. They are just too drunk to realize how enough you are. Regardless, the spouse often experiences the feelings and loss of not being enough. This loss is often kept inside, like an ache you can't quite explain.

Love Is…

This love is experienced by many women who have a spouse that cheats on them. There is an urban myth among women that love is powerful, so powerful it can change men, keep men faithful, make them never look at another and is able to keep her whole world safe.

This myth is unchallenged when things are good. Most women are even unaware they have succumbed to such a myth until this tragedy happens. Then they realize

neither their love, nor his, is enough to keep this tragedy from happening. The loss that finding out their love is not enough is another loss to grieve.

Not Competing

Not competing is another loss many women experience when their husbands cheat. When they were dating, women are very aware of competing with each other for the attention of men. They marry, and in a sense, they win the competition and have the man they want. Over time, she no longer feels the need to compete. She's enough. She stays as attractive as she wishes and life moves on, competing with other women is reduced or gone completely. When adultery happens, the feeling of comparing oneself, in so many ways, creeps back in.

This spouse questions their looks, body parts, weight, aging process and almost anything they can imagine. Of course, this had nothing to do with their addict acting out, but they often feel if they can control this or that and begin competing again, he won't cheat. Since he cheated because of his addiction, no feature or anything else about you was at fault. It's irrelevant. However, many women feel the loss of not competing and begin what can become a very obsessive process that can actually hinder their healing. Feeling the loss is important, but don't believe your features had something to do with him cheating. I have seen gorgeous women in our counseling center, and there is not

a feature in the world that would have kept their sex addict faithful.

The numerous losses for spouses of sex addicts who cheat are unique and incalculable. For more work in this area of

losses for the spouse, I would refer you to the workbook.

The Addict's Losses

The losses for the addict, who disclosed or was caught in adultery due to his addiction, are also real. Even though they are the guilty party, they still experience losses. They often can't talk to their spouse about these losses due to the guilt from the pain they have caused their spouse. These losses, although not as large by any means as their spouse, are still very real to the addict and important to be identified. I want to cover these losses as well so that both the addict and spouse can have an understanding of these losses as well.

Image

The loss of image is significant for most sex addicts. They like to see themselves as "good," a good spouse, good parent, good friend and good employee. They know they have a dark side, but they are "mostly" good in their own minds. Often, they compensate for their guilt and shame, by building almost an unbelievably good image. This image is devastated when their dark side and good side collide. The dark side is now known and, it's difficult to sell the wonderful, good image to anyone, even themselves.

The loss of image is so real. Good people just don't do the dark, hurtful things he has done. Many addicts have years or decades of secrets that nobody ever would suspect. Some have spent thousands to millions of dollars on their addiction.

Saying goodbye to the good image is one of the early

things we do in recovery. Accepting the loss of the good image and accepting a more realistic view of oneself is a significant task for the sex addict.

Friend

The sex addiction grew up along with the sex addict. It was on the inside of them through fantasy, porn and masturbation, happening thousands of times before they married. The addiction was believed to be a friend. Boo boo mommy, fantasy girl, was always there to kiss away any of the adolescent pain. She was there anytime, all the time, with no needs of her own.

The emotional and psychological dependence on the addiction developed a friendship. Regardless of the type of appetite, the addict would trust the addiction with his feelings, fears, anxieties and sexuality. The addiction unconditionally accepted this teenager, who maintained their friendship over the decades.

The loss of this friend is real. I have had so many addicts cry a significant

amount of tears when they had to write a goodbye letter to the addict. I know this pain is real for many sex addicts. Sometimes, the addict places the persona of their addiction in the person they were having an affair with. However, in most cases, they are able to separate that their grief is a loss of the persona of the addiction rather than the loss of the other person(s).

This friend, the addiction, was there through every stage of life: high school, college, dating, marriage, careers, children and some old age. Just last week, I met a man more than 70 years old whose addiction has been there since his early teen years. The addict doesn't get the down

part of this relationship until they become sober. There is a point during recovery where the addict becomes so glad to be rid of this relationship. However, early on, the addict is often torn, grieving the loss of their friend, the addict.

Medicine

Earlier in the book I talked about how the brain receives these endogenous opiates, called endorphins and enkephalins, sent to the pleasure area of the brain called the prefrontal cortex. This is a real chemical high for the sex addict.

This sex rush feels incredibly good. For the addict, this hit became a way of medicating his life. If he was down emotionally or chemically, he could always rely on the quick fix of the orgasm to at least feel better. Many sex addicts used their acting out as a reward for accomplishments or a way to celebrate, just like they did when they were teenagers.

If stressed, anxious or just feeling out of control, the afterglow of sex calmed them down. I know a lot of male addicts, who use an orgasm to put them to sleep, just like when they were teenagers. The hit is real, and they received it without working on a relationship. They didn't have to connect or serve their spouse to receive it.

Losing this medicine is real. For some addicts, learning to be sexual and relational is a process, although some sex addicts are sexually ambidextrous. What I mean by this is that some are capable of having relational sex and compartmentalizing their addictive sexual acting out completely.

The addict can no longer push a button to receive the release, excitement, relaxation or high at all. They now have to live in the real world, experience pain, processes, as well as emotional, spiritual and moral realities they have never had to deal with before.

The addict loses the medicine, and after a while, he starts to stabilize and grow. Eventually, the impulse control grows, and he develops other ways of processing real life.

One Up

This loss may sound crazy, but let me go through it, so both the spouse and addict can understand this. First, let me explain what I mean by “one up.” The one-up position of the soul is very common with sex addiction. This aspect of the sex addict is usually an aftermath affect of too much masturbating and thinking he is the center of the world, in control of everyone and everything while in a fantasy environment.

When an addict is one up, he does believe he is better, smarter, sexier, more intelligent and capable than you, and he really should be followed, regardless of previous history. You see, he was smart enough to have a secret porn world, fantasy world, affairs and prostitutes to create this whole other world.

He was able to fool everyone and make people believe he was okay. He could even have other people voluntarily have sex with him, need him and even manipulate the other person to say they loved him. Like I said, it’s crazy, especially after he has been caught or disclosed the affair and/or addiction.

However, internally, he loses this one-up, sometimes grandiose, part of his identity. His bubble is popped. When he realizes what he did, what he risked and for what, he is not only merely one of us, he often ends up feeling less than.

This loss is harder on some than others. The addict will try to focus on the spouse or the marital problems, because “my spouse has issues.” It shows up in anger and rage towards the spouse, because he has to process with an equal adult, not some “Stepford-type” spouse. Initially, it’s hard for the addict to not be superior. Over time, several months to a year, this should be grieved as the addict matures.

The value in grieving this loss is that he is no longer one up but equal to others. He can now really experience life with other flawed but loved humans. Life is more relaxed and much more enjoyable for everyone involved when the arrogance of addiction in the one up has moved to the real and healthy perception of equality.

Adventure

Let me start this loss with a story. I know an addict, who was the classic CPA accountant. Joe worked nine to five with no changes. He went home dutifully, attended church every Sunday and was present at the deacon board meeting once a month. He had no real hobbies and no real relationships, other than those that life seemed to provide by proximity. Joe was boring, even he knew it. All year, Joe would save money from his lunch and spending allowance. Over the course of a year, he would squirrel away several thousands of dollars. Then, it would happen every year like it had for the past 11 years, the annual CPA national conference for his company was held in Las Vegas.

Joe would take his thousands of dollars, go to strip clubs and have several

prostitutes during the week. He would party up and binge sexually every year. Of course, early on, he stopped attending to the conference, but that didn't address the way Joe was wrongfully acting out with other people. Joe had no adventure, and I mean nothing, no hobbies, no places where he was challenged, nowhere in his life had he taken any risk. His yearly acting out was the totality of adventure for Joe.

So many addicts put their adventure needs in their addiction. They want the high of risk, the unknown, the challenge and figure out how to get it all done without anybody knowing. The lies, excuses and stories are all part of the adventure. I know this is completely misguided and wrong, but I am explaining how an addict thinks, not a mature person.

When the addict gets caught in adultery or discloses the adultery and addiction, several losses occur, and the loss of adventure is one of them. I encourage the addict to frame recovery and work on their marriage and family as an adventure.

In my book The Power of Pleasure, I walk people through creating positive pleasure that enhances a person's life. This would be a good read for an addict, once they have stabilized. Early recovery has some legitimate restraints on an addict's life. However, as the process moves on, locating positive adventure can be really productive. In the interim, the addict will grieve the adventure loss silently. This grief is especially felt by those whose addiction moved into adultery, particularly, serial adultery or regular use of paid sexual services.

Good Guy

Almost everybody wants to see themselves as good. The male sex addict, or female sex addict for that matter, is no different. They want to perceive themselves as good, even though they know they have this "issue" or "problem." They are good people. They work hard, are good neighbors and would do anything for their children. Yes, they even love their spouse. (Less than 3 percent fail that question when asked on a polygraph).

They like to see themselves through the lens of their goodness. For many addicts, the badness is isolated, contained and compartmentalized. Their acting out is like going to a movie, and then they go back to being the "real" them, the good guy.

Strangely enough, the adultery itself doesn't rob the addict of the good in them. When the addict is caught or discloses the adultery, then the bad guy really hits them. When they see their beautiful wife, who has been faithful and a good mother to their children, convulsing on the floor for hours, the shattered look on her face, the "I hate you" look from their daughters and sons or when they face the HR department for exit procedures or a lawyer for soliciting a prostitute, they

finally see the bad in them.

Now, it's hard to conjure up how good and wonderful they are. They feel like an ax murderer to everyone they loved throughout their life. They know they are wrong, there's no "good" in what they did, and they will forever lose the good guy image they had for all those years.

This idea that I am not good is a huge paradigm shift and loss. This isn't to say the addict is all bad, especially if they begin doing the work of recovery. However, there is no good to be found in what they did. They are not

wonderful, even to themselves.

They are introduced early on to self-loathing like they never had before. Their choices created pain. The loss of the good guy, or good girl, is one of the earlier, quicker losses for the addict. When they attend their first 12-Step group or telephone group, they come out of it feeling that they are "okay," at least they aren't "as bad as some of those people."

As they recover and truly become sober, the good of the work they are doing evolves. The people they hurt slowly heal. A realistic sense of self emerges, and they can experi-ence a good self that is authentic.

When someone's addiction has manifested in adultery, losses are definitely a part of the package. Everyone, including the addict, has their life forever changed. As the addict continues in his individual healing, he will most likely have to process some of the losses we discussed.

If you are staying married and working recovery, you will both be addressing your losses on your own unique timetable. This process of experiencing losses is not predictive in any manner. You may both experience losses differently but on the same day. Expect some less than wonderful days as you work through recovery.

Most of the couples I have worked with choose recovery and restore their marriage. If that's your journey, then take your time and be gracious to each other. If you have to heal independently of the marriage surviving, I recommend you attend a support group. Losses are real. The pain is real. The fact that over time you can heal is also very real.

Chapter Eight

Grieving

Having already discussed some of the losses that occur to the spouse and the sexual addict in the previous chapter, we now move toward the aftermath process of grief. The grief process is very real.

Like many processes of the soul, grieving is a messy, volatile and sometimes an uncontrollable process. As the spouse or the addict, you may be having a good day. Then, out of the blue, a flood of emotions can hit you so hard you are

unable to do anything but grieve. This can manifest in crying, rages or just staring out the window. Regardless of the manifestation, I think it's helpful for you to have some broad parameters for what you will go through in the grief associated with adultery.

In the following pages, I am going to walk through each stage of grief. Each stage affects both of you. I will do my best to share with you what each person goes through in

the grief process. Your pain may make you less interested in your spouse's grief process, but since it will affect you, I find it helpful to have this awareness.

Shock

For the spouse of an addict who has cheated, this stage of grief is by far the shortest. Usually, for the spouse, shock begins at the point of disclosure or exposure. It's the moment when you realize the addict has cheated.

As the spouse, you might have found the phone numbers, emails, texts, unexplained time and money. Or, you may have relived that infamous phone call from the other woman or man. For the husband whose wife is an addict, it may be that he catches her acting out in their house, or she placed a letter on the table after she left, saying she's found somebody else.

The pain is actually beyond words. It's as if a lightening bolt starts at the top of the skull and rips through the entire body. Then, it shakes every cell of the body into a bizarre vibration that leaves them speechless, breathless and thoughtless.

Momentarily, all the fears and concerns from the impact of this discovery and how it will affect the children, friends, family and neighbors are realized. She now recognizes her world is radically different than it was moments before. She can't go back and can't go forward. She is just in shock.

For some spouses, this is temporary. Then, they click into survival mode, become coherent again and start addressing the trauma. Whether they are now rational or not, they start

to move into some action. For some spouses, the shock is felt so vehemently they convulse for hours. The crying and feeling like they are going to burst is normal. They can't be touched, comforted or communicate with anyone. They are fully experiencing shock. For others, the shock comes and goes. This spouse finds periodic shock and experiences the ripple through their life for months.

The addict can have several episodes of shock. Usually, the addict experiences shock the first time they start crossing lines beyond their internal moral code. This could be the first time they go to a strip club or adult bookstore, talk to a prostitute or have sex outside the marriage. It may even be looking at a form of pornography that's more deviant than typical, and they find themselves

aroused.

They are shocked they crossed the line. Again, it's momentary, and for some, it ripples for short periods of time. Unfortunately, for the addict, the pain, guilt and shame that follows can actually fuel the next step in their addiction cycle, pushing them towards more acting out and medicating any warning the shock provided them to question their judgment.

The spouse is affected by these episodes but attributes the addict's disconnectedness and irritability to travel, work or stress. The addict is able to keep the real world and acting out world separate, and the process continues until the next movement further along in the addiction or until exposure or disclosure.

If the addict has chosen disclosure, they will experience the shock feelings that I described during the process of making the choice to disclose. It's the experience of I have

to tell, because this secret is killing me. I need relief and help. I am going to explode, so I must do something. Yes, I am aware it's all about them during this moment. This shock can also be experienced immediately after the choice has been made.

Often, in the case of experiencing this shock as a result of their choice, it causes them to feel numb, cold and experience disassociation. I have seen this many times, as the addict realizes he just agreed to a polygraph while he is still lying and has to quickly reconcile.

There is also the shock of the addict who gets caught. This is the guy who the wife calls and says, "Come home right now." Another scenario is when his wife and her girlfriend walk in the office at the same time together and neither is happy. It feels like he is in jail, and he has to make his one phone call. Or, the doctor's report saying he did get an STD in Asia. This is the moment where they think, "Oh my God, everything is going to break loose. I'm dead. I'm caught." This is real shock. The addict never dreamt years or decades of lies would actually catch up with him and land him smack in the middle of real life, such as being fired or sued or having the other woman contact the spouse. It's over. It's out, and it's awful. Addicts are more used to the hyper state that shock brings. They tend to experience it briefly. Depending on what they choose to protect, the addiction or their spouse, they move resources in that direction.

Shock is real, and you both will experience it. When you're in shock, you don't have access to all of your best thinking or resources. Many things are said while in shock that are honest but not necessarily the most thought out.

You'll definitely want to get past the shock before making long-term decisions about each other or the future.

Denial

Denial comes in so many different forms for both the spouse and the addict. For the addict, denial is sometimes the long process prior to disclosure or exposure. Then, there is the denial after disclosure or exposure.

The spouse's denial before exposure or disclosure varies significantly, depending on the signs the addict gives to the spouse. Some addicts give no significant signs, and the spouse is totally caught off guard and has no clue of the adultery.

Sometimes, the spouse is so busy with family, work and other issues they are unaware of the addict's subtle changes. Sometimes, the spouse is really self-absorbed and has little concern for the addict due to the lack of a relationship for years. Then, there is the spouse who projects their moral strength and commitment to the marriage, and it never even crosses their mind.

For financial or emotional reasons, some spouses really look the other way regarding their husband's behaviors. Increase in travel, separate phone, email accounts and no sexual appetite from their husband isn't examined, as they don't want to know more than they do. Looking back after disclosure or exposure, it's easy for the spouse to put reality together. However, during the denial process, they were protected from the ruptures that were occurring under the foundation of their marriage.

The denial after disclosure or exposure for most spouses is

very short. It's the thought, "I can't believe you did this. How could you?" Most spouses when confronted with facts or disclosure move out of denial quickly. However, some spouses, especially the more dependent types, may stay longer or go back into the denial of the addiction. "He only kissed her. She chased him. I believe his story."

