

# CONTROLLING SEXUAL ADDICTION

RECLAIMING YOUR SELF  
RESPECT BY LIVING CLEAN



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# Foreword

It may appear unusual at first to believe that sex may become an addiction. It's an innate biological activity, not a chemical consumed into the system.

But even as intoxicants and drugs may become habit-forming, so may natural activities like eating and sexual activity.

These activities become problematic when they're utilized as a means of escaping hurt or tedium, and when the behaviors carry on even when they get destructive.

Some people have described sex addiction like this: The substance utilized was humanity. You marshal all your intellect and appeal and power to keep the dependency alive.

Getting fired from a job doesn't make them quit. Losing a mate doesn't make them quit.

Risking their life and the lives of their sexual partners doesn't make them quit.

Everything and everybody in your life, who you are and what you trust, joins line around it.

As sexual mores alter in our society, and as porn and the sexual practice it presents get ever more common, 1000000s of individuals discover themselves getting compulsive in their sexual conduct. They discover themselves enlisting in unhealthy and destructive habits, not able to quit.

The hurdle with sex addiction is that, as sex is so personal and private; individuals are particularly hesitant to admit their battles with it. Sex addiction is simple to laugh about, but difficult to admit.

**Breaking The Habits Of Sexual Addictions!**

Live clean and regain your self respect.

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# **Chapter 1:**

*When Is Sex Actually An Addiction*

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# Synopsis

Even if society assumes something as “regular,” we surely realize that it may be habit-forming and destructive (consider alcohol, tobacco, and gambling). However what about sex? When does somebody turn into a sex addict? Where is the line that differentiates a normal, sound sex drive from sexual dependency? The line is drawn when that individual discovers him or herself not able to quit - when they repeatedly return to the same conduct, in spite of damaging consequences. The medical and guidance communities have founded numerous universal standards for ascertaining if a substance or behavior is a dependency. Note how these apply to sexual behavior as well as chemical usage:

## **Know What's Occurring**

Utilization of the substance or behavior has gotten uncontrollable. This means that the addict needs - and repeatedly attempts - to quit but can't. There's a history of bombed attempts. The word powerlessness - a central word in Step One of the 12 Steps - aptly distinguishes the feeling the addict has about his or her sexual conduct.

Even as an addict goes through destructive results for his or her sexual conduct, it's not adequate to get them to quit. Addiction isn't weakness, but its helplessness. Addiction isn't a deficiency of self-control; it's a powerlessness over the substance or conduct in question.

The addiction becomes tougher over time. This occurs because more and more of the substance or conduct is required over time to accomplish the same outcome. The chemistry of the brain adapts to whatever an addict orders into it. Over time the brain calls for more to accomplish the same outcome.

For alcoholics, the brain adapts to alcohol and calls for more. Considering sex and engaging in sexual conduct calls for the brain to produce the brain chemistry to accomplish sexual reaction. Fresh research is discovering that the sexual chemistry of the brain may likewise become tolerant, which means more and more arousal is essential to have the same



brain chemistry effects – the notions of stimulation, excitement, and pleasure.

This escalation may take 2 forms. The commonest is that the addict does more and more of the same sort of behavior. For other addicts, escalation entails that they'll postulate fresh sorts of acting out experiences to accomplish the same high. So they'll seek fresh, novel, or more hazardous forms of sexually acting out. Nearly every addict may point to particular behaviors that they formerly said they'd never do, and afterwards discover themselves doing. This is the consequence of neurochemical tolerance.

Addicts utilize the thoughts and behaviors that bring about the neurochemical highs to either bring up or bring down their moods. This is what is implied by stating that addicts medicate their feelings.

If an addict is blue, lonesome or bored, he or she may engage in - or even merely fantasize about - a sexual meeting, and the stimulation part of the sexual reaction produces chemicals that enhance his or her mood. If an addict is distressed, anxious or frightened, the chemicals that flood the brain after climax (or in fantasies of the love and attachment aspects of a relationship) produce a feeling of wellbeing and contentment that lowers his or her mood.

Many addicts are capable of both sorts of behaviors, and consequently, may both elevate and bring down their moods depending upon their feelings at the minute.

Addicts act out in spite of damaging consequences. Addicts don't pay attention to damaging results; rather they live in self-denial. They belittle or rationalize their acting out, in spite of the results.

