

9 Telltale Signs You Have a Sexual Addiction

How can you know if something, anything is an addiction, whether it's alcohol, drugs, work, porn or sexual addiction? Here are several characteristics of an addiction and you can apply each to sexual addiction. Some of these ideas I'm sharing will be coming from my book. *Final Freedom*

Characteristics of Addiction

1. **Effort:** This man has made attempts to stop his fantasy, pornography, self-behaviors or acting out with others. He may have been motivated internally to stop or externally by being caught. Regardless, these efforts end up in failure repeatedly.
2. **Read My Lips:** Remember when President George H.W. Bush made that promise to not raise taxes and then later he did exactly what he said he wouldn't do? The addict has made promises to himself, his wife, girlfriend, pastor, friend, or accountability partner to stop. He, however, keeps breaking this promise to himself or others.
3. **Consequences:** As the addiction grows, consequences occur. These consequences may be a bad marriage, getting caught, getting arrested, being separated, divorced, losing a job, having a ruined reputation, getting STDs, being blackmailed or it could be as simple as the constant guilt, shame, anxiety or depression a man experiences by living a double life.
4. **Keep it Going:** Even after consequences that are sometimes severe, this man goes back to his sexually inappropriate behavior. It seems insane to go back after such consequences, but the addicted man does exactly that, goes back.
5. **Do More:** Doing more is simply increasing the frequency or intensity of the additive behavior. For the man who

uses pornography, this would mean he might increase his hours of use in a week. He might also increase the intensity or perversion of the pornography.

6. Takes More: For the addicted man, it begins to take more and more to get the same effect. What once was an occasional flirt with pornography can grow into many hours a week. It can also go from using porn, to using people and then to all types of attempts to do more risky acts, to get the same buzz he used to get from just a little pornography.
7. More Time: All addictions are behaviors that take time to perform. As the addiction grows in a man's life it takes more time for him on a daily, weekly or monthly basis. As an addict you preoccupy yourself by spending more time to pursue a behavior or person, then more time with that behavior or person, and maybe even more time recovering from the behaviors or events with these people.
8. The Blues: As a man increases his dependence on his addiction to deal with his current or past issues, it is very common for him to feel withdrawals when the drug isn't present or available. These cycles may include guilt or shame, or may feel like a very strong hunger to act out. Withdrawals for the sex addict are real and tend to go into remission in increments of thirty days after the last acting out has occurred.
9. Decreasing Other Activities: As the addict grows in their addiction, other things in their life must get smaller. The addict will have less time for his wife, family, recreation, social or vocational activities. His interest in real life diminishes as the desires for more of the addictive behavior increases.

Review these characteristics with me for a moment. Write down any of the categories that you may be currently experiencing. For those of you that don't struggle, you might want to put these characteristics in your phone so you can help others

figure out if they are addicted or not.

1. Effort
2. Read My Lips
3. Consequences
4. Keeping it Going
5. Do More
6. Takes More (of the behavior)
7. More Time
8. The Blues/Withdrawal
9. Decreased Other Activities

If you said yes to three or more of these characteristics to any behavior in your life, you are probably addicted. If you said yes to three or more of these characteristics about a specific sexual behavior, then you could easily make this statement, "My name is _____ and I am a sex addict."

You can theologize, philosophize, whine or complain, but you will still have a sexual addiction. Just be honest and look at the track record you have on being successful at getting and staying clean. There is no shame in admitting the truth. If you are a recovering sex addict, it doesn't make God become any less God, it makes Him more as you walk the road to recovery together.

If you find yourself sexually addicted, you can start to get clean by going to our website . You can also call Heart to Heart Counseling Center at 719-278-3708 to schedule a telephone session.

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