These spouses want their world to stay the same. They don't want a divorce. They don't want to go to work or deal with the shame of it, so they slide back into the "everything is okay" mode. The spouse in denial doesn't want her husband to take the polygraph, nor do they want the truth. They don't want to do any of their own work to heal from their past or present issues. Denial offers them a buffer from the reality of the addict's addition and adultery. When reality is too hard, denial is an option.

I still remember being in a bathroom stall when I was 19 years old. On the stall was written, "Reality is for those who can't handle drugs." The pain of addiction and adultery is a huge reality, so for some, denial can soften or slow down the grief into manageable degrees to grieve.

The addict lives in denial, denial they have a problem with porn, masturbation and other behaviors they believe they can control or stop on their

own. They believe they are not hurting anyone and that nobody knows or will find out. This type of denial starts in their early teens and grows along with the addict like moss on a rock. They can't see it, sense it or even deal with the fact that they are an addict. Somehow, addicts are sicker than they are. After all, they still go to work.

Exposure or disclosure is usually the beginning of the end of the addict's denial. Some, however, especially

the anorexic-type sex addicts, have great difficulty "being the problem." The addict in denial wants to blame the marriage, the sex life, her weight gain, stress, global warming or anything other than "I am sick."

Denial after disclosure or exposure can be short lived. However, if the addict wants to stay sick, it will outlive any attempts at recovery and still exist, even after the marriage is dissolved. Denial is a formidable foe in addiction. If the addict can't take a moment and look at the many years of addiction before marriage and see its progression into adultery or ongoing adultery, there is little chance at all that he will heal. In a state of denial, he is most likely to continue to cheat, because it is part of his addictive process.

If the addict chooses to stay in denial and not own his addiction, then pain is ahead for everyone involved. The addict who can accept, "I am an addict. I am the problem." can move past his acting-out behaviors and actually build a better life for himself and those that love them.

Anger

Anger is a very big issue for the spouse of a sex addict who cheated. The betrayal is global. As a spouse, you have been betrayed emotionally, sexually, financially, socially and in many different ways that impact your life. Of course, you would be angry and rightfully so.

Anger can happen immediately after disclosure or exposure. The spouse yells, throws things, curses up a storm, but the anger stage of grief is so much more than a fit here and there. This wasn't supposed to happen to her. Generally speaking, she is a good woman, keeping

their marriage vows, loving her family and working hard to do life right.

As a result of sex addiction, his cheating nuked their entire global world. Due to the sex addict acting out with other people, there is little to nothing that has not been defiled in her world. As a spouse, she must grapple with each layer of impact and betrayal. This means there will be good days where you think things are going to be okay, and then, there will be days where you feel like killing them. Anger is a normal part of grief. It is best to be proactive when dealing with anger. I recommend utilizing the Partners Recovery Guide for several practical ways to be proactive, so the anger is the least destructive as

possible as you heal.

The spouse who does nothing with her anger can suffer depression, weight gain and other difficulties. Her body has experienced trauma and will need to release this. The ongoing feelings of anger will most likely occur when inappropriate events happen.

For some spouses, especially women, anger can move beyond just grieving. Some women believe if they stay mad, then he will recognize how serious this is. However, they will eventually have difficulty letting go of the anger, because this is now what they believe will protect them.

Generally, the ebbs and flows of anger move over time. First, it's daily. Then, a few times a week, weekly and so on until the anger has moved on. If there are regular manifestations of anger and shaming, I would strongly recommend counseling for the spouse. Also, I find spouses of sex addicts that attend support groups seem to progress through anger and all the grief stages much better than

those who do not attend a group. The addict goes through anger as well. Sometimes, it's displaced, and they are simply angry they got caught. This is like finding drugs in your child's room, and the child is focusing on how angry they are because you were in their room. This anger that he is losing, his entitlement to act out or stay an addict, is real. Anger also exists because their life has to change and become restricted. Basically, they are not God anymore and are ticked off about that reality.

As they become sober, they also experience anger at themselves for their poor choices and anger at the addiction they fed, which grew into such a destructive monster. Again, depending what the addict chooses to protect will make a huge difference in how he is going through all of the grief stages.

Also, let me just take a moment to express that both the addict and his spouse is in grief. Since both will go through these stages imperfectly, neither will be able to meet the other's needs at any given time, so be as gracious as you can, especially during the first 6 months of the grieving process after disclosure or exposure.

Bargaining

This stage of grief is probably the most cognitively arduous of all the stages of grief. It's during this stage when the real trauma and repercussions are starting to sink in. As the spouse, the permanence of the betrayal is real. You now know you can't change the past.

That is the process of grief, a painful reality being experienced. Now, in bargaining, it's starting to sink in, and this bargaining stage can slow the pain down a little for the spouse of an addict. You begin to create thoughts, ideas, scenarios and themes, putting pieces together to assist you in making this

insanity make sense.

During the bargaining stage of grief, the rationalization is endless for the spouse. However endless they are, they do have a consistent if-then logic to them. Their logic goes like this, “If X happened, or didn’t happen, then it would have changed Y (the painful reality) from occurring.” Let me use a non-sex addict analogy. A parent loses their teenager in a car accident. In the bargaining stage of their grief, they think, “If the car had better tires, if he was wearing a seatbelt or if the other person wasn’t drunk, then their teen would still be alive today.”

The bargaining stage of grief is normal to go through. The spouse of the addict has thoughts, such as, “If my spouse didn’t travel, if I was skinnier, better in bed or had red hair, if he wasn’t sexually abused, had bad parents (or any other bargaining idea), then it wouldn’t have happened. I have seen many spouses stuck in this bargaining stage for years. They go over each affair or infidelity, looking for the magic clue to make insanity make sense. Their hope is that once they find the magic ingredient, they can understand it and control it from happening, such as, “If he doesn’t drive by the red light part of town, then he will never cheat on me again.”

The reality is the sex addict is a sex addict. They cheated, and if he is left untreated, he will cheat again. The addiction is insane and cannot make sense. It had nothing to do with you as a spouse or the marriage. In most cases, he was sick with the cancer of sex addiction way before meeting you. As the spouse, you were not the problem.

You are not the solution to their sobriety, they are.

Writing down your bargaining ideas on a pad of paper may be helpful. Read the last paragraph out loud and see if it helps you move further along in the grief stages, so you can accept this illogical, insane occurrence in your life as healthily as possible.

Bargaining for the addict occurs before and after disclosure or exposure. Prior to disclosure, they bargain. It’s only porn or masturbating. It’s only when I travel. It’s only prostitutes or men I don’t care about. I am not sick. It’s just a little hobby. I can stop. I am still able to work and keep it all going. I’ll stop for lent or make a New Year’s resolution. They have to bargain to maintain their sex addiction. That’s the only way the addiction can exist.

Then, there is the entitlement bargaining with themselves prior to disclosure or exposure. I deserve some fun, cheap sex, prostitutes or affairs. I’m too much for one woman. Variety is the spice of life. I make enough money. Who cares what I really do? My wife isn’t enough anyway. These bargain entitlements are also part of the addict’s process to maintain their addiction.

The addict isn’t going to say, “I’m sick. I have a great spouse who is better than the prostitute or lover. My spouse deserves better. I am an addict.” Usually, that happens after sobriety, but in addiction, bargaining is the oil that keeps the addiction engine running smoothly.

After the bargaining stage, there is a tougher dilemma to deal with. The addict still isn’t the problem or sick. They want to work on the marriage and not attend a Twelve-Step group. They don’t want to take a polygraph. They don’t

want to receive treatment. They don’t want to do the hard
work of recovery. They learned their lesson, and they are going to be good boys or girls now.

This type of bargaining is lethal. The commitment is most likely toward the addiction, especially the addict who wants to keep masturbating and viewing porn, which in most cases, is the primary addiction that led to cheating. Bargaining to maintain any of the addiction leads to further expansion of the addiction process for the addict.

The addict also comes up with all kinds of theories. If I stay away from blondes, young women, bookstores and prostitute locations, then I will be okay. In general, the addict bargaining has to do with changing some variable outside of themselves (I’ll stop traveling) instead of changing something inside of themselves. When the addict is addressing their flaws of character and thoughts, then bargaining is on its way out, and the next stage of grief can occur.

Sadness

When a spouse stops bargaining and resisting the painful reality, he then moves into the final stage of grief, which is sadness. The stark reality of the sex addiction and the betrayal are right there in front of him. It’s real, and it’s not ever going to change.

These are sad facts. The fact you don’t have a monogamous marriage, coupled with the consequences of this behavior, are real and are all very true. Now, truth is being experienced by the spouse, which is sad.

Sometimes, this sadness is contemplative when you slow

down enough to experience it. Often, it’s a general down feeling a spouse has that can last days, weeks or longer. They are sad about the losses, even if things are better than ever. Experiencing this sadness is legitimate. I encourage spouses to journal each stage they experience, as well as stay connected to support group members during this grief process.

The sadness for the addict is two-fold if they are getting sober. After 8 to 12 months into recovery, the sadness for what they have done really hits them. They are sad about who they were during their acting out times. They are sad about the risk they took and the consequences due to their addiction.

They are sad they caused it and really hurt the people they love.

The addict who doesn't become sober is only sad about the limitations they have and the lack of freedom. It's still all about them, and they are sad their addiction is leaving their life. This expression of selfishness is truly a horrible plight to be in. They are unaware of the pain they themselves are in and the pain they willingly perpetrated as they stay sick.

Acceptance

Acceptance for the spouse is often experienced long after it has already occurred, much like when you feel better after a bad cold and all of a sudden you realize you're breathing better, and you have your energy again. The spouse has broken through denial, engaged anger, climbed through bargaining and breathed through sadness. Now, she is sitting on a part of the mountain of life they thought they would never be on.

However, there is a view from the mountain. If their sex addicted spouse did the hard work of recovery, like so many of my clients have, they feel loved by an imperfect spouse. They have imperfect children, and they themselves are less perfect than before. However, like the velveteen rabbit, they are valued and loved. They didn't ask for this painful journey. However, they have accepted the journey and are able to look toward a positive future for themselves.

The spouse of an addict who chooses their addiction over their spouse also has grieved. They have had many life changing events due to their spouse's choice to stay sick. They have walked through what seems to be an endless valley of obstacles and feelings. They also come out accepting of their situation with hope for themselves.

The spouse who has gone through grief to acceptance can breathe once again. They are experiencing life again and accepting responsibility for their quality of life. They are not the same as before, but generally, they are okay with where they are and their life.

The addict who reaches acceptance is very clear, "I was sick. I am an addict." They have worked recovery hard and also have absorbed the consequences of their choices as fully theirs. They have moved past the mountain of shame, shattered the illusion of their image and came out of the crucible of recovery more authentic, less wonderful and with integrity of self than they have never known before. They too can give and receive the love of those around them.

Grief is very real. You both have an entirely different type of grief to go through. You cannot go through grief

perfectly. Grieving is messy, inconvenient and not that controllable. You will be misunderstood and, at times, not know exactly what's going on with you.

Your spouse will not always be understanding or know what you need. My encouragement is to be as kind to yourself and each other as possible as you both process through the grief in your recovery journey.

Anne's Story

It was out of nowhere that my life changed, or everything as I knew it to be was transformed in a statement. The kids were in bed, and I was tired. On the computer, looking at my bank statement, I was wondering why there was a late charge. I asked my husband about it, and we both spoke at the same time. I think he heard the last half of what I said and it was, "…no telling what you were doing those times!" He said, "I'm going to bed!" After a little while, I went in there and told him he needed to tell me what was going on, because something was up, and I felt it.

After a bit of silence and stillness, he said, "I used to pick up sluts." I said, "What do you mean sluts?" All the while, I was processing exactly what he meant to say. He said, "Prostitutes." I wish I could have seen his face, but it was totally dark. I was struck with emotions. I said, "What? I can't believe what I'm hearing!" I went downstairs to sit in my chair.

I wanted to leave, but I didn't know where or who to run to. He followed me downstairs, and he asked me not to leave. I was still in shock. I couldn't speak, and I really couldn't cry either. Funny thing was I felt calm,

and I didn't have that nervousness in my stomach that I'd experienced so many times before. He was asking me to please not leave and to forgive him. I had so many things going through my head. I didn't know where to begin to dissect all of the events, so many questions, so many hunches and gut feelings in the past. I never had a sense of trust where he was concerned.

All along, I thought it was just an affair here and there or a one night stand, never this! Then again, I recall being drawn to things about prostitutes, a show on HBO before and after the kids. I thought then that it was a possibility, but I didn't think he would have been capable of doing that. How wrong was I?

He said this took place over a year and a half or so. It all happened during working hours. He had the flexibility and no accountability to allow free time. Plus, he could always use the excuse of the area we lived in for not answering his phone because of the mountains.

He couldn't tell me how many prostitutes he was with, just that with two of them, he didn't use protection. Most of the hookers had rooms. Others just did their business in or outside the car in a wooded or secluded area. If he was short on time or money, many times he just received sexual favors.

I thought of how my previous marriage of four and a half years wasn't so bad after all and how this hurt me so much more. I told him that, and he couldn't

believe it could hurt me more, but it definitely did. My other marriage was a cake walk, and this was a living

nightmare. I'd never be the same again. I was so full of pain and disappointed. I felt all this time had been such a waste. He had been married previously also, and his marriage lasted one year, almost to the exact date. In any case, I always knew we had started on the wrong foot. We did, we did everything wrong.

I decided I was going to stay in the marriage, and he said he wasn't going anywhere either. We mutually agreed we needed to make drastic changes to our lives and rebuild our trust. He said he knew it was going to take time. He was going to prove to me he could be a wonderful husband, and he definitely was committed to being a great father and provider.

We talked about going to counseling and knew it would be a great idea, but our budget was not going to allow it.

The first month was emotionally very exhausting for me, because I would cry most of the time. I recall thinking about it and just melting right then and there. Whether I was in the car or at the grocery store, my tears would fall. He kept apologizing, and I couldn't stand the thought of being intimate with him. I still feel timid to this day about intimacy. I hide myself from him most of the time when I'm dressing and undressing. I feel more comfortable by myself.

I asked questions about what he did, and he was very good at answering without ever becoming defensive or agitated. He remained very calm and, most times, would answer with his head hung low. I knew that was another sign he was truly making an effort to change, because he didn't try to avoid the issue or run from it, as he had in

the past. Of course, asking questions didn't always lead me to the place where I felt the best, but it quenched my thirst for those probing questions of why and how.

That first night he came clean, he was emotional. He said he was afraid I'd never look at him the same way again, and he was right.

He did have a few accountability partners in his men's group, and sometimes, I was it, but I told him I couldn't be. He needed to seek another man for that aspect.

In a couple of months, it will be 4 years since he disclosed his other life to me. Things are good between us right now. I still lead groups and have read so much on the subject that it's easy to talk to someone about it if they have a need in this area. I'm there to encourage and support women whose lives have been affected by this addiction. As of this past August, we've been married 15 years. Our kids are almost 5 and 6 years old, and they are a blessing to us.

We both have also been afflicted with an STD. We found out about it last year, as I was having abnormal bleeding. We have Herpes I and II.

I never thought I could say that our marriage was going to be stronger on the other side of disclosure, but it's just that. Our marriage is better and stronger.

Chapter Nine

The Six Types of Sex Addicts

We have been discussing some very important issues, as it relates to those who cheat because of sex addiction, those addicted to adultery. Here's a very important paradigm I have developed while working with sexual addicts more than twenty years.

When I started as a counselor many years ago, there was a one-size fits all approach to sex addiction. However, working with sex addicts over time, I realized one approach didn't seem to work for everyone. Day after day, I was in my office over eight hours or more, noting significant distinctions in sex addicts, how they became addicted and why they were staying addicted, even when they were faithfully attending 12-step groups and really working hard.

For clinicians, I developed the Six Types of Sex Addiction Paradigm. This paradigm is a critical part of a clinician's

education in the AASAT training program they complete in order to become certified to treat sex addiction. This paradigm is the core for proper assessment and treatment of sex addicts.

So many of my clients had gone to therapy prior to counseling with me and were not properly assessed or treated. They and their spouse endured many more years of acting-out behaviors unnecessarily. I want to share this with you, so you can have a feel for what type of sex addict you or your spouse may be so that you can obtain the appropriate treatment for that specific type of sexual addiction.

There is a Six-Type Test available online at www.sexaddict.com, which can help a sex addict assess their type of sex addiction, as well as the ability to download clips to outline a treatment plan, depending on their type, or types, of sex addiction. The addict can also contact our office to schedule a telephone counseling session. In this counseling session, the counselor can give you an assessment for the addict's type of sex addiction and outline the basics of starting recovery for the type of sex addiction you or your spouse may have.