Till an addict decides to give up control of the fears that keep him or her from getting assistance, the addiction will carry on. As the addict experiences negative outcomes for his or her behavior, notions of depression and self-disgust grow. Unless they're in some manner helped to discover hope and guidance for change, these damaging feelings produce the addiction spiral: guilt and hopelessness leading to acting out as a way of dealing, which leads to feelings of shame and frequently also to damaging consequences, which lead to more guilt and hopelessness, which lead to more acting out, and so forth.

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## **Chapter 2:**

*Myths*

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# **Synopsis**

Addicts are not hooked on substances; addicts are addicted to the feelings they acquire from their substances, and if they're refused a substance and they may acquire that feeling from a different substance, they will.

## **True and Not**

**Myth #1** - If I'm already in recovery from a different addiction, I don't have to fret about sex. The either/or attack to addiction is ill-conceived and unsafe. The truth is that addictions commonly come in bunches. If addictions are coping techniques we acquire to deal with distress, it only adds up that we'd wish or have to acquire multiple techniques, and not simply one.

A lot of studies disclose the prevalence of cross addictions, and sex addiction is frequently part of that mixture. For instance, one study discovered that more than one-half of cocaine users had sexual obsession issues. Clinicians have long observed that sex addiction was interwoven into a tangled web of addictions, compulsions, and avoidance techniques. ... The 'monodrug user' is a disappearing species in American civilization. The fundamental interaction between addictions is complex, and the assortments of "addiction interaction disorder" (AID) are practically unlimited.

**Myth #2** - Sex dependency is a "man thing" The fact is that sex addiction is an equal opportunity trouble that bears on women as well as men. Since the field of sex dependency has been tagging these statistics, the gender breakdown has been that 20% of individuals who look for treatment for sex dependency are female.

But in late years this is modifying, and the gender gap is narrowing down. Hit wise, a company that tracks net usage with huge databases monitoring web traffic, reports that 27% of visitors to adult sites were female. The sites tracked for this inquiry included not only optical porn, but likewise erotic tales and chat, which broadly have higher female utilization. Gender stereotypes might be helpful for pop psychology books and stand-up comedians, but not for recovery. Particularly in younger generations - who didn't grow up with the same sorts of prejudices and cultural mentality as senior generations - we find the typical gender stereotypes about sex more and more inapplicable. We see girls as likely to be the sexual aggressor as guys, and as attracted to optical porn as well as guys. We likewise find guys as probable to be drawn to chatrooms and romance dependency as girls. In recent years this trend of the gender gap shriveling up.

**Myth #3** - many sex addicts are (or will be) sex wrongdoers. Among the roadblocks that keep people from discussing sex addiction is the false affiliation between sex addiction and offending behaviors, like sexual assault or molestation.

It's crucial to mention that while a substantial portion of sex offenders are likewise sex addicts, only a diminutive fraction of sex addicts are wrongdoers. Authorities estimate that 30% of sex offenders in prisons nowadays may be diagnosed as sex addicts, and 70% of wrongdoers in prison

for child-related sex offense may be diagnosed as sex addicts. But the huge majority of individuals who are addicted to sex never cross the line of sexual violating. Most authorities estimate that merely 2 - 5% of sex addicts are sex wrongdoers.

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# **Chapter 3:**

*Getting On The Road To Recovery*

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# Synopsis

Individuals who deal with sex addiction face a hurdle unlike recovery from drugs or alcohol. With chemical dependencies, recovery is difficult but at least soberness is aboveboard: recovery entails complete abstinence from the matter. Sex addiction is more perplexed. We'll always be sexual individuals, and many addicts will engage in sexual practice throughout their lives. The question then gets to be: what makes up healthy - as contrary to addictive - sexual activity?

## **Beginning Steps**

In that sense, the challenge is more like that confronted by food addicts. As the saying goes, "Trying to eat abstinently is like attempting to take a tiger out of a cage 3 times a day and then cajole him back in till the next time." Recovering food addicts must eat. They can't simply refrain from their "drug" - they have to acquire a healthy, in progress relationship with it. So must sex addicts.

The job may feel overpowering, but there's hope. A lot of individuals around the globe are discovering recovery from addictive sexual conduct. How? How does recovery from sex addiction occur?

