

Does Sex Addiction Really Exist?

There are two camps when it comes to sex addiction: those who believe it is a real affliction; and those who don't.

I'm in the "don't" camp. Sexual addiction is, in my opinion, an easy and convenient label for a very complicated problem. As it stands, there is a lack of empirical evidence and scientific agreement on whether such a condition exists. Visit us now to book your girl at

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You see, the trick to what makes up a sex addiction is defining what are 'normal' sexual pursuits. An exercise in subjectivity as every person has their own comfort level and preference: some people want sex three times a day (or more); some have exotic tastes; others favor vanilla sex. Consequently, it's extremely difficult to do any scientific study that can set guidelines to say what is an acceptable way to express sexuality.

That said, when you look at what sex addiction advocates have developed over the last 15 years, their standards are a moral judgment--rather than scientific conclusion--based around a heterosexual, monogamous, long term sex lifestyle. Other forms of sexual expression outside these boundaries could be construed as a sex addiction.

Apparently a lot of people agree with this belief system as over the last few years we see the term sex addiction popping up all over the media. In fact, Oprah and Dr. Phil have christened it as a real condition. Dr. Drew Pinsky has an incredibly popular television show helping "B" list celebrities.

Not surprisingly, all this media attention has filtered down to the average couple. I get countless inquiries from people asking how to help their 'sex addicted' partner. When they explain their situation, it's usually a gross self-misdiagnosis: "He wants sex everyday. I think he's an addict." Please understand, it can be incredibly harmful to a couple's wellbeing when an incorrect diagnosis is put on their sexual dilemma(s). When you self diagnosis, it's difficult to impartially gage if the behavior is obsessive and harmful to you and your partner; or (more likely) you're uncomfortable with the behavior and don't know how to manage the circumstance.

However, all my nitpicking does not help an individual or couple who is in the middle of a serious sexual struggle.

After eight years together, one couple revealed their marriage started to unravel quickly. The husband was having an affair, compulsively self pleasuring as well as seeking out sex workers. His wife decided to work on saving their marriage. She first started to read books and research the web. After trying a combined eight different counselors, they both felt they were getting nowhere fast.

It was only when she stumbled upon the term sex addiction, she says everything clicked into place and their situation made sense. Author, Patrick Carnes, defines sexual addiction as, "any sexually-related, compulsive behavior which interferes with normal living and causes severe stress on family, friends, loved ones and one's work environment."

After they took Carne's on-line test, it showed the husband was a sex addict. He started to attend Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) and she S-Anon meetings. Both of them agree that SAA

and S-Anon has been instrumental in fixing and changing the way they are as a couple, parents and individuals.

He confides, "It is the only place where I can be 100% completely open. I feel like I belong."

They are grateful both groups have taken away the shame and stigma of what was happening in his sex and their overall life.

In this situation, the husband caused "severe stress on family, friends, loved ones and one's work environment", as well as possibly giving STIs to his partner. Obviously, it's a good thing when someone can get immediate and free help if they feel their sexual behavior is out of control.

Yet, it's been my experience this is the rare exception and not the norm. For the record here are a few things that are normal sexual behaviors.

- If a person has a high sex drive and wants sex far more than their partner
- If a person wants to experiment in outside the heterosexual, monogamous boundaries and try such things as S&M, swinging or cyber sex
- If a person wants to look at porn in moderation

If you are in the middle one of these typical couple difficulties, it's best worked through with a professional counselor.

If you feel strongly that you are dealing with a sex addiction, remember the road to recovery is not a quick fix, cease and desist the behavior immediately. It's a lengthy, soul searching process where both partners must be 100% committed to fixing themselves and their relationship.