Before I start, I want to clearly say up front rarely is an addict just one type of sex addict. Most sex addicts are a combination of several types. This is important, because if you receive incomplete treatment regarding just one of the sex addict types, this may become a factor in an addict's relapse. In the case that a relapse is adultery, the consequence can be life changing for many people, so

read through this section describing the six types of sex addicts carefully.

1. Biological Sex Addict

We've already discussed this type of sex addict in an earlier chapter, pertaining to the brain. This addict has attached his sexual reward system to fantasy, porn or an object. Their reward system has conditioned them to the point that it is seeking a high chemical reward to continue to attach to the object of desire.

Almost all sex addicts have the biological type of sex addiction. In my clinical experience, I would say about 15 percent of the sex addicts I have treated are only biological sex addicts. The purely biological sex addict is the easiest to treat and most likely to be successful in recovery. The only drawback to just being a pure, biological sex addict is that when they go to a support group they feel like they don't belong. When they walk away from their first meeting, they think to themselves, "Those other guys are really screwed up." Regardless, even a pure, biological sex addict will not become better by themselves, as they will need to attend a support group.

2. The Psychological Sex Addict

This sex addict has suffered some type of emotional, physical, spiritual and moral abuse or neglect. The abused people have a clear understanding of what has occurred, because it was obviously a violation and, in many cases, an ongoing violation. Those that have been neglected or abandoned often take a little more work to see the pain and its impact in their life. Most are unaware of their past neglect, because it is difficult to miss what you didn't have.

3. The Spiritual-Based Sex Addict

The spiritually-based sex addict is a person who is filling their spiritual voice or what we call the "God hole" with

sex. I love doing a particular exercise with a spiritually based sex addict. I ask them to describe the characteristics of God to me. They will usually rattle off several characteristics, such as loving, accepting, always available, there when you really need help, strong and nonjudgmental. Then, I have them give me a list of the characteristics of the addiction or "boo boo mommy." They generally reply with caring, loving, accepting, fun, unconditional love and non-critical.

Every time I do this exercise, it's blatantly obvious to the spiritually-based sex addicted client that their sex addiction is a replacement for authentic spirituality. For this type of sex addict, their addiction is their religion. It's where they worship, offer themselves and gain a sense of transcendence, peace and tranquility. As odd as it may seem, the addiction is their spirituality, even for some who have a faith. Pragmatically, they go to the addiction for help in times of trouble.

4. Trauma-Based Sex Addict

The trauma-based sex addict is someone who has experienced a sexual trauma. Although 80 percent of sex addicts are sexual abuse victims, not all are trauma-based sex addicts. The sex addict who is trauma based is an addict who is specifically reenacting a sexual trauma. Let me give you two illustrations to help you understand this type of sex addict.

Randy is a successful business man and in a committed relationship. Randy, however, is addicted to adultery. He is cheating regularly. Randy discovers on the Internet that he is a sex addict. He wants help with his sex addiction.

During his assessment, I ask about early sexual encounters. When Randy was about 14 years old, he went into a car with a stranger where an adult man sexually abused him. Then, two weeks later, he was in a public bathroom, and an adult man sexually abused him in the bathroom. Randy didn't tell anyone and repeatedly masturbated to these sexual abuse encounters.

Now, Randy could be having anonymous encounters or affairs anywhere all the time, but guess where 95 percent of his acting-out encounters occurred? That's right, 95 percent of his sexual encounters were happening in cars and public bathrooms, two very confining areas to be sexual. His acting out was a direct reenactment of his sexual trauma. Randy had never seen the correlation and was able to do the work to disconnect from the trauma and stop the addiction to anonymous encounters.

Bart was a 42-year-old man, significantly overweight and depressed. Actually, so depressed he was suicidal. He was admitted to a local hospital for his suicidal issues. His psychiatrist wanted me to do a sexual assessment on him. I arrived at the hospital, and we sat in a small room where I asked him why he was there. He said he wanted to kill himself, and I asked why. Bart said very straight faced, "I am having sex with nine women outside of my marriage, and I can't keep up with it anymore."

At this point, I understood why the psychiatrist ordered the sexual assessment. When I went through Bart's sexual history, he told me about his first sexual encounter. Bart was 14 years old, and he went down the street to play with his friend. His friend wasn't home, but his friend's mom asked him to come in, and she gave him oral sex.

A couple of days later, they had intercourse. He and this woman had sex 2 to 3 times a week until the week before his wedding at 35 years old. For almost 20 years, Bart was sexually abused.

I asked him to describe the various women he was having sex with outside of marriage. All the women were 15 to 20 years older than him. He was duplicating his sexual trauma exactly.

The trauma-based sex addict is stuck in the trauma. Bart could have acted out with young women, strangers or prostitutes, but because of his trauma, only a much older woman could satiate his addiction. These are both good examples of a trauma-based sex addict reenacting their sexual trauma.

5. Sexual Anorexic Sex Addict

The term sexual anorexia or intimacy anorexia may be new to you. I will give you the basic understanding here. If this applies in your relationship, you will want to watch the DVDs Sexual Anorexia and Married and Alone for more information.

Sexual or intimacy anorexia is the active withholding of emotional, spiritual or sexual intimacy from a spouse. The sexual anorexic will withhold sex. The intimacy anorexic doesn't mind having sex, but he or she will withhold emotional and spiritual intimacy. To be anorexic, you would need five or more "yes" answers to the following questions.

1. Does your spouse keep himself so busy with work, projects, TV, etc. that he has no time for you?

2. Does your spouse's reaction to a problem or is sue focus on you and your part of the problem before he can see his own contribution to a prob lem? The spouse of the anorexic feels blamed for most things in the marriage.

3. Does your spouse withhold love from you, often giving love to others but not to you unless you are in public?

4. Does your spouse withhold praise from you? You are not praised, although, they may be able to praise others.

5. Does your spouse withhold sex? They will of ten sabotage sex, so you don't want to be sexual or make you ask for sex and do little to no initiat ing of sex.

6. Is your spouse unwilling or unable to discuss their feelings with you?

7. Does your spouse use anger or silence as a way to control the relationship?

8. Does your spouse have ongoing or ungrounded criticism of you? In most cases, they are hyper sensitive if you have any criticism of them.

9. Does your spouse control or shame you around financial issues?

Often, I also add number ten when talking to the spouse of an anorexic. Do you feel more like a roommate than a lover? Go through the list and see if your addict fits these behaviors by having five or more yes answers. Our

research shows that 29 percent of sex addicts are also sexual/intimacy anorexics.

You may also go back through the questions to see if this applies to yourself. Our research shows 39 percent of spouses of sex addicts also have sexual/intimacy anorexia. If the sex addict is also anorexic and this is not treated,

relapses in sex addiction are almost certain. In most cases, the withholding (anorexia) is the primary addiction and sex addiction is secondary. Even though the adultery will be the major pain factor at disclosure, the anorexia causes a long aching pain of neglect that the spouse experiences. The sexual/intimacy anorexic sex addict often needs professional help to heal both the addict and the spouse in order to repair the marriage. I would definitely recommend a 3 Day Intensive if this is your situation.

6. The Sex Addict with Mood Disorder

In a past journal article I wrote, I discovered 29 percent of male sex addicts struggle with depression. I don't know if the depression occurred first, and the addict was using sex to medicate the depression, or if the addiction and its consequences were causing the depression.

The other common mood disorder I see is Cyclothymic Disorder. In my experience, about 15 percent of addicts have this mood disorder. Cyclothymic Disorder can be defined where there is a mild "up" for several days and then an unexplainable "down" day one or more times a week. Bipolar disorder and/or manic depressive disorders can also be present. These disorders have higher ups and downs and are often longer in duration. You can go online to obtain specific symptoms of each disorder.

This mood disorder for the sex addict has a chemical imbalance neurologically of some kind. The sex addict with this chemical imbalance has often treated this imbalance with sexual releases in adolescence and ongoing. This habit of medicating through orgasms creates a sex addiction pattern in their life. This chemical imbalance, if not diagnosed, can also set in motion influences that can create a desire to act out sexually, even if the addict is trying to get sober.

This completes the six types of sex addicts. I hope this information has been helpful for you to understand. At this point, you know as much or more about the types of sex addiction than most counselors who are untrained in this model of sexual addiction recovery. Sex addiction recovery is possible. It's even more possible if you understand the type, or types, of sex addiction you or your spouse are dealing with.

The six types of sex addicts is a paradigm I have been using for many years in treating the sex addict. On the website (www.sexaddict.com), there is a test that can be helpful. I recommend both of you watch the video clips that explain the best way to start recovery based upon the type(s) of sexual addict. If you have a certified Sex Recovery Therapist (SRT) in your area, that's great. If not, call Heart to Heart Counseling Center at (719) 278-3708, and we can get you in touch with a certified SRT.

The addict deserves the best start in recovery. Understanding how someone is addicted is extremely important, the earlier, the better. I also find it helpful for the partner of a cheating spouse to understand the type of sex addict. This knowledge can help you tremendously to accept you were not the problem. Their sex addiction and/or trauma,

mood disorder or anorexia predated your relationship to the sex addict.

Actually, I find if both of you understand this basic information, it can birth hope that the addict can heal. A sober addict (and I am one for more than 22 years) can lead a healthy, intimate and monogamous life and experience a happily ever after.

Donald's Story

I was sexually abused by two adults from the age of 6 to 11 years old. One was a family friend, the other was my aunt. I had employed many common coping skills used by child trauma victims. First and foremost, I compartmentalized my experiences and pretty much cut them off from my conscious living. Nonetheless, the damage was done from this early age. I learned I could not trust the world. Even the basics of right and wrong were in question, especially since the perpetrators were supposed to love and protect me. I also learned not to trust my own instincts and feelings.

In the case of the man, he groomed me and stroked my fragile ego, and so I was led to feel guilty about questioning some of his acts against the backdrop of what a "wonderful" person he was. In the case of my aunt, she used me as a means to get back at her husband. The more attention she paid me, the more jealous he became, and over time, her attention turned from provocative and flirtatious to overtly sexual. My uncle would respond by becoming violent with her, often in my presence and in direct connection to me. This led me to feel both disgust

and guilt but also great power. I felt I possessed some type of sexual power that could make this big powerful man feel powerless.

As I got older, I had great difficulty with this identification of myself as solely a sexual being. I became charming, manipulative and flirtatious before I even entered my adolescence. Part of my core being was of some disgusting, broken, poisoned person. Based on participating involuntarily in vulgar disgusting acts, I compen-sated for it by acting out like Don Juan. I treated almost all interactions with others as potentially sexual. I used innuendo in most of my interactions, and I made it a point to try and seduce others, especially those "off limits," such as the girlfriends, sisters or mothers of friends.

As I approached my twenties, I made a conscious effort to change my behaviors. What I once saw as an asset (the ability to seduce others) was no

longer something to brag about, especially when my peers were beginning to have serious long-term relationships. Up to that time, I had been unfaithful to any girl I dated, both casual and long term. I had also patronized prostitutes by this point in my life, and I made a concerted effort to change my behaviors. No more cheating and no more prostitutes.

When I was 21 years old, I met my wife. She was eighteen and already engaged to be married to a person who had a reputation for being possessive of her. I suspect part of my initial attraction to her was her “off-limits” status, being engaged to possessive person and being the little sister of a rather large male acquaintance. Being such a sweet-natured, kind-hearted person made it all the easier to fall in love with her, and we have been together

ever since.

See, I was always a person with secrets, even as a child. I did not have a conceptual framework of my abuse, but I always felt I had dark things, hidden things inside me that I thought made me a bad person. As I came of age and acted voluntarily in ways to reinforce this, such as being an all around lothario, cheater and “John” to prostitutes, I carried this weight with me throughout life.

The more good I had, the closer I became with people, but the more I felt like a fraud who didn’t deserve it. If the truth came out, I would be exposed for who I really was. Add to this my total inability to be intimate in any appropriate way, and I had a recipe for disaster in my marriage.

As I look back on the early years of my marital relationship, I see myself as a “dry drunk” in regard to my sexual addiction. My actions were limited, but my attitudes and behaviors did not change. I saw nothing wrong with being flirty or suggestive to women, so long as I did not actually follow through with connecting with them. Quite frankly, I thought this was normal behavior all of my life. I even rationalized, though I had acted inappropriate, if I did not do anything wrong, I was committing no sin against my marriage.

However, I did stumble two times, and both had a devastating impact on my relationship. Early in my marriage, I entered into an affair with a coworker. The result was to increase my self-loathing tenfold, which affected my relationship with my wife. The worse I felt, the worse the transgressions. The more I failed myself and her by

breaking my promise to myself not to cheat, the more I kept away from my wife. My wife had only one place to look for my changing behaviors and that was herself. She tried her best to connect with me, please me and compromise with me. In my eyes, it was not about her at all. It was about me, my guilt and shame. In fact for her, it was a crushing blow to her ego, as she could only find herself to blame for our withering connection. Our marriage limped along in this

state for almost 10 years until I stumbled the second time, patronizing a prostitute and being found out by my wife.

This was my rock bottom of my addiction, and in this context, I became reconnected with my childhood past. I revealed both my sexual addiction and my childhood sexual abuse to my wife in the aftermath of this and entered into individual psychotherapy, as well as couple's therapy. I also found a 12 Step Group through the suggestion of my individual therapist. I am blessed that my wife is wonderful enough to take this journey of recovery with me, even though she was devastated by the revelations about my childhood trauma and the impact of my sexual addiction on her life.

One of the major ways in which my recovery has positively impacted our relationship is my ability to jettison all of my lies and secrets. Because I am truthful about my life and include some of the unsavory details of my past, I am less reticent interacting with my wife on an intimate level. She also reports less of a dreadful feeling within her, a feeling she could not name or place but was there in our marriage prior to my recovery. Certainly, I no longer use flirtation as my main social skill, and I am careful about the ways I come across to the opposite sex, even in casual, passing conversations. I exercise healthy

boundaries with others and see myself and my body as less of a loathsome repository of secrets and shame. So therefore, I live in a generally more healthy way, eating well and exercising regularly. Being part of the fellowship of recovery offers me the opportunity to talk with other sex addicts and practice the principles of recovery modeled in the 12 steps of alcoholics anonymous, which I do every day.

We continue to work on our marriage, sometimes on an hour-by-hour basis. As I have been able to shed some of my dark past, my wife has only recently become acquainted with it. Therefore, it has been a much harder road for her. For example, I felt for most of my life and more so after I was married that all of the past sexual experiences would be in the room with me, so to speak, when being intimate with my wife. My childhood perpetrators, the girls I had wronged and the infidelity would all loom over me. With recovery, much of this has disappeared. Unfortunately, many of those faces are now there for my wife, and we work hard at discussing our feelings about this. If I said it was easy to engage in conversations that are heartbreaking for my wife, it would be a lie.

In our couple's psychotherapy, we regularly process and work on the recommendations provided by the therapist to encourage a stronger, healthier relationship. This is our goal, to have a healthier, stronger relationship as a result of my rock bottom incident, the revelations and all the work since then. We believe this is the case, but it remains a long road ahead. I feel humbled by my

wife’s strength and desire to join me on this journey.

Chapter Ten

Abandonment and Abuse

The city of abandonment and abuse, where many ad-dicts have lived or visited, are often cold and windy places. Abandonment comes in many different forms, causing much pain and loss to be absorbed into a soul. I will do my best to visit several of the neighborhoods of abandonment.

Total Abandonment

The downtown of abandonment is total abandonment. Total abandonment can be a willful or unwillful abandonment by a parent in your life. If you were born illegitimately and one or both of your parents abandoned you, willful abandonment might have occurred for various reasons. It can also occur if your parents sent you to live in foster homes, with relatives or to boarding schools. If you have been adopted, you would have definitely visited total abandonment.

This type of abandonment is intentional by one or both of your parents. Some of their intentions were completely selfish. They didn’t want you or wanted to live their own life to chase their dreams, lovers or careers. Some parent’s motives may have been to give you a chance at a better life. What may have control over you now may be influenced by the abandonment of the total self.

The neighborhoods around downtown abandonment break up into several suburbs. Each suburb represents a part of you that was abandoned or neglected by one or both parents. We will make short trips into these neighborhoods since you or your addicted spouse may have been there before.