Recovery calls for facing topics about our past tense, here and now, and future tense. I promote what I call a "return to the future" approach: begin by becoming clear-cut about your vision for healthy sexuality (future tense), make certain that your surroundings help you move towards that vision (here and now), and do whatever it requires to make peace with your past tense.

I comprehend the importance of living in the here and now. Christ encouraged his following to not be apprehensive about tomorrow, but rather center on the needs of now. Paul wrote of his resolution to "forget what lies behind". A lot of spiritual teachers stress the importance of living in the

minute, and thought that's highlighted by the "one day at one time" centering in much recovery teaching.

The "Return to the Future" plan of attack is merely a way to consider the problems of recovery. We get clean-cut about our vision for the future tense, not as we discount living in the here and now, but as we wish to move in the correct direction. We wish to make peace with our past tense not as we require to drag up old hurts and stay stuck in the past tense. We do it as we wish to free ourselves from the bonds of the past tense. We wish to let those old wounds go, so we may be free to live in the here and now, one day at a time.

With that in mind, think about this "Return to the Future" plan of attack to recovery from sexual battles.

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# **Chapter 4:**

*Means To Recovery*

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# Synopsis

Among the first jobs of recovery is to "institute sobriety."  
With sex addiction, it's even more elementary: we have to establish what sexual sobriety is. Till we get clean-cut about this, we're stuck. A Chinese philosopher stated, "The journey of 1000 miles starts with one step." But in this case we must first clear up the direction in which to assume that step.

## **A Path To Help**

In its early on stages, recovery from sex addiction involves choosing what behaviors a individual wishes to include in her or her life, and what behaviors to refrain from. How do you choose this? 12 step recovery fellowships take issue about this. One group (Sex Addicts Anonymous, or SAA), promotes recovering addicts to choose for themselves - with counsel from their sponsor and support group - what their bottom lines has to be.

Individuals in SAA realize that this bottom line might alter over time, frequently moving from an across-the-board definition of sobriety to a more specific view over time.

For instance, early on recovery might call for distinguishing only the most debatable, risky behaviors (like unguarded sex, or sex outside of one's devoted relationship). As time advances, the addict might come to think that additional activities (like porn use or compulsive masturbation) are addictive likewise.

A different fellowship (Sexaholics Anonymous or SA) delineates for its members a general definition of sobriety: "no sex in any variety with oneself, or anybody other than the spouse." Their worry is that leaving the definition of sobriety vague opens the door to self-deceit.

They feel that addicts will battle to discover sexual health if they remain in compulsive behaviors, even if they haven't listed those behaviors as part of their own personal "bottom lines."

All the same we approach drawing a line between healthy and addictive behavior, the point here is that recovery can't occur till we go through sobriety from the addictive behaviors. Till we go through some ongoing sobriety, we live in the mental and emotional cloud of addiction.

We cycle backward and forward from addictive hungering, acting out, self-reproach, and self-disgust for our conduct. When we start to break that cycle, we may begin the work of self-reflection that leads to inner shift.

Recovery vision is about what we bring, not just what we take off. Among the crucial problems in recovery from addiction is to understand what to fill one's life with when faced by the void produced by ceasing the behavior.

As the saying goes, "It's difficult to say no till you understand what yes is." It's difficult for an addict to abandon sexual conducts that have brought solace and exhilaration to life without having hope that other fit things may meet those needs.

A vision is an image of the future tense that pulls us forward. For sex addicts, among the many losses affiliated

with their addiction is a loss of vision. A lot of addicts are so filled up with guilt that they've lost hope for a positive future. Their addiction has probably produced bedlam in their lives.

They might have lost occupations because of their addiction, or at any rate fought with weakened productivity. As addiction intensifies, it consumes more and more of an addicts' time. Therefore, a lot of addicts lose touch with the hobbies and interests that brought a fit balance to life in the past. Life looks increasingly gloomy, and a positive future more and more remote.

Vision necessitates time. A vision for a fit future is crucial for recovery, but it takes time to acquire. In early on recovery, addicts' lives are frequently still filled up with the bedlam produced by their addiction, and their brains are blurred by denial, rationalization, and hopelessness.