Spiritual Abandonment

The abandonment of your spirit is our first suburb to visit in the town of abandonment. If one or both of your parents have abandoned you spiritually, you would not have received any spiritual training or encouragement to develop the spiritual aspects of yourself as a child.

Spiritual abandonment feels as if your parents decided you didn’t have a spirit, so they spent little to no time communicating spiritual matters. Your contact with a community of faith would have been totally absent. As another form of spiritual abandonment, you may have experienced one or both of your parents were so rigidly religious you weren’t allowed to explore honest questions of a spiritual nature.

Emotional Abandonment

The next abandonment you or your spouse may have ex

perienced is abandonment of your emotions. Emotional abandonment is a confusing area of town. It’s as if the city engineers forgot to put names on the

streets. You travel down a road, and you don’t know the name of the street you are on to travel to another street you don’t know.

In the United States, one or both parents may have emotionally abandoned their children. I don’t think it was intentional. I don’t think mom and dad had a business meeting and said, “Hey, let’s abandon our children’s feelings.” Remember, more than likely, your parent’s feelings were abandoned as well. They were probably raised under the bad idea children are to be seen and not heard. Such a parent may have also raised you.

In this family, several things occurred to the emotional part of your being when it was abandoned. You learned your feelings are not valid at all. You were taught you are not to identify, trust or feel. If you’re feeling full, you can’t listen to your body communicate the full feeling. You will still have to eat what is on your plate. You can’t cry if you feel like crying. “Big boys don’t cry.”

You receive so many mixed messages your emotional self is not vocal, not trustworthy or important. Then, in turn, you and your spouse have very little training on how to identify or communicate your feelings in your relationship. You also will have little understanding about how to access feelings in a decision-making process. This can lead you to stay completely in your head or become emotionally based in decisions so that you keep making more bad decisions. Most sex addicts are emotionally illiterate.

Someone who has experienced emotional abandonment

will rarely learn how to be emotionally honest and available in an intimate relationship. I think you can see how visiting the suburb of emotional abandonment as a child can defi-nitely be a genesis for the influence of addicted behavior.

Gifting Abandonment

Abandonment of your gifting is another stop on this tour. This suburb is confusing as well. It’s similar to being in a part of a town that speaks a different language and has a different currency than you. One or both parents have not investigated you or your spouse’s particular gifts. They may not have allowed you to experiment with various sports, music or art to see what your natural aptitude might have been.

Another form of abandonment is if your parents knew you had a gift but did not allow you to develop your gift. You may have been athletic, musically inclined, enjoyed tinkering with fixing things or maybe you liked to ask a lot of questions. Even though these parents knew their child possessed a gift, they wouldn’t allow the child to develop their gift. This lack of accepting and nurturing your giftedness can definitely be a genesis for out of control behavior.

Affection Abandonment

The abandonment of affection is familiar to many who are addicted. All babies come with a built in need (not a desire) to be touched, hugged and have physical affection. This need for affection remains until death. The abandonment of affection starves the soul who thrives on this. The child may be confused, because their body

really wants a hug, a cuddle, a pat on the back or just to wrestle around. Yet, it's as if mom, dad or both don't see your body needs touch. The abandonment of affection is definitely a place for an influence of behaviors that can have control over you.

Financial Abandonment

Financial abandonment has two neighborhoods. The very rich live somewhere on the north side and the poor, in debt, struggling to live on the south side. The interesting thing about this town is there are no roads to travel on. Nobody knows how to reach one another's place, and it seems as if it's all guesswork.

If you have been financially abandoned, you probably know exactly what I mean. You may not understand finances at all. Nobody taught you about saving, investing or how money actually works. You could have been exposed to either the work/spend existence model or the mystery model of money.

Even if you earn well, you may still feel inadequate. Parents who neglect the financial aspects of their children rarely do this intentionally. I find that financial abandonment can continue up a family tree. This financial abandonment can most definitely be an influence that causes a lot of stress, which addicts don't handle particularly well.

Sexual Abandonment

Sexual abandonment is rampant with billboards everywhere for you to exchange sexuality for something else, whether it is love or a good time, without mentioning the consequences of pregnancy, disease, shame and a whole

host of others.

Sexual abandonment also tends to run down a family tree. In some families, it's as if you really are nonsexual. You receive either no message at all or confusing messages, as one client told me her parents insinuated, "Sex is bad, nasty and save it for the one you love."

Being sexual is a part of being human. Until death, it is who we are and always will be. Without clarity from parents, managing sexuality is difficult. Our culture attempts to steal sex from its adolescents. Sexual abandonment is a common place that I have seen most sex addicts evolve from. The roots from sexual abandonment can be some of the strongest roots of all for addictive behavior.

Moral Abandonment

The suburb of moral abandonment is a smoggy city. Things are not really clear here. It's not anyone's fault for the smog. It's just there. Morality tells us what is absolutely right and absolutely wrong, and it is imperative to navigate through life with as few crashes as possible.

Morality has been given a bad rap in a culture that wants us to be led by our feelings so others can manipulate us. Parents can avoid this by being clear with right and wrong for various reasons. Some parents fear being misunderstood or judged by others. Due to issues in their own life, some parents are unclear on moralities, even the basics such as lying, stealing or monogamy. Regardless of the reason for moral abandonment, it is a bastion for the influence of what can later have control of your life.

Abandonment is a big city with many suburbs. Some of us

have lived in just one part of town. During our developing years, some of us have been moved from one part of town to another part of town. Regardless of the abandonment (total, spiritual, emotional, gifting, affection, financial, sexual or moral abandonment) you or your spouse may have visited, there is hope as you both move forward in recovery.

Abuse

Abuse is the intentional violation of another person's spirit, soul and body, including their emotions and sexuality. Abuse damages the soul of a developing person on so many levels. Abuse is like taking a colt 44 and blasting it into a computer. There is no telling exactly how it will damage the computer. For some people, the abuse damages memories, self-esteem and causes posttraumatic stress and addiction. It also affects the choices that are made and can cause all kinds of dysfunction. Of course, I'm talking about the human computer.

Physical Abuse

Physical abuse is usually one of the many abuses that can be easily identified as to whether you have experienced it or not. Physical abuse is when one or both of your parents, siblings, neighbors, schoolmates or a stranger has physically hit you. You knew you were hit, and some of you were hit repeatedly. If the abuse came from a parent, there potentially could have been years of physical abuse. Physical abuse can also include demanded physical tasks that were cruel or beyond your development as a child.

Emotional Abuse

Emotional abuse is common among addicts of all types. Children who experienced this growing up had parents or other people of influence who would excessively yell at them or shame them. They may have enmeshed you as a surrogate adult in the family. Often, you were shamed just for being a child or

for being yourself. This chaos and unpredictability can definitely be an influence in a soul's life.

Spiritual Abuse

Spiritual abuse is a little trickier to detect than emotional or physical abuse. A religious (not necessarily spiritual) significant person to the child demands total compliance to a religious belief. This person is shaming, controlling and often so rigid it is difficult to be in relationship with them. In this spiritual relationship, being right is more important than love.

The effects of spiritual abuse vary from person to person. Some feel confused; some question their own spiritual development and some forfeit all spirituality for fear of being controlled by others. Spiritual abuse can be a festering ground for influences of future out of control behaviors.

Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is one of the most damaging abuses one can experience. Remember, 80 percent of sex addicts have experienced this abuse, as well as 40 percent of partners of sex addicts. The sexual shame often attached to this one-time experience or multiple experiences is overwhelming for the child, teen or adult.

Often, sexual abuse is kept secret and poorly received when finally disclosed and can lead to more issues for the abuse survivors to deal with. The repercussions of sexual abuse, especially if that abuse continues to be a secret, are multidirectional. This influence for out of control behavior is often an anchoring for future out of control behavior or addiction.

With all the types of abuse you or your spouse may have experienced, you certainly didn't choose the abuse, nor did you deserve it. Yet following the abuse, you suffer many of the consequences. I liken this to a person walking downtown on a sunny afternoon. Suddenly, the sound of a shotgun was heard, and a bullet struck them. They didn't ask for someone to shoot them. They didn't deserve the bullet, but they have indeed been shot. Now that movement has been impaired, the pain management and physical therapy to restore movement is the victim's responsibility.

Abuse can easily be an anchor in which an out of control behavior can be attached. Acknowledging the abuses that have occurred in your life can be a huge hurdle to overcome. Many sexual abuse survivors tend to beat themselves up about what they wish they had done to prevent the abuse from happening. These survivors often come up against their own denial of abusive events in order to not shatter the image they made to protect themselves. They may also have fear about being honest regarding the abuse. I know several clients who felt if they were honest about their abuse, they would decompose uncontrollably and

never be sane again. It may sound irrational, but when you're afraid, being rational is not a requirement.

As you can see, there is a wide range of what could have caused psychological pain for the sex addict. Remember, this pain happened as a child or adolescent. This pain occurred way before drinking age and before they met you. The soul in pain, whether it's in pain due to abuse or neglect, wants to escape from it. Yeas before marriage, many sex addicts have been escaping the pain through fantasy, porn or object sex.

If you had a toothache, your first response would be to locate some pain relievers. Similarly, so it is with the young soul of the sex addict when they are in pain. When they ejaculate, fantasize or escape to pornography, they disconnect from their painful reality and go to a place where they are wanted, loved and nurtured. They reward this place with the brain chemicals in order to locate a psychological and biological pleasure experience disconnected from reality and then feel better, at least for a little while.

This crazy cycle of not dealing with pain continues in the addict's life until they hit bottom and deal with these core issues. These issues were influences of the addiction and the insane choice to cheat. Are they still responsible? By now, I think you know my answer is yes.

I hope this chapter provides further expansion of the context in which insane choices are made. Regardless of their past issues and insane choices, there is hope for recovery. Actually, the second step in the 12 steps of recovery offers us hope to be restored to sanity. I have been restored, and I have seen many other addicts restored as well.

Chapter Eleven

Treatment for the Six Types

In each case, treating the addict, the addict's spouse, their marriage and family is a unique process. Each addict brings his or her own complex dynamics that formed the addiction, manifestations of their addiction and damage as a result of the addiction. Each spouse also brings their history prior to marriage, the experience within the marriage and various levels of willingness to view and address the marriage, along with their individual issues.

For more than 20 years, I have been treating sex addiction. I have been on Oprah, Dr. Phil and had a Life Time movie entitled, Sex, Lies and Obsession, as well as an English documentary on my 3 Day Intensives. I simply say this to let you know our results of treating sex addicts have received national and international attention.

When you have lived with sex addiction for any period

of time, you want results. The client deserves an accurate assessment of the addiction. The assessment should include the type of sexual addiction they struggle with. The spouse also deserves an accurate assessment of the residual effects they experience living with a sex addict without any blame for the addiction. Both the addict and the addict's spouse deserve specific treatment for their unique marital issues as they process through recovery for their marriage and family.

I want to share with you a few options for treatment the addict and his spouse can utilize for their recovery. In a later chapter, I will also walk you through the maze of finding an appropriate counselor. This unique field of counseling and psychology needs to be explained so that your recovery needs can be fully met. If you are looking for local help, that entire chapter will be dedicated to finding a therapist. Now, let's talk about the treatment options I have been applying for many years.

Three-Day Intensives

As a psychologist at Heart to Heart Counseling Center, several licensed counselors and I have been offering 3 Day Intensives for years. These intensives are offered Monday through Wednesday or Wednesday through Friday. We offer several types of intensives, including sex addiction individual intensives and couples intensives, which I would recommend if you are married. It is best for the couple if both of you are assessed and receive the same information, as well as clear treatment plans. We also offer partner's intensives, which are specifically for the spouse of the addict, as well as sexual abuse intensives and an intensive for adult children of sex addicts.

Our 3 Day Intensives include individual sessions for the addict, individual sessions for the spouse and couple sessions daily with the therapist. Attending appropriate support groups and viewing educational DVDs to address your specific issues would also be included. All aspects of the intensive are aimed directly at the needs of the addict and his spouse, not generally, specifically. At the end of the intensive, both the addict and spouse leave with treatment plans to follow, so both can continue working on their recovery.

The 3-Day Sex Addiction Individual Intensive is for the addict who wants to address his sex addiction and its consequences in his life. Each individual intensive has two individual sessions daily, as well as to attend support groups and view therapeutic DVDs. This intensive can be for male or female sex addicts. Within the first day, the addict will know the type of sex addict he or she is and will aggressively work on the sex addiction, leaving with a very pragmatic and measurable treatment plan.

The 3-Day Sexual Anorexia Couples Intensive is for couples where one or

both have the presence of sexual or intimacy anorexia. Within this intensive, we will identify how they became anorexic and determine if there is a disorder supporting the anorexia. They will also be given practical tools to move forward in their recovery.

The 3-Day Partners Intensive is specifically for the spouse of the sex addict. This partner of an addict will focus on her issues during this intensive, including trauma, anger, boundaries, self-care and much more. Regardless if the partner is still active in the relationship with the sex addict, separated or divorced, this will be very helpful to their recovery

process. Living with a sex addict and/or anorexic has its residual effects on one's life. Healing from this experience can help in so many ways to ensure a brighter future. Take time to focus on your own recovery.

The 3 Day Intensive for Adult Children of Sex Addicts has been very positive for many. Living with a sex addicted parent has many effects on their children. My book, Beyond the Bedroom: Healing for Adult Children of Sex Addicts, addresses the impact sex addiction has on these adult children. The intensive for adult children helps this individual address their issues head on and move away from the past toward a much healthier future.

Sexual Trauma Intensives are for those who want to focus on healing from past trauma. The survivor and therapist review the pain from the past and work hard to experience healing. The counselor will also address consequences the sexual trauma is presently causing and create strategies for a more positive future.

Telephone Counseling

Most of you reading this book are not located in or near Colorado Springs. Telephone counseling can be helpful for those located anywhere around the world, whether you are the spouse or the addict. In my 20 years of counseling, I have had so many clients seek out local help with good intent to obtain successful recovery. Unfortunately, the local therapist was not trained in sexual addiction recovery or in partner's issues, so they attended therapy but did not receive positive results.

I have had so many people tell me, or one of the therapists at our center, that telephone counseling or telephone

groups were very helpful in their recovery. If you would like to receive intelligent help, I would recommend telephone counseling. The therapist can also provide an assessment to determine what type of sex addiction you have, as well as create a treatment plan right over the phone. If telephone counseling is of interest to you, please call (719) 278 3708.

Materials

Some like to start their treatment by simply obtaining more information, so let me provide recommendations for the addict, the spouse and for the anorexic. These materials can help you get started in recovery and are also part of the material package support groups use to work on their recovery together.

For addicts, begin by reading the book The Final Freedom: Pioneering Sexual Addiction Recovery. Also, the workbooks for the addict include 101 Practical Exercises and the twelve step workbook, Steps to Freedom. These are also available for download as an eBook from www.sexaddict.com. The DVD Addict to Addict is also helpful to connect to other recovering sex addicts who have been there. They have years of recovery experience and hope to share with you. Also, there are so many AASAT Training DVDs that may be helpful for the sex addict's recovery.

An important focus of our recovery materials have been specifically designed for partners of sex addicts. Most partners have lived through some significant trauma and deserve respect for having the courage to heal. The materials that can be helpful for partners are Partners: Healing From His Addiction book, The Partners Recovery Guide:

100 Empowering Exercises workbook and Beyond Love: A 12 Step Guide for Partners workbook. Other materials partners have found to be helpful are the Now That I Know What Should I Do DVD and the Partner to Partner DVD, which includes several spouses of sex addicts sharing their experiences and journey of recovery with you. Also, there are several DVDs within the AASAT DVD training set that are helpful for the spouse of a sex addict.

Materials are also available for sexual/intimacy anorexics. The DVD entitled, Sexual Anorexia is very helpful in understanding how someone can become anorexic and includes strategies to help them begin to heal. The DVD Married and Alone is also helpful for the spouse and the anorexic. I recommend the anorexic and the spouse view both of these DVDs together. Also, the two marriage books Intimacy: A 100 Day Guide to Lasting Relationships and The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle are also very helpful, as the couple moves away from anorexia into intimacy.

Chapter Twelve

Impact on You

Living with a sex addict definitely has its consequences. Even before disclosure or exposure of adultery, there is an addictive process that impacts both of you. The addict is aware of his double life, the lies, as well as his guilt and shame. He was fully aware it was causing an impact on both of you. The spouse was, oftentimes, totally unaware of what she was living with.

Over time, the impact of the unknown addiction will have an effect on the marriage and the spouse of the addict. Even if you grew up in a wonderful family, made great choices in life and were successful, there would still be an impact on you, as the spouse of a sex addict.

I can hear it now, that creeping thought in your brain that goes something like, “Oh great, he cheated, and somehow, I am sick.” That is not my heart at all. I’ve worked harder than anyone to rid our field of the thought that spouses

of sex addicts are innately broken because of their choosing, or being chosen by, a sex addict.

I don’t believe every sex addict’s spouse is a codependent, sexual abuse survivor or a child of a sex addict, trying to work through some issue from their family of origin. These descriptions may apply to some women in this situation but definitely not all.

I have had the privilege of meeting some of the healthiest women who were married to a sex addict. Many have had a good family of origin, self-confidence, healthy sexuality and are even be financially successful. It was very clear she didn’t have issues.

As we continue, please understand my heart. In most cases, sex addiction does impact the spouse. I want to share with you the major impacts on a wife of a sex addict. I know women cheat as well, and this also impacts the faithful husband. However, there is no substantial study on the male spouse to be able to provide real data.

The spouses of sex addicts have been studied. In my book Partners: Healing from His Addiction we had 85 wives of sex addicts answer a survey. Their results to this survey are what I would like to share with you. My hope is that in reading some of these very common impacts on a wife of a sex addict, you realize the residual you may be experiencing is very common.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem is important to every human being. Every woman wants to feel good about herself. This self-esteem is often a collective collage for women on how they see

themselves, their relationships, family, utilization of their talents and integrity in doing what they feel is right.

There are many variables to a married woman’s self-esteem. However, one of the impacting factors can be, and often is, the quality of relationship with her husband. If the husband is a sex addict that limits the quality of relationship in several ways. He is often emotionally, morally and spiritually immature. He is prone to be more selfish in the marriage and less of an adult in decisions pertaining to parental, household and financial matters.

As a spouse, you're more likely to feel like you have an extra child than a man in the house. If he is acting out often, you receive his self-hatred thrown at you through criticism or avoidance. You don't really feel accepted and celebrated for who you really are, because he can't see the real you that often. Because of his addiction, he may complain about you sexually or talk about your appearance.

If you're married to the anorexic-type sex addict, you are being starved emotionally, blamed constantly and feel untouchable often. You have the worst of both, neglect from the anorexia and the impact of his addiction, choosing to engage in adultery.

I say all this to simply say it's logical that living with a sex addict would impact the self-esteem of most women. In our survey, 65 percent said during their relationship with the active sex addict, they had low to very low self-esteem. Also, those women who had said that prior to their relationship with a sex addict, their self-esteem was high, 25 percent. However, during the relationship with

the addict, only 5 percent said their self esteem was high.

The women in this study stated before their relationship with the sex addict, they rated their self-esteem as average, 40 percent. During the relationship with the sex addict, only 20 percent reported their self-esteem as average. That drop in self-esteem is very common. Also, the women reported significant improvement in self esteem, as they worked on their recovery. You may or may not have been impacted in regards to your self esteem, but it is very likely and normal that you have, especially since your sex addicted spouse went over the line and traumatized your life with adultery.

Depression

We are all aware of how popular depression has become in America. I, like you, have seen the countless commercials and magazine articles advertising antidepressants. We are also aware that Americans are taking antidepressants more than ever. Yet, most people, who are not clinicians, couldn't really tell you the symptoms of depression.

I want to start by giving you the symptoms of depression, so you know exactly what we are talking about before we apply this to the spouse of a sex addict. To be assessed for depression, you can go online and find many tests to help you self-assess depression. Below you will find the symptoms checklist most commonly seen for depression. You would need five yes answers to consider depression as an issue.

1. Sleep disturbance (too much or too little)
2. Overeating or not eating enough

3. Low energy
4. Restless feelings
5. Difficulty with concentration
6. Difficulty making decisions
7. Hopeless feelings
8. Suicidal thoughts
9. Diminished pleasure

Now, before we go any further, if you just found out your husband has been having sex with others, you would have some of these symptoms short term, as a result of the trauma and grief. So, look at these symptoms as more long-standing issues.

Thirty-nine percent of the women in our survey stated prior to the relationship with the sex addict, they struggled with depression. These same women then answered the question about their struggles with depression during their relationship with the sex addict. Eighty-two percent of the women said they struggled with depression in their relationship with a sex addict. That's a 43 percent increase of depression with a woman married to a sex addict.

Depression is a real consequence for many spouses of sex addicts. This is normal and may help explain some of the changes you have seen over the years in your life. Again, I want to say this is normal, and I want to give you a look at the entire symptom list from our survey to illustrate which symptoms of depression seem to be higher for the wife of a sex addict.

Low energy or fatigue 82%
Depressed mood 82%
Unable to sleep or oversleeping 78%
Feelings of hopelessness 78%
Poor appetite or overeating 74%
Feelings of restlessness/slowed down 71%
Poor concentration/difficulty
making decisions 69%
Diminished interest or pleasure
in most activities 62%
Suicidal thoughts 33%
Food

That's right. We need to talk about food. When anyone is in pain, they want to medicate. Some exercise, others work, some sleep and some eat. As a wife of a sex addict, oftentimes, the stage for pain is already set. Now, we just have to see which medication the wife is going to choose to medicate or deal with the world she finds herself in.

During their relationship with a sex addict, 62 percent of women stated they felt they struggled with an eating disorder. Fifty-nine percent stated they felt they have turned to food during their relationship with the sex addict. Of those stating they felt they struggled with an eating disorder, 84 percent stated it was overeating, 11 percent

stated it was anorexia and 5 percent stated it was bulimia.

So, if you gained weight as a result of living with a sex addict, that is very normal too. Not all women turn to food, but it's safe to say many do. If that's you, it is an affect of living with the addiction.

Dependency

Addicts marry every spectrum of women. There is not a one-type-fits-all type, which some in our field suggest. Like many people, addicts marry young, marry for multiple reasons and marry women at every dependency level, depending on their need or availability of women to marry.

Let's talk broadly about dependency. The healthiest place is a person who is able to have a clear sense of self, clear boundaries, the ability to trust and be able to be interdependent by choice in a relationship. The next lower stage of dependency is the woman who has a clear sense of self, clear boundaries but doesn't choose to trust and has independence as her primary relating style. The next stage down is the woman who is not that clear about herself, boundaries are difficult, relates more from need than choice, and her relationship style is more dependent. The last stage in dependency is a woman who has a very poor view of self, has little to no boundaries and relates out of fear and need. She also can't make choices within the relationship and feels trapped to depend on the relationship.

Now, let's talk about the sexual recovery movement. Our movement developed in the heyday of adult children of alcoholics and the codependency movement. If you were married to an addict/alcoholic of any kind, you were au

tomatically labeled as a codependent. Without investigation, the pop writers of our movement bought that idea hook, line and sinker. We were seeing many codependent types, but the generalization to include all spouses was not grounded or applicable to all women married to sex addicts. If you are seeing a therapist who still buys into this, you might want to start therapy with another trained therapist.

Codependency in its simplest form is a person who depends on a person who depends on an addiction. It's the wife or husband of the alcoholic, drug addict, workaholic, sex addict or any other form of addict. The high of the codependent is avoiding their real life and feelings by participating in the chaos of the addict.

Most wives I meet didn't even have a clue their spouse was a sex addict.

Unlike alcoholics, drug addicts or workaholics, sex addicts leave very little evidence of their addiction.

In our survey of spouses of sex addicts, 85 percent stated they felt codependent during their relationship with the sex addict. My clinical experience of more than 20 years also would concur that about 15 percent of women who are married to a sex addict are the top tier of healthy on their dependency, and the majority have work to do to move into more healthy relating styles.

Anorexia

Earlier, we discussed the concept of sexual/intimacy anorexia, as it relates to the addiction. Now, I want to also walk though this concept, as it relates to the spouse of a sex addict. In an unpublished journal article on sexual anorexia called Sexual Anorexia: A New Paradigm for

Hyposexual Disorder (available at www.sexaddict.com,) I surveyed three populations for sexual anorexia: male addicts, female addicts and spouses of sex addicts. Here are the results of the prevalence of sexual anorexia in their population.

39% of spouses of addicts are anorexic

29% of male sex addicts are anorexic

39% of female sex addicts are anorexic

At this point, let's review the characteristics of sexual/intimacy anorexia for you. Now remember, at this time to apply it to yourself. If you have it, your anorexia can be reactive, or it may be independent of your spouse's sexual addiction or anorexia.

Withholding love from spouse

Withholding praise or appreciation from spouse

Controlling spouse by silence or anger

Ongoing or ungrounded criticism of spouse, caus ing isolation

Withholding sex from spouse

Unwillingness to discuss your feelings with spouse

Staying so busy you have no relational time for spouse

Making issues/problems in the relationship about spouse instead of owning your own issues

Controlling or shaming spouse with money issues

If you have five or more of these symptoms, you might want to watch the Sexual Anorexia and Married and Alone DVD. If your anorexia is a residual from the relationship, it will move naturally into remission. If, however, it is yours independent of his addiction, you will need to do your own recovery.

Now, let's look at the results of the survey that spouses of sex addicts responded to about their symptoms of sexual/intimacy anorexia. As you look at

this, it will be easy to see 30 to 40 percent of women identified with many of these symptoms on the checklist.

39% Withholding love from spouse

39% Withholding praise or appreciation from spouse

52% Controlling spouse by silence or anger

35% Ongoing or ungrounded criticism of spouse, causing isolation

34% Withholding sex from spouse

34% Unwillingness to discuss feelings with spouse

36% Staying so busy you have no relational time for spouse

34% Making issues/problems in the relation- ship about spouse instead of owning your own issues

21% Controlling or shaming spouse with money issues

Interestingly enough with recovery, the symptoms of anorexia dropped significantly. Here is the same symptom checklist women stated they had during their recovery. You can see that recovery definitely has an impact on the residual affects of living with the sex addict.

18% Withholding love from spouse

25% Withholding praise or appreciation from spouse

25% Controlling spouse by silence or anger

20% Ongoing or ungrounded criticism of spouse, causing isolation

25% Withholding sex from spouse

18% Unwillingness to discuss feelings with spouse

18% Staying so busy you have no relational time for spouse

22% Making issues/problems in the relation ship about spouse instead of owning your own issues

5% Controlling or shaming spouse with money issues

Other Behaviors

Granted, when you live with an addict of any kind, it can get crazy, the games they play, the immaturity and the unmet needs in your relationship due to the addiction. Combine all that with kids, homework, friends, family,

work, plans, medical issues and any women’s life with a sex addict could easily feel out of control. When we find ourselves in a crazy making environment, we have to adapt. In adapting or trying to live in this environment, all kinds of behaviors can develop. In the Partners Recovery Guide, I created a list of what we call “acting out behaviors” for the spouse of a sex addict. I added this list to the survey we did for the book Partners: Healing from His Addiction book.

Below is a list of these behaviors. Use this or a separate piece of paper to see which of these behaviors has applied to you in living with a sex addict.

Checking up on him
Being controlling
Looking for more proof
Spiritualizing or rationalizing staying together when he is not recovering
Feeling threatened or insecure around other women when you are with your addict
Not having sex or being hypersexual
Reinforcing your fears of abandonment
Trying to think about what they may be thinking about
Not being able to separate when it makes sense
Sarcasm
Scoping out women he might be looking at
Using his problem not to deal with your feelings
Rages
Shaming him
Changing your boundaries with your partner
Pretending you are in a perfect relationship
Fantasizing about him acting out
Spiritualizing the problem
Hitting him

I hope you were able to use the checklist to see some of these adaptive behaviors. Now, let's compare your answers to the survey, as I think it may help you feel just a little bit more normal.

85% Checking up on him
78% Being controlling

76% Looking for more proof

68% Spiritualizing or rationalizing staying to gether when he is not recovering

68% Feeling threatened or insecure around other women when you are with your ad dict

58% Not having sex or being hypersexual

66% Reinforcing your fears of abandonment

65% Trying to think about what they may be thinking about

64% Not being able to separate when it makes sense

61% Sarcasm

58% Scoping out women he might be looking at

58% Using his problem not to deal with your feelings

54% Rages

52% Shaming him

51% Changing your boundaries with your partner

47% Pretending you are in a perfect relationship

46% Fantasizing about him acting out

36% Spiritualizing the problem

18% Hitting him

Living with an addict has its impact. Even if all was well before this relationship, you would do well to work your own recovery and attend a support group. You might even want to do some individual therapy as well if you have some of the impacts from the addiction that most women have.

Your journey of recovery is totally your responsibility. It's true he shot the bullet, but you're the one who will have to do the physical therapy, so to speak, to get your life back. I want to encourage you that you're worth the journey, regardless of his past or present choices. You can be as healthy as you can as a gift to yourself and to all those you love.

Chapter Thirteen

The Whole Truth

We have all been to a movie or have seen a television show with a court scene where someone is called to testify. They walk to their seat next to the judge, and they are sworn in. They put their hand on the Bible and say something like, "I swear to tell the whole truth and nothing but the truth."

Truth is critical to recovery. However, I want to engage in a dialogue about truth. I have noticed truth is even more critical for women. In my 22 years of working with couples, the women clients I have met have no design to deal with lies. Truth, even painful truth, appears to be better for them. Occasionally, I'll

meet a spouse that just doesn't want to know anything from the past and just move forward, but they are few and far between.

Why?

Most spouses of sex addicts want to know the truth. Why they want to know the truth varies, but let me give you my thoughts on this. They rarely want to know, so they can shame, humiliate or beat up their spouse, unless the spouse is anorexic and uses this as a way to maintain no intimacy in the marriage.

Most spouses want to know, because they don't want secrets in their relationship. Intuitively, the spouse knows if there are secrets, the addict can't heal. They know if the addict protects the addiction, they are most likely in for more affairs, pain and humiliation in their own life. So, many spouses have said something like, "You might do this to me once, but never again. I won't ever go through this pain again."

The reason they want the truth is they don't ever, ever want their heart ripped out, stomped on. They don't want to feel the betrayal, rejection and total loss of the world as they knew it again. Addicts don't easily understand the absolute global damage they cause in their spouse's world. For the spouse, it's like a nuclear bomb in every area of their life.

Usually, the fear that anything could detonate a bomb like this again is the driver. The fact that they can't trust the addict compounds this dilemma. They believe if they know the truth, they can then gain insight into the variables that caused the affair. If you control the variables, you stop the bomb.

Unfortunately, we are dealing with an addicted human so knowing every detail doesn't guarantee success. The

addict has way too much control over the details of his acting out behaviors so that knowing the detailed truth cannot promise recovery. However, knowing the truth is still critical to recovery, so stay engaged in this dialogue a little longer.

Danger

I want to share with you something I have learned along the way while working with addicts and their spouses. Truth is one issue and details are another issue altogether. Let me talk about details for a moment.

A spouse can have all kinds of questions for the addict, and the addict is very emotional just being caught. The spouse might ask, "When you did this, where did you do this sex act? Was she skinny, young? Did you like her hair? What restaurant and hotels did you go to?"

I had an addict who was an international business man. He had three affairs in three different major international cities. His wife refuses to ever go to those cities, even though she likes them, because it reminds her of the affair. One

addict told his wife the other woman was Asian. Now, she looks at all Asian women as a threat to her marriage. One addict disclosed a certain restaurant he took the other woman to. The wife not only won't go to that restaurant, she won't go to any restaurant that serves that type of food.

The danger of details for the spouse is they become a permanent part of their memory. The addict was often in an altered state due to the addiction, so these memories fade and have no real meaning to them. The spouse, however, is fully present while hearing the details.

I have had so many women tell me, they still are pricked by a detail or many details almost daily, even a decade later. The danger of details is that the spouse is most likely not to forget. The details will most likely change your life. Before going into details, you might want to have a counseling session and work through this with a therapist.

The general rule of thumb is to write out everything you want to know, review it with a therapist and then visit it monthly. At the end of the year, if you still want to know, then consider it. I am talking about details, not truth.

Truth

As we engage this conversation, the obvious question that comes up for spouses and addicts is what truth is. Each couple will negotiate somewhat on what truth is necessary for both to move forward. If the spouse is willing to move forward, they feel it's fair to know what they are moving away from. Again, if you get into a little battle with the addict on whom they are protecting, then you will need to establish the boundaries of truth.

Let me share with you the basics of truth most couples agree on.