The future orientation of early on recovery must center on a sight of a life free from the mightiness of addictive sexual behavior. A lot of addicts have lived so long with their addiction, and fought with attempts to quit their behaviors for so long that they've lost hope.

They question if living sexually sober lives is even imaginable for them. Spending time with others who have experienced the battle and come through on the other side is helpful at this phase. Viewing other addicts who have



accomplished long-run sobriety infuses the beginnings of a vision for an addict, as they begin to think, "If he/she may do this, perhaps I can also."

It's likewise crucial for addicts to spend time considering fit ways to experience replenishment. Frequently addicts have lost touch with fit ways of getting their needs met.

As time advances, and the addict discovers the emotional and spiritual clearness that comes from lengthy sobriety, his or her vision gets more clear-cut. Time that had been passed in illusion and acting out now may be vested in ways that tap into the addicts' inborn talents and passions.

Our sex drive is, at its commonest level, an originative and passionate exhort. Recovery from sex addiction doesn't call for suppressing this drive, but instead transferring its energy toward other interests which may become outlets for one's creativeness and passion. In their addiction, a lot of addicts lost touch with the matters they were passionate about, and vested more and more of their passion and creativeness in acting out behaviors.

The procedure of recovery implies placing that same amount of energy, passion, and creativeness into fit pursuits.

Plainly the establishment of vision - of sobriety and of personal replenishment - is easier said than done, particularly for addicts who are living in surroundings filled

with enticements to lapse into old sexual habits. Clearness and resolve aren't adequate: we have to make changes to our surroundings.

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# **Chapter 5:**

## ***Changes To Make***

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# Synopsis

Environmental alteration precedes life change. Life-change doesn't happen with resolutions, hopes, and exertions of self-control. Unless we do things to alter our surroundings - making it more tributary to our fresh dedication - we'll unavoidably regress into old behaviors. In the fight between self-control and surroundings, surroundings always wins.

## **Start Today**

Nobody has adequate self-control to sustain substantial life-change if their personal surroundings subverts those alterations with enticements and disheartenment. If we don't alter our surroundings, the only leverage we have is the force of will, and self-control is a much more limited commodity than we recognize.

Envisage somebody attempting to accomplish sobriety from an addiction to alcohol while working as a barkeep. Naturally it's theoretically possible to refrain from drinking in that circumstance, but to do so would call for facing down mighty and repeated enticements. A human may only be expected to defeat a limited number of these enticements.

To be successful, the recovering alcoholic has to alter the environment so that he or she isn't required to battle such a ceaseless fight. Our surroundings are multi-dimensional. It includes loved ones, friendships, workplace, the places we spend our time (physical surroundings), and the media we devour. 4 areas are particularly crucial:

- 1) Discover a safe community of recovering addicts. This is the most often ordered technique for recovery, and for great reason. It's vitally crucial for the recovering sex addict to be in community with others who comprehend his or her battle, and support them in it. I've yet to discover an individual

who accomplished long-run recovery who wasn't part of some rather support group.

Even a person "accountability partner" isn't adequate. For the addict who's acquired a pattern of knavery and sexual compulsion, it's simple to float out of touch with one's accountability partner when we're struggling. And occasionally, when we need this individual and do reach out, he himself might be struggling or unavailable.

An individual in recovery will require a multiplicity of hoi polloi who will assist him or her in this journey. By being a part of a group, recovering addicts are exposed to an assortment of challenges and resolutions, successes and failures, thoughts and insights. There is an assortment of support groups available for individuals fighting with sex addiction. There are numerous 12-step groups specifically centered on sex addiction and many church groups likewise. We encourage addicts to center on groups that comprehend and center on sex addiction particularly.

Sex addiction is unparalleled. It bears its own brand of guilt, and is often misunderstood not only by the population as a whole, but likewise by other addicts. Recovering sex addicts postulate a place where they may be truthful, and where other addicts may be truthful with them. A different reason support groups are so crucial is that many sex addicts are ravenous for friendship. Sex addiction is a sequestering syndrome. Addicts live "in their heads," disquieted by

thoughts of sexual illusion, plans for acting out, or guilt for having acted out. They depersonalize and fantasize about the individuals around them, instead of relating genuinely with them. Moreover, sex addicts are detached as they've produced walls of deception to hide their conduct. They live in dread and guilt, convinced that "if individuals truly knew the facts about me they wouldn't love me."