1. When did you first have a sex act (hand, oral, vaginal or anal) outside of the current marriage?

2. When was the last time you had a sex act (hand, oral, vaginal or anal) outside of marriage?

3. Since married, how many people have you had sex acts with?

4. Since _____, have you had communication

with any of the people you have had sex acts with outside of marriage?

That's the basic truth information. Usually, each couple has some variables they want to clear up as well, so let's engage in a few of these.

· Did you pay for sex?

· Did you have sex with someone of the same gender?

· Does your spouse know any of the people you had sex with outside of marriage?

· Are any of the people you had sex acts with coworkers?

I recommend a therapist be present as you both work through these variables.

For the coworker question, the spouse wants to know if you're safe at work or is the workplace now a threat to the marriage. The same is true if she personally knows any of the people you acted out with at the gym, in the neighborhood, at the country club or wherever. A great question we use on the polygraph is, "Is your spouse aware of all the behaviors in your sex addiction?" If he is into pornography and masturbation, then the question about strip clubs and massage parlors wouldn't need to be addressed if she already knows the extent of his behavior.

Truth is a big issue, and usually, I address this the first day of an intensive. Emotionally, I have seen hundreds of pounds lifted from the spouse's soul when they know the truth. Actually, in many cases, the truth is not nearly as bad as all the ideas that were running through the spouse's mind.

Polygraph

Drug addicts have urine tests of various kinds, alcoholics have the breathalyzer and overeaters have the scale. These are all objective measures to assess the success or failure of the addict in recovery. The sex addicts have the polygraph.

For well over 15 years, I have utilized the services of a polygraph examiner in my office. I'll never forget the first couple I recommended the use of a polygraph to breakthrough in therapy. Janet was an almost 40 year old, blond woman. She was married before to a sex addict, who had multiple affairs, and it destroyed her marriage, which ended in divorce. Over the years, she started to date, trust again and married Lance.

Lance had the kind of job where he was mobile most of the day, and clients regularly paid him in cash. One day, Janet found an old porn magazine in a box in Lance's closet. She went off on him. She started to read about sex addiction and came in to talk to me by herself.

She discussed her past husband, who viewed porn, used prostitutes and affairs as part of his sex addiction. She was convinced Lance was a sex addict, and she needed to divorce him next week. I asked if I could meet with Lance first to determine if Lance was a sex addict. I met with Lance, did an assessment, and he was not a sex addict. The porn magazine was 9 years old, and he didn't know it was in the box.

Well, we had a real problem. Lance and I knew he wasn't a sex addict, but Janet was more of the mindset of "I know the truth, don't bother me with the facts." Then the idea hit. So, I asked Lance if he would be willing to take a

polygraph, so there was something objective to give Janet to save his marriage. He thought that was a great idea.

I found a great polygraph examiner that we met with the next week. Janet

agreed the results were truth, not feelings. Lance took the polygraph and passed with flying colors. They are still married because of the polygraph and Lance's willingness to do this to save his marriage.

I have seen the polygraph save countless marriages. The argument of "just trust me, even though I lied for two decades, I promise to stop" isn't a rational decision for an intelligent spouse. They are more apt to divorce than trust again. The polygraph gives the spouse a tool to assess if their trust is being responded to by the addict being trustworthy.

The polygraph for the addict is awesome as well. It totally destroys the secret world, past, present and future. No more secrets, shame or guilt. The addict receives the opportunity of a clean slate to start over again. The polygraph has killed so many temptations to act out or even contact old or new people to have sex with. So many addicts have told me that if it wasn't for the polygraph, they would not have been able to stay clean, and I believe them.

Using the Polygraph

As I said, we have been using the polygraph for more than 15 years. If you are going to incorporate a polygraph as part of the recovery of the addict in a marriage, I want to give you some tips here.

The first and most important thing to know is not all polygraph examiners are the same. Some have incredible

training as FBI, CIA or police officers. Some work part time at the grocery store (true story). You want a credible examiner if you are not coming to Colorado Springs.

You can call a few criminal attorneys. They usually have a name or two to offer you. After calling a few attorneys, generally the same name comes up repeatedly, who could be a good choice.

I highly, highly recommend you use a polygraph with a therapist as part of the therapy process. The safety of developing questions together with a therapist and processing the results with a therapist are very important. That is the way we do it with a 3-day intensive and the followup polygraph as well.

If you're going to a local polygraph examiner, be sure to know how many questions, how long they take and how many charts they run, as well as the cost. Also, if they give inconclusive answers, this can be nerve wracking, especially if it is a very important question.

You can set up a phone appointment and talk to a therapist to make sure you have the questions you want and to make sure the wording is specific enough. For example, did you have sex outside your marriage? A person could engage hundreds of times in oral sex, had jobs or lap dances to ejaculation, and the spouse wouldn't know, because the wording of the question was not precise.

In the AASAT training, I created two DVDs on the polygraph for therapists. If you are doing the polygraph locally, this might be very helpful for you.

Lastly, on the subject of polygraphs, you want to think of

the polygraph as an ongoing therapeutic tool in recovery. For those doing 3-day intensives, they often want to do that while they are doing the intensive. However, it is optional. Some couples elect not to do polygraphs. If they do utilize the polygraph, then usually the addict does a second one 90 days later, then 90 days after that. If they are clean, then I recommend every 6 months for a year and then annually for as long as the couple desires.

I hope this conversation about truth, details and polygraphs has been helpful. Let's go back to John and Marlene. John passed his test and has been honest with his wife. They were able to negotiate a fresh start and rebuild their marriage. Fifty percent of the time, starting out honestly about behaviors like John did is not the case. The addict needs the polygraph to even begin becoming honest. Later in recovery, most addicts do so much better with their honesty on the polygraph and actually thank me for it.

The addict has learned how to live without a secret world, to have integrity and live without shame. Most of the time in my office, the spouse can trust, relax and respect their spouse again over time.

Chapter Fourteen

Can We Heal?

Clark and Kat have been married for 10 years. They

are in their thirties with three small children.

Clark's sex addiction has been active since the age of 14 years old. Masturbating to porn continued through their entire marriage. He has also had six short relationships outside of his marriage to Kat.

Clark has done several things in his life the hard way and starting recovery was no different. Two years ago, he was caught by his wife, who checked his cell phone and found out he was having an affair. He didn't tell Kat about the two women prior to getting caught. He was caught again after this. Kat knew there was more. After several of their all-night conversations, Clark cowardly gave Kat a little bit more information every few weeks.

Even in a session with me during their 3-Day Intensive, Clark coughed up the final bit of information to Kat.

This is absolutely the worst way to start recovery. It's better for a clean cut of facts than a drawn out tearing of the spouse's soul. To her, it felt as if she would get up, and then he would knock her down again. Day one of the intensive was tough for Clark and Kat. During Kat's individual session on the second day of their intensive, she was talking about the support group she went to and heard

how other marriages have made it.

Kat, with her red-hair and green eyes that were still puffy from crying, looked at me with a heart as open as it can be. She had a question that needed to be answered, “Dr. Weiss, can we really get better, really?”

I leaned forward and handed Kat a tissue, because a tear was starting to leave her puffy, green eyes. I said, “Can I be honest with you?” She said, “Of course.” “Let’s talk a few minutes about this. This is not as simple as yes or no. There are cases where, yes, couples absolutely can recover, and there are cases where, no, they can’t. Let me talk to you about the answers, then you can tell me what you think, okay?” “Okay,” Kat said. Let me take you through these same conversations I have regularly with open hearted women and men.

Three Recoveries

When a couple has been hit by sex addiction that culminates in adultery, recovery becomes a three part process. It is important to understand that for recovery to happen, each leg on this three-legged stool must heal for people like Kat and Clark to have the recovery they want.

The first part of recovery critical for healing involves, of course, the addict. If the addict becomes sober, then and

only then, can they be able to contribute to the relationship in recovery. If a spouse stays and turns a blind eye to the sex addiction (“At least he doesn’t hit me. He’s a good dad. I don’t have to work”), the addict stays sick, and the relationship stays toxic. Ultimately, the spouse has to sacrifice something, whether it is self esteem, self respect, their health, countless other losses or even the loss of their children. That’s not recovery by any stretch of the imagination.

However, the addict alone can’t do everything. He may attend meetings, be involved in therapy, complete workbooks, make support calls and even take a polygraph. Yet, if the other two pieces of recovery don’t take place, then a successful marriage recovery won’t necessarily happen.

I’ll never forget Clayton, a 40 year old professional man. He had a sex addiction to porn and had sex with two different people outside of marriage. He started his recovery very strong. He had a sponsor and even ended up a leader in a 12 step group. He was “Mister Recovery.” He took his polygraph each time, as requested by his wife, Carol. It was Thursday, and he just completed his yearly polygraph. I called Carol with the positive results.

The following Monday, he called to see me right away. Clayton stood six feet tall, but he looked smaller as he walked into my office. He sat down, and it looked like he saw a ghost, which was starkly different than when I saw him on Thursday, beaming after successfully passing his polygraph.

He was quiet after I asked him what he needed to talk about. He looked at

me like a bearer of bad news. He

said, “She’s gone.” That Sunday morning when they were getting out of bed, she rolled over to Clayton and looked at him right in the eye. Very calmly but decisively, she told

Clayton, “I can’t do this. I filed for divorce.” She explained to him she just couldn’t live a life knowing he cheated on her. She was proud of him that he became sober and hoped he would be a good dad. She just didn’t want to be married to someone who could cheat. She did follow through. She wasn’t angry or vindictive in the divorce, but she just couldn’t do this journey.

You see the second leg in this recovery stool is the spouse’s recovery. It’s critical the spouse address any of the residuals of living with a sex addicted spouse. They do well to work through the anger, grief work, forgiveness and embrace their spouse again.

I find spouses that do their own recovery by attending a support group, making their calls and doing their workbooks do the absolute best, by far. Often, they discover issues about themselves they address, which allows them to be a healthier person, better parent and spouse.

Recovery is a journey for the spouse. It is also a choice. I have seen spouses make the choice of recovery when the addict chose not to recover. They move through the divorce, find recovery for themselves and, afterward, choose healthier people to share their life with.

The third part of this recovery stool is the marriage. The marriage is an entity itself that needs to be in recovery. The marriage also needs to repair from the devastation of the sex addiction that manifested in adultery.

Briefly, let me explain what marriage recovery looks like. Before I do, let me suggest some materials that can really help. The AASAT training has several DVDs, addressing couple’s issues in recovery. The book Intimacy: A 100 Day Guide to Lasting Relationships and the book The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle could be very helpful in your couple’s recovery.

The basics of couple’s recovery are to restore and maintain the healthy structures of a marriage. Briefly, I will walk you through each structure. The addiction wrecks havoc with marriages. Strangely enough, some marriages are healthier to start with and others start at ground zero. Also, if the couple has sexual or intimacy anorexia, the marriage is hit with two major, addictive processes, which leaves the marriage very depleted.

Also, each couple is unique. Their history prior to relationships, their relationship, their worldview, their personalities, the stages of their life and their children create a very unique couple that chooses recovery.

Some marriages are also at the early stages of a separation and that also

throws another variable into the mix. Separation must be looked at as a personal situation to see if it is serving the goal of recovery for all involved.

Now, let's get to each basic structure and give you some ideas on each. I realize marriage recovery is also a process, so start with what you can and work toward others. Where you have to do the hard work will be unique to your own relationship.

Dating: It's important for any couple to date (no children) for 3 to 4 hours of fun. Rotate who is responsible for the

date, to pick the day and activity. The role of the other person is to be the happy camper. So, pick how often you want to date and stick to it. If you slack off, set up consequences, so you keep the discipline of dating in your marriage.

Feelings: It's important to share feelings with each other daily. Go to the appendix for the Feelings Exercise and the rules.

Spiritually: I find it very important that recovering couples connect spiritually. If you have a faith, then practice it together. If you don't have a faith, then just pray together daily regardless, so you can grow together spiritually.

Socially: It really helps for couples to have friends. Sometimes, however, this is where the addict has selected victims to act out with, so this might be a tough process. Usually, as the couple does their individual and marriage recovery, this one usually takes care of itself. This might be as simple as once a month get-together with another couple or other couples.

Sexually: Each couple walks through this differently. Eventually, you want to set up an agreement sexually. This simply means you discuss, like adults, how often you want sex, set up a way to accommodate this and rotate responsibly. For more on this, you can read Intimacy: A 100 Day Guide to Lasting Relationships.

Financially: Couples who roughly agree on a budget, plan for the future (college for children or retirement) and have boundaries around debt do better than those who don't. I would recommend you talk to a CPA and financial advisor

to create a plan you both agree with.

I realize these are broad strokes, but as I said, each couple is so unique that marriage recovery is really unique to each couple. I would suggest if the sex addiction has resulted in affairs, get involved in telephone counseling or pursue local help, the earlier the better. I have seen couples look for help where the therapist really didn't understand sex addiction. This is why I have devoted an entire chapter on this for you.

Now, let's turn back to my discussion with Kat. "If Clark does his recovery, you can have the miracle of recovery. If you do your recovery, you can have the miracle of recovery for yourself. If you both work on the marriage, your

marriage can have recovery as well. If Clark, you and both of you do the work, you can have the recovery you heard the woman talk about last night in your group. If one of these legs doesn't do the work, you will have less than the miracle of recovery."

I have seen couples where one or both spouses don't do recovery and the marriage ends. More often, however, I have seen two damaged, hurt people pull their resources together, work really hard and receive what I call the miracle of recovery. Endless times, I have heard couples like Clark and Kat say months or years later that their marriage is better than ever. I love those miracles.

Chapter Fifteen

Professional Helpers

You have read many stories about how those who
are addicted to adultery due to sexual addiction
have hurt themselves, their spouse, their marriage and families. I have seen more than two thousand of these collisions, which are similar to watching the survivors of car accidents.

You may not have been the one driving the car. Usually the addict is driving, but you were in the accident. Almost everyone in the collision of sexual addiction is damaged. Even if you were perfectly healthy before a car accident, you can have minor or major pain. Depending on your particular previous health, the extent of the damage may be different for each, but my experience is there will be damage.

Like in a car accident, even if you don't look injured, most people would recommend you go to the emergency room

just to make sure. Sometimes, you go and they affirm the limits of damage. Sometimes, they find the damage done only by the accident, and other times, they find other issues you didn't even know about. Regardless after the accident you find yourself in, if you're the spouse or the sex addict, it is best to seek professional help.

Like going to the hospital, there are so many professionals who do so many things based on different training, theories and practices. The field of therapy is so much like that and, honestly, can be really confusing. If you need a trained specialist after an accident, a general practitioner will be of little help to you. When you're in a wreck from sex addiction, general counseling may or may not be what is best for your situation.

In the following pages, I want to expose you to our field. The letters after a name indicate how they have been trained, so you can decide if this is a good fit for you. Most therapists care and care is important, but you will also want results to move on with your life after the accident. If you can find local help, that's

great. However, remember you can also receive specialized help over the telephone from anywhere in the world or do a 3-Day Intensive to get started on the right track for your specific accident.

Counselors Certified to Treat Sex Addiction

A certified therapist in sexual addiction recovery trained through the American Association for Sex Addiction Therapists is a master's level, or higher, counselor who is licensed by their state. They have undergone a minimum of 45 hours of training by Dr. Weiss. During their training, they have been supervised for a minimum of 6 months by

Dr. Weiss, or a certified supervisor, and have completed a competency exam in sexual addiction.

These counselors have been trained in the appropriate assessment of the six types of sex addicts. Due to their training in sex addiction, they also are very aware of the therapy needs for both the spouse and the marriage.

The counselor who has invested him or herself to be trained in the field of sex addiction is the best first pick. Make sure they have been trained by AASAT, so they will be utilizing the paradigms and assessments that have been tested by time to be successful.

Psychiatrist

Psychiatrists are medical doctors. They attend several years of medical school and are trained to look at biological reasons for problems with the human being. They are trained in medications that influence the chemistry of the brain. This professional can be a valuable help or support to a sex addict or the spouse if either has been previously diagnosed with a disorder of depression, manic-depression or other disorder that requires the supervision of a medical doctor. He or she can prescribe medication the individual might need to feel better, such as antidepressant medication.

If the psychiatrist has had addiction training or has had exposure to workshops dealing with sexual addiction, he or she may be of some help to you as you work on your issues.

Psychologist

A psychologist is quite different from a psychiatrist. Although they are often confused, as they both have the designation of doctor. Psychologists (Ph.D., Ed.D. or Psy.D.) are not medical doctors. They have not attended and graduated from medical school. They are not licensed physicians. Therefore, they cannot prescribe medication. They spend their educational training looking at the cognitive, or thinking, aspects of the human being, such as Intelligence Quotient, reading and math levels, psychological testing and the like. He or she is often trained to do individual, group and marital therapy. They can also provide

psychological testing to evaluate other possible disorders.

A psychologist with a doctorate in psychology can be of great help to the sex addict and spouse, especially if he or she has had experience working with sex addicts. A psychologist can be of help in therapy to a sexual addict, especially if the addict is experiencing any psychological disorder, such as depression, suicidal thoughts or a compulsive eating, sleeping or alcohol disorder. Often, these survival mechanisms respond well to treatment under the care of a trained and licensed psychologist.

Licensed Professional Counselor

The Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC) has either master's level training, or Ph.D. level training with expertise in counseling or another field, such as sociology or anthropology. They can acquire a counselor's license through taking certain counseling classes. A master's level degree is the minimum required for the LPC in

most states. The master's level professional may also have a degree in an area other than counseling, such as a Master's in Education (M.Ed.). During or after his or her graduate degree program, they may take 10 or 15 classes in counseling to acquire a professional counseling license from the state he or she practices in. This is something to note in your initial interview with a Licensed Professional Counselor. You can ask about their background, because some licenses may not require a degree in counseling in some states. This can be important for addicts to know when they are seeking help for their own issues or for the issues regarding their family, marriage or children.

Much like a psychologist, the master's level LPC can be a great resource for a sex addict as they deal with family and individual problems. An LPC is usually able to identify and deal with depression, obsessive/compulsive disorders, addictive disorders, codependency and other issues. Like psychiatrists and psychologists, LPCs have ongoing training and, in most states, will have a more reasonable fee structure for those seeking counseling. In finding a Licensed Professional Counselor, ask how many years they have been practicing, and review the "Questions to Ask" section at the end of this chapter to determine the counselor's experience with sexual addiction treatment.

Social Workers

Social workers will have either a bachelor's or a master's level education. They may have several levels of certification, which can differ from state to state. They may be a Certified Social Worker (CSW) or a master's level Social Worker (MSSW), depending on their experience. Their training is mostly from a social perspective.

Seeing issues from a social perspective is beneficial and can be helpful.

Unless specific training is given to the Social Worker in the field of addictions, there may be limits as to how helpful they can be. However, if there is a need for social services for the family or for the sex addict, such as finding residential treatment, a social worker can usually be quite resourceful. In some states, the social worker is much like a Licensed Professional Counselor, as they provide individual, group or family therapy. In other states and situations, they may do social histories and things of that nature. In finding a social worker, you will need to find out what educational training and experience they have had. As you seek help for either your own issues or those of your family, you may find this will be a very beneficial relationship to you. Again, refer to the "Questions to Ask" section at the end of this chapter for further information.

Pastoral Counselors

Pastoral counseling is also available in many areas. Pastoral counselors include people who have professional degrees in counseling from an accredited seminary or institution. They may have a doctoral level education (Ph.D.), or they may have master's level education. Pastors of local congregations would be included in this category. Although most pastors minimally have a bachelor's level education, some may have no formal education at all. Such counselors can be significantly helpful to those who have strong church, Christian or religious background. Pastoral counselors can be helpful in your recovery, because development of spirituality is a significant part of recovery for the whole person.

The strengths of a pastoral counselor would include their

spiritual training, coupled with professional experience and training in the field of addictions or counseling and psychological training. With such training, a pastoral counselor could be beneficial.

Some possible weaknesses of the pastoral counselor might be a lack of training or skill in some areas. The pastor who has had no training in counseling may be of brief support to the sex addict and their spouse. They might not be as beneficial in resolving personal issues or identifying other psychological problems that might exist. Usually, pastors are not trained counselors but can be a great support as far as accountability to the sex addict in the recovery process of sexual addiction.

Like all other professionals discussed, the pastoral counselor should be asked the appropriate questions from the "Questions to Ask" section. This is very important. Often, their understanding of addictions and sexual issues can influence how therapeutic they can be to you.

Certified Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselors or Licensed Chemical Dependency Counselors

Certified Alcohol and Drug Addiction Counselors (CADAC) and Licensed

Chemical Dependency Counselors (LCDC) are available in most areas, although their designations may differ from state to state. These are counselors with a variety of training backgrounds. They may have a Ph.D., a master's or bachelor's degree or may have had no formal education whatsoever. Again, the training of an individual counselor is very significant. This cannot be stressed more than in the field of alcohol and drug addictions.

In some states, individuals recovering from alcoholism or drug addiction who want to enter the helping profession find such certification is the easiest way into this field. They do have a valid experience and understanding of the addiction process, as well as understanding of the recovery process. However, caution must be used in that recovering people often have multiple addiction problems. This is something to be noted when interviewing an addiction counselor.

In addition, it is important to ask how they have integrated a Twelve-Step philosophy into their own lives. Our personal opinion is that unless a counselor has completed at least a fourth and fifth step and has begun the process of making amends, his or her perceptions might still be clouded by guilt and shame. The counselor might not be able to facilitate the growth you need in your life.

Addiction counselors do have some strengths, however. They are often trained in family systems theory. They are familiar with the dynamics of addiction and usually come from a Twelve-Step perspective. Often, these counselors can be found working in alcohol and drug addiction treatment centers. Sometimes, they practice alongside a psychiatrist, psychologist or master's level counselor. They are often supervised in their work by a degreed professional. You can ask if their case load is being supervised, by who and details about the supervision process. This is important, because some supervisors, due to time constraints, will not review each case thoroughly. Another benefit to an addiction counselor is that he or she would be aware of recovery groups in the area and the importance of support groups.

Marriage and Family Counselors

Marriage and family counselors can have a variety of degrees in education also. They may have a Ph.D. or a master's degree in marriage and family counseling. Marriage and family counselors come from a family systems approach, taking into consideration the needs of the entire family, not just the needs of one person. Also, they will be highly attuned to how each family member processes problems and how family members interact with each other.

For example, in some addictive systems, the addict is the one who is perceived as needing help. The wife is the one who is strong and "helps" the addict, while the children are her supporters and cheerleaders in helping dad.

From a systems approach, a counselor might look at this situation and say, “Dad needs to be sick, so that Mom can be a helper.” Mom needs to give up the helper role, establish her own identity and boundaries, so if Dad recovers, the family doesn’t need somebody else to be sick, such as the children or the mother herself.

The marriage and family counselor will be highly astute in these matters and can be beneficial to the sex addict, as well as to the family as a whole. Refer to the “Questions to Ask” section to determine what training and experience this counselor has in addictions in general and specifically in sexual addiction, as well as in recovery from sexual addiction.

It is very appropriate to interview the professional you are considering as a therapist. Each addict has a different history and could have possible conflicts with certain professionals due to their past experiences. Also, the many

professionals discussed here represent a sort of continuum of care. At one point in recovery, you might find one type of professional more helpful than another. Many practices include several types of therapists and are able to treat sex addicts from what is known as a multi disciplinary view. When interviewing a potential therapist, consider the following list of questions.

Questions to Ask

1. Do you have experience working with sex addicts?

2. How many sexually addicted clients have you seen in the last two months?

3. Do you have training to do therapy with people with addictions? (State or Board certification)

4. Are you a recovering person working a Twelve-Step program?

5. What books have you read on sexual addiction?

6. Do you have specific training to deal with (if these issues apply to you) rape victims, survivors of child sexual abuse, incest or other trauma?

7. Do you treat the spouses of sex addicts?

8. Is your model of spouses of sex addicts that they have to be sick or codependent?

9. Do you treat the marriage as well as the individual?

10. Do you have groups for sex addicts or their spouses in your office?

11.Have you been trained specifically to treat sex addiction?

Telephone Counseling

The current number of professionals who specifically treat sex addiction with a great deal of success can be limited, even in the larger metropolitan area. Heart to Heart Counseling Centers has established telephone counseling for the sex addict, the partner of a sex addict and for the couple.

This form of counseling is especially helpful for those who travel quite a bit,

because they can call for their appoint-ment from anywhere and speak to the same counselor every week. Telephone counseling is also helpful to those who feel their confidentiality is of utmost importance.

We see many physicians, lawyers, ministers, entrepreneurs and students who don't want to run into their sex addiction counselor at the grocery store. They also don't have to walk into his office where they may be seen by someone they may know. Also, some like it so they don't have to locate a babysitter to set up an appointment. Whatever the reason sex addicts or their spouses have for using the phone for counseling, it has been very successful for their recovery process. Also, there are private practitioners that provide telephone groups for the addict, anorexic or spouse. All providers of telephone groups are AASAT trained.

Your process of recovery may include a therapist at some point. I find the earlier the better to do therapy for most couples. Recently, I counseled a couple in my

office who was dealing with his sex addiction all by themselves for 5 years. This addiction led to adultery. Professional counseling could have saved so much wear and tear on their marriage had they sought help earlier in their recovery.

The addict, spouse and family are worth your best efforts in recovery. I hope this chapter helps you clarify what kind of specialist you need for your specific situation. Good professional help can help you both experience the miracle of recovery sooner rather than later. I hope all who journeyed with me through these pages get their miracle of recovery.

Appendix

FEELINGS EXERCISE

1. I feel (put feeling word here) when (put a present situation).

2. I first remember feeling (put the same feeling word here) when (explain earliest occurrence of this feeling).

Abandoned
Abused
Aching
Accepted
Accused
Accepting
Admired
Adored
Adventurous
Affectionate
Agony
Alienated

Aloof
Aggravated
Agreeable
Aggressive
Alive
Alone
Alluring
Amazed
Amused
Angry
Anguished
Annoyed
Anxious
Apart
Apathetic
Apologetic
Appreciated
Appreciative
Apprehensive
Appropriate
Approved
Argumen- tative
Aroused
Astonished
Assertive
Attached
Attacked
Attentive
Attractive
Aware
Awestruck
Badgered
Baited
Bashful
Battered
Beaten
Beautiful
Belligerent
Belittled

Bereaved
Betrayed
Bewildered
Blamed
Blaming
Bonded
Bored
Bothered
Brave
Breathless
Bristling
Broken-up
Bruised
Bubbly
Burdened
Burned
Callous
Calm
Capable
Captivated
Carefree
Careful
Careless
Caring
Cautious
Certain
Chased
Cheated
Cheerful
Childlike
Choked Up
Close
Cold
Comfortable
Comforted
Competent
Competitive
Complacent
Complete

Confident
Confused
Considerate
Consumed
Content
Cool
Courageous
Courteous
Coy
Crabby
Cranky
Crazy
Creative
Critical
Criticized
Cross
Crushed
Cuddly
Curious
Cut
Damned
Dangerous
Daring
Dead
Deceived
Deceptive
Defensive
Delicate
Delighted
Demeaned
Demoralized
Dependent
Depressed
Deprived
Deserted
Desirable
Desired
Despair
Despondent

Destroyed
Different
Dirty
Disenchanted
Disgusted
Disinterested
Dispirited
Distressed
Distrustful
Distrusted
Disturbed
Dominated
Domineering
Doomed
Doubtful
Dreadful
Eager
Ecstatic
Edgy
Edified
Elated
Embarrassed
Empowered
Empty
Enraged
Enraptured
Enthusiastic
Enticed
Esteemed
Exasperated
Excited
Exhilarated
Exposed
Fake
Fascinated
Feisty
Ferocious
Foolish
Forced

Forceful
Forgiven
Forgotten
Free
Friendly
Frightened
Frustrated
Full
Funny
Furious
Gay
Generous
Grouchy
Grumpy
Hard
Harried
Hassled
Healthy
Helpful
Helpless
Hesitant
High
Hollow
Honest
Hopeful
Hopeless
Horrified
Hostile
Humiliated
Hurried
Hurt
Hyper
Ignorant
Joyous
Lively
Lonely
Loose
Lost
Loving

Low
Lucky
Lustful
Mad
Maudlin
Malicious
Mean
Miserable
Misunder- stood
Moody
Morose
Mournful
Mystified
Nasty
Nervous
Nice
Numb
Nurtured
Nuts
Obsessed
Offended
Open
Ornery
Out of
control
Overcome
Overjoyed
Overpowered
Overwhelmed
Pampered
Panicked
Paralyzed
Paranoid
Patient
Peaceful
Pensive
Perceptive
Perturbed
Phony

Pleasant
Pleased
Positive
Powerless
Present
Precious
Pressured
Pretty
Proud
Pulled apart
Put down
Puzzled
Quarrelsome
Queer
Quiet
Raped
Ravished
Ravishing
Real
Refreshed
Regretful
Rejected
Rejuvenated
Rejecting
Relaxed
Relieved
Remarkable
Remembered
Removed
Repulsed
Repulsive
Resentful
Resistant
Responsible
Responsive
Repressed
Respected
Restless
Revolved

Riled
Rotten
Ruined
Sad
Safe
Satiated
Satisfied
Scared
Scolded
Scorned
Scrutinized
Secure
Seduced
Seductive
Self-centered
Self-con- scious
Selfish
Separated
Sensuous
Sexy
Shattered
Shocked
Shot down
Shy
Sickened
Silly
Sincere
Sinking
Smart
Smothered
Smug
Sneaky
Snowed
Soft
Solid
Solitary
Sorry
Spacey
Special

Spiteful
Spontaneous
Squelched
Starved
Stiff
Stimulated
Stifled
Strangled
Strong
Stubborn
Stuck
Stunned
Stupid
Subdued
Submissive
Successful
Suffocated
Sure
Sweet
Sympathy
Tainted
Tearful
Tender
Tense
Terrific
Terrified
Thrilled
Ticked
Tickled
Tight
Timid
Tired
Tolerant
Tormented
Torn
Tortured
Touched
Trapped
Tremendous

Tricked
Trusted
Trustful
Trusting
Ugly
Unacceptable
Unapproachable
Unaware
Uncertain
Uncomfortable
Under control
Understanding
Understood
Undesirable
Unfriendly
Ungrateful
Unified
Unhappy
Unimpressed
Unsafe
Unstable
Upset
Uptight
Used
Useful
Useless
Unworthy
Validated
Valuable
Valued
Victorious
Violated
Violent
Voluptuous
Vulnerable
Warm
Wary
Weak
Whipped

Whole
Wicked
Wild
Willing
Wiped out
Wishful
Withdrawn
Wonderful
Worried
Worthy
Guideline #1: No Examples about Each Other
Guideline #2: Maintain Eye Contact
Guideline #3: No Feedback
Sex Addiction
Sex Addicts
Anonymous (SAA)
(713) 869-4902
www.saa-recovery.org
Sexaholics Anonymous
(866) 424-8777
www.sa.org
Sexual Compulsives
Anonymous (SCA)
1-800-977-HEAL
www.sca-recovery.org
Sex & Love Addicts
Anon.
210-828-7900
www.slaafws.org
Sexual Recovery
Anonymous (SRA),
(212) 340-4650 or:
Canada (604) 290-9382
www.sexualrecovery.org
Freedom Groups
Faith-Based for
Sex Addicts
(719) 278-3708
www.sexaddict.com

Support Groups
For the Partner
or Family Member
COSA
(612) 537-6904
www.cosa-recovery.org
S-Anon Intrntnl.
Family Groups
(615) 833-3152
www.sanon.org
Co-SLAA
www.coslaa.org
Partners Groups
(719) 278-3708
www.sexaddict.com
Recovering Couples
Anonymous (RCA)
(510) 663-2312
www.recovering-couples.org
Sexual Trauma
Survivors
Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA)
(410) 282-3400
www.siawso.org
Incest Survivors Anon.
P.O. Box 17245
Long Beach, CA 90807
(562) 428-5599
Sexual Assault Recovery Anonymous
Canada (604) 584-2626
www.r-a.org
The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous
Adapted for Sexual Addicts

1. We admitted we were powerless over our sexual addiction--that our lives had become unmanageable.

2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could re store us to sanity.

3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

8. Made a list of all people we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Resources By Dr. Weiss

Men's Recovery

The Final Freedom, book—$22.95 CD—$35.00

Plentiful, current information on sexual addiction and recovery. Goes beyond what many counselors can offer. Many attest to successful recovery from this product alone.

101 Practical Exercises for Sexual Addiction Recovery, workbook—$39.95

Use proven techniques that Dr. Weiss has recommended through the years to successfully help thousands gain and maintain recovery from sexual addiction.