The only way to defeat this reclusiveness is to acquire safe relationships where addicts may be truthful about their tales, and discover acceptance and love. And this may be established in support groups with like-minded sex addicts in recovery.

## 2) Remove enticements

For the same grounds that an alcoholic shouldn't spend time in a lounge, the sex addict has to monitor the individuals and images around him or her, and restrict the things that will set off sexual ideas and illusions. Particular video channels could need to be blocked off, and Net filter or accountability software arranged. The recovering sex addict might decide not to go to particular films, or visit particular parts of town, beaches, etc. The enticements encountered in these places are just too mighty. One place of specific importance is to go through the house and office to make certain that any hoard of sexual material is removed. This plainly includes porn, but likewise might include secret e-mail accounts, post office boxes, or cells.

3) Remain hyper- watchful about emotional health.

Individuals in recovery from sex addiction have to discover ways of addressing the emotional ups and downs of life without acting out sexually. In the past tense, they've turned to illusion and sexual practice as a way to handle painful feelings. So when dreadful feelings come up, addicts must recognize that their sobriety is at risk. They've learned to refuse or minimize the damaging feelings they have, and rather utilized illusion and sexual practice as a way to handle these emotions. The process of recovery calls for gaining a fresh predisposition to the feelings that come on, and acquiring techniques to deal with them. The journey of recovery calls for acquiring a fresh regard to one's emotional state, and applying healthy coping techniques for terrible emotions like sorrow, anger, and fear.

4) Work toward reconciliation and health in wedlock. Many addicts who are wed have significant trouble to work through with their mates, and a great deal healing to be done. Sex addiction is particularly destructive for marriages. Its very expression assaults the commitment to sexual fidelity, and produces enormous hurt and alienation. Acting out behaviors are nearly always attached to some sort of dishonesty – and frequently an voluminous web of lies – so trust has likewise been broken and needs to be reconstructed. Sex addicts require help formulating intimate relationships. Their addiction and the lies and shame it fosters has produced a distance and shallowness in their marriage. Many addicts don't understand how to process



their angriness toward their mate in a healthy way. Because they're used to feeling shame and guilt about their actions, they can't discover ways of accepting and expressing their own needs and sufferings. When they experienced anger in the past, they frequently acted out sexually rather than dealing with the letdown or hurt that induced the feeling. Now they have to learn to do this. However it's more complicated than that. Sex addicts have to discover how to be truthful about their feelings and needs with the mate that they've hurt deeply.

Their mate – because of the hurt caused by the acting out behaviors – will likely be fighting to manifest acceptance and compassion to them. A lot of addicts fight to deal with the mixture of feelings they have toward their mate ... often love, compassion, and self-reproach combined with letdown and angriness. If nothing else, addicts need the back up of their recovery group and other trusted acquaintances to help them carry out the transition from revelation of their addiction to openness and mending with their mate. This will take time.

5) Make peace with your past tense. Individuals are frequently amazed about why they fail to keep their resolution to abandon destructive behaviors. Addictions are more potent than simple habits, which may be formed and altered at will. Sex addicts have gotten dependent upon sexual conduct as a way of dealing with the tension, grief, and pain they confronted in their past.

Many sex addicts discovered sexual behaviors early in life to be an answer to medicate pain that was overpowering to them. Very frequently these addicts discover themselves being set off into these same feelings of guilt, loss, and stress as grownups, and find themselves reaching for the same solutions. As the saying goes, "old lesions, old answers."

Till they learn to address these past feelings and hurts in ways that are fit, they'll continue to battle with addiction.

## **Wrapping Up**

Like a lot of things in life, recovery might appear easy on paper, but in practice it's not simple. It calls for the willingness to be truthful, to end reclusiveness, and to invest in recovery materials, therapy, and groups. But the payoffs are enormous. It may seem that the consequence of recovery is merely the conclusion of destructive behaviors, but it goes much deeper than that. Recovery is the opening of one's heart. Recovery makes it conceivable to live with a fresh freedom and self-regard. Recovery - particularly from sex addiction - opens the door to honesty and True intimacy in relationships.

Perhaps this book has presented you some fresh insights about how recovery works. Perhaps it reinforced things you've already heard, and gave you a reminder or another perspective about them. I do hope it's helped.

To your success!