101 Freedom Exercises for Sexual Addiction Recovery, workbook—$39.95

Use proven techniques that Dr. Weiss has recommended through the years to successfully help thousands gain and maintain recovery from sexual addiction. A Christian Edition of 101 Practical Exercises

Steps to Freedom: A Christian 12 Step Guide, workbook—$14.95

This is a thorough interaction with the Twelve Steps of recovery from a Christian perspective. This workbook can be used in Twelve-Step study groups or for individual use.

Addict to Addict, DVD—$19.95

This amazing DVD has 8 addicts telling their stories through directed questions. These individuals address key issues along with their journey through recovery. A must DVD for every sex addict.

Sex, Men & God, book—$13.99 CD—$29.95

Finally, an encouraging message for men who want to be sexually

successful! God is not against sexual pleasure in your marriage! In fact, He created it! So what is keeping you from experiencing the best of His creation? This book has clearly and creatively outline practical, doable suggestions and principles that will help you enjoy your sexuality as God intended.

Addicted to Adultery, book—$14.95

We regularly read in the headlines about how some rich, famous or glamorous person has cheated on his or her spouse. It's insane. We think to ourselves, "How does this happen? What is driving them to cheat?" This book answers these questions in a new way that makes sense for those who commit adultery and those who are impacted by the behavior.

Sexual Anorexia, DVD—$69.95

This ninety-minute video provides practical steps to heal paralyzed relationships marred by withholding behaviors that strangle intimacy. This video outlines a practical approach to recapturing intimacy.

6 Types of Sex Addicts, CD—$29.95

This CD will give you more information than most therapists have on sexual addiction. You will be able to finally know how you became a sex addict and identify why you might still be relapsing. A must for every sex addict in recovery!

Treatment for the 6 Types of Sex Addicts, CD—$29.95

This CD will take you to the next level in your recovery. Once you know the type of sex addict you are, Dr. Doug outlines the same treatment plan you would receive in an individual session.

Freedom Group Training Set, CD—$74.95

This CD set includes how to start a freedom group as well as The 6 Types of Sex Addicts and Treatment for the 6 Types of Sex Addicts.

Beyond the Bedroom, book—$14.95

This is the first book to discuss the issues of adult children of sex addicts as well as provides a road map to recovery. You will also be exposed to research findings on the impact of being a child of a sexual addict.

Women's Recovery

Partners: Healing from His Addiction, book—$14.95

This book has the latest research on the effects to partners of sex

addicts. Riveting statistics are combined with personal stories of partners in recovery.

Partner's Recovery Guide: 100 Empowering Exercises, workbook—$39.95

This is the most practical workbook for partners and was conceived from many years of successful treatment for partners of sex addicts. It includes 100 proven techniques used in counseling sessions to help partners.

Beyond Love: 12 Step Recovery Guide for Partners, workbook—$14.95

This is an interactive workbook that allows the partner to gain insight and strength through working the Twelve Steps. This book can be used individually or as a group step-study workbook.

Now That I Know, What Should I Do?, DVD—$69.00

This DVD answers the ten most frequently asked questions by partners first finding out about their spouse's sexual addiction. The need for counseling is significantly reduced by listening to this video.

Partner to Partner, DVD—$19.95

This DVD is a dialogue of several partners of sex addicts sharing their hope and experience. These women address key issues facing a partner of a sex addict and their journey through recovery.

Married & Alone: For Spouses of Sexual/Emotional Anorexics, DVD—$49.95

This DVD walks a spouse through the key issues to begin to heal from their spouse's anorexia. Dr. Weiss's information is practical and can help fast track your healing from the consequences of your spouse's anorexia.

Dating Again, DVD—$29.95

This 2 hour DVD set was produced for divorced women who desire to date again. Dr. Weiss has more than 20 years of professional experience counseling women. These women, divorced due to their husband's sex addiction, are given tools such as pragmatic principles to help navigate through dating again.

How to Love When it Hurts so Bad, CD's & workbook—$38.00

This 4-CD series and workbook deals with the partner issues of

an addict. This has a religious focus and gives biblical answers to boundaries, tough love, and how to love an addict the way God does.

Secret Solutions, workbook—$39.95

This is a practical recovery exercise workbook written specifically for female sex addicts. Many of these techniques have been successful to help other female sex addicts. This is the most solution-oriented and practical workbook for female sexual addiction to date.

She Has a Secret, e-book—$11.95

Twenty-four recovering female sex addicts share their stories of addiction, consequences and their recovery. This book is the most current book in the field of sex addiction for women and is packed with new statistics to further our understanding of female sexual addiction. This is a must read for any woman struggling in this addiction as well as for professionals in this field. Visit www.sexaddict.com.

Marriage

The Ten-Minute Marriage Principle, book—$14.99

By taking just ten minutes a day to focus on each other, you can enhance your marriage in ways you'll appreciate for a lifetime. As you and your spouse learn to talk and understand each other more fully, you'll ignite true, lasting intimacy.

Intimacy: A 100 Day Guide, book—$11.99

Dr. Weiss walks couples through the skills necessary for lifelong intimate relationships. This guide can transform couples to deeper levels of intimacy.

The 7 Love Agreements, book—$13.99, DVD—$12.95

These 7 agreements are so powerful that only one person needs to

be applying them to see a marriage make progress. Weiss explains the power of agreement in the areas of faithfulness, patience, forgiveness, service, respect, kindness and celebration. Weiss encourages men and women to grow closer to their spouse by entering mutually beneficial agreements-individually or as a couple.

Winning@Marriage, DVD—$69.00

This 3 set, 4 1/2 hour marriage conference is for everybody. You will

gain insight, laugh and most importantly walk through the practical tools to make your marriage a winning marriage.

How to Really Love a Woman, DVD—$69.00

In this 12 part DVD series, you will be exposed to tried and true principles to help you learn how to really love a woman. These 30 minute sessions are easily and immediately applicable. Begin to love your spouse the way you wished you could. Dr. Weiss' practical tools will make you more successful at loving your spouse.

The Best Sex of Your Life, For Men or For Women, DVD—$29.95 (each)

This video is a must for every Christian man or woman. You are practically and passionately walked through Christian sexuality that really works. For over a decade couples have been using these principles and techniques to radically improve their love life.

Many resources available as e-Books or DVD/Audio downloads at www.sexaddict.com

Telephone Counseling

Telephone counseling is convenient and effective.

Individual Telephone Counseling

Individual counseling offers a personal treatment plan for successful healing in your life by telephone. In just one session a counselor can help you understand how you became stuck and how to move toward freedom. Your counselor can successfully walk you toward freedom that can last a lifetime.

Couple Telephone Counseling

Couples are helped through critical phases of disclosure, moving into the process of recovery, and rebuilding trust in relationships. We have helped many couples rebuild their relationship and grasp and implement the necessary skills for an intimate relationship.

Partner Telephone Counseling

Partners of sex addicts need an advocate to call upon. Feelings of fear, hurt, anger, betrayal, and grief require a compassionate, effective response. We provide that expert guidance and direction. We have helped many partners heal through sessions that get them answers to their many questions including: “How can I trust him again?” A phone appointment today can begin your personal journey toward healing.

Call Heart to Heart Counseling Center at 719-278-3708 to schedule your telephone appointment today.

Order Form

Item Qty. Price Total

The Final Freedom, book ___ $22.95 _____
The Final Freedom, CD ___ $35.00 _____
101 Practical Exercises, workbook ___ $39.95 _____
101 Freedom Exercises, workbook ___ $39.95 _____
Steps to Freedom, workbook ___ $14.95 _____
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Sexual Anorexia, DVD ___ $69.95 _____
Addicted to Adultery, book ___ $14.95 _____
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Treatment for the 6 Types, CD ___ $29.95 _____
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Beyond Love, workbook ___ $14.95 _____
Now That I Know?, DVD ___ $69.95 _____
Partner to Partner, book ___ $19.95 _____
Married and Alone, DVD ___ $49.95 _____
Dating Again, DVD ___ $29.95 _____
How To Love When it..., CD/Wkbk. ___ $38.00 _____
Secret Solutions, workbook ___ $39.95 _____
Sex Men and God, book ___ $13.99 _____
Sex Men and God, CD ___ $29.95 _____

The 10-Minute Marriage Prncple, bk ___ $14.99 _____
Intimacy: 100 Day Guide, book ___ $11.99 _____
The 7 Love Agreements, book ___ $13.99 _____
The 7 Love Agreements, DVD ___ $12.95 _____
Winning @ Marriage, DVDs ___ $69.00 _____
How to Really Love a Woman, DVDs ___ $69.00 _____
The Best Sex: Men, DVD ___ $29.95 _____
The Best Sex: Women, DVD ___ $29.95 _____
Sub Total _____
7.4% Sales Tax (in Colorado only) _____
Shipping: $8 + $1 each additional item (USA) _____
International $30 + $1 for each additional item _____
To Order: (719) 278-3708 or visit www.sexaddict.com
VISA/MC/Discover/AmEx #_____
Exp. Date_____ 3 or 4 digit Security Code _____
Name _____
Signature _____
Street Address _____
City _____State _____
Zip Code _____ Phone (_____)_____

or Mail to: Heart to Heart Counseling Center, 5080 Mark Dabling Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80918 or email to: heart2heart@xc.org or ebook it now by going to www.sexaddict.com

Porn Blocker

We have partnered with a porn blocker for more than 15 years helping families keep pornography out of their home. Men can also have accountability software as part of this porn blocking package. This is a powerful software program that puts YOU in control. It filters online, inappropriate adult content, monitors Instant Messaging & much, much, more! To learn more visit www.sexaddict.com.

3-Day Intensives

Sexual Addiction Couple Intensive:

This intensive serves the needs of couples who are trapped within the disease of sex addiction. A masters level counselor will address the structural damage that takes place in most systems within sexually addictive relationships. The couple will attain skills and goals to count themselves among many clients that have successfully remained in committed relationships after the awareness of sexual addiction. A new beginning is possible with the tools attained from this intensive. This intensive includes one counseling session for the addict, one

session for the partner and one session as a couple with a licensed counselor each day. Structured assignments are given to work on during your own time. Attendance is encouraged in our office Freedom Groups and Partner's support groups in the evening. The Couple's 3-Day Intensives held at Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado is available most Mondays through Wednesdays. Call to schedule your Intensive at (719) 278-3708.

* If you need an Intensive with Dr. Weiss immediately and cannot wait till the next scheduled appointment, an Emergency Intensive may be able to be scheduled. Call and request an Emergency Intensive. This Intensive is priced at a higher rate than the others.

Partner Intensive:

If you are married or living with a sexual addict there are often residuals to this. The addicts addiction may have left you feeling hurt, betrayed, angry, confused or even hopeless. This three-day intensive allows you to look at yourself as well as the consequences of living with a sexual addict. The skills you will learn can expedite your healing from the consequences of his addiction. You deserve to be all you can for the people

in your life, this intensive can help you be that again. This solution-driven intensive can help make recovery smoother and much more attainable. This intensive would include one and a half sessions of individual counseling in the morning and one session of individual counseling in the afternoon. Structured assignments are given to work on during your own time. Attendance is encouraged in our office support groups in the evening. Partner 3-Day Intensives held at Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado are available most Mondays through Wednesdays.

Sexual Addiction Individual Intensive:

Those struggling with sex addiction want solutions. This three-day intensive focuses on solutions. Some highlights of this intensive will be:

* Discover the origination of your sexual addiction
* Outline a definitive plan for your recovery
* Identify a working plan for deprivation
* Address core issues of sexual addiction

This solution-driven intensive can help make recovery smoother and much more attainable. This intensive would include one and a half sessions of individual counseling in the morning and one session of individual counseling in the afternoon. Structured assignments are given to work on during your own time. Attendance is encouraged in our office support groups in the evening. Sexual Addiction 3-Day Intensives held at Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado are available most Mondays through Wednesdays.

Adult Child of a Sex Addict Intensive:

This Three Day Intensive will help anyone who grew up in a home that was tainted by the colors of a sexual addict.

Whether it was your mom or dad, you will be able to practically deal with your anger, hurt, betrayal and other issues involved from living with a sexually addicted parent.

TeenageChild of a Sex Addict Intensive:

Most of us are aware that teens are affected by a parent's sexual addiction. If your adolescent is experiencing symptoms from living with a sexually addicted parent in the past or present there is help. This 3 Day Intensive can help teens with emotions, pain, anger and the hurt related to the confusion of living with a sexually addicted parent. Teenage Child of a Sexual Addict 3-Day Intensives held at Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado are available most Mondays through Wednesdays.

Sex Abuse Intensive:

This 3 Day Intensive addresses the residual affects of sexual abuse that many sex addicts and partners experienced. This intensive focuses on giving relief of the symptoms due to the sexual abuse. Sex Abuse 3-Day Intensives held at Heart to Heart Counseling Center in Colorado Springs, Colorado are available most Mondays through Wednesdays.

Schedule your Intensive Today by calling 719-278-3708.

Here's what our attendees had to say!

100% Attendees responded that they felt their intensive was "Very Helpful."

100% Believed their marriage has improved "greatly."

100% Stated they would recommend this Intensive to others.

81% Maintained complete sobriety. (19% had a couple slips, but still are actively on the road to sobriety)

• Everything you said to us in those 3 days was so right and so healing! I felt like a big load was taken off my back while counseling with you!

• Thanks to Doug we're not only not getting divorced we're actually sober & still in love.

• Without the intensive, my marriage would have ended and I would not have known why. Now I am happier than ever and my marriage is bonded permanently.

• The 3-Day Intensive gave me the help I really needed...Our marriage could not have survived without this Intensive.

• Doug Weiss, I can't thank you enough. Our marriage is better than ever thanks to you and the sessions. Keep up the great work!

• I was unsure as to whether or not I would still have a marriage when I

arrived. After the 3-Day Intensive, I became stronger myself upon implementation of Doug Weiss's recommendations. Myself, my husband and our relationship has done nothing but grow. He gave me tools to use that helped me come out of "emergency" mode and allowed me to bring sanity back into my life with confidence. Thank you Doug!

• I can not begin to thank you enough for all that you have done for me and my husband...I am continually getting stronger every day and thinking clearly again.

• I would encourage other women to attend a 3-Day Intensive with Doug Weiss. Doug Weiss is one of the few people that addresses the partner's recovery.

• I applaud you for spending your time working with these people and with us...Thanks for your help in our lives.

• I've thanked God (every day since we've been there) for leading us to you! I feel like shouting your name & phone number to the whole world!



A A S A T

American Association of Sex Addiction Therapy

Dr. Weiss has created a 45 hour program to train counselors on how to work with sexual addiction and partners of sexual addicts. This DVD/Workbook training set is available for any one that would like to have more information on treating sexual addiction. Everyone who completes this 45 hour course receives a certificate of completion. This course is for anyone who has a significant interest in the field of sexual addiction. This course can be taken by anyone who wants to increase their knowledge of sex addiction and partners recovery. For more information and how to order, please visit

www.AASAT.org

or call

719-330-2425

AASAT Total Training $795.00

Each Individual DVD $29.00

_____ 1: Intro and Defining SA _____ 24: 12 Steps 9-12 _____ 2: Sexual Addiction _____ 25: Masturbation

_____ 3: Assessment _____ 26: Relapses

_____ 4: Cycles of SA _____ 27: Anger

_____ 5: Biological _____ 28: Gestalt Techniques

_____ 6: Psychological _____ 29: Female Sex Addict Stats

_____ 7: Trauma _____ 30: Female SA Key Issues

_____ 8: Perpetrators _____ 31: Polygraph
_____ 9: Sexual Anorexia _____ 32: Polygraph Questions
_____ 10: SA with Mood Disorder_____ 33: Partners Stats 1 _____ 11: Comorbity _____ 34: Partners Stats 2
_____ 12: Six Model Typology _____ 35: Partners Intake
_____ 13: Intake 1 _____ 36: Key Factors in Partners Rec.
_____ 14: Intake 2 _____ 37: Running a Partners Group
_____ 15: Actual Intake _____ 38: Adult Children
_____ 16: Behavioral Treatment _____ 39: Marital Intake Plan
_____ 17: 1st Session Tips _____ 40: Disclosure
_____ 18: Session 2-5 _____ 41: Separation
_____ 19: Educational Groups _____ 42: Sex and Recovery
_____ 20: Work Groups _____ 43: Ethics 1
_____ 21: Various 12 Step _____ 44: Ethics 2 Groups
_____ 22: 12 Steps 1-2 _____ 45: Differences in Treatment/
_____ 23: 12 Steps 3-8 Conclusion