

Addictive Relationships Self-Test

The same relationship problems that exist in recovery existed prior to the sex addict becoming sexually sober. Even at best, a practicing sex addict has relationships that are likely to be intimacy-disabled in some way. These patterns are old habits, and the addict in recovery will bring them with him or her in the new attempt to form a bond. Below is a simple self-test to illustrate the indicators of relationship problems that typically occur in addiction. They are not specific to sex addicts but they give a general idea of the things experienced by people with impaired intimacy and relationship abilities.

1. Growing up I didn't see my parents as consistently loving, and contented with each other.
2. My relationships typically start with an intense sexual attraction and rapid involvement.
3. I find it easy to start relationships but they always get complicated.
4. I find it hard to know how to get out of a bad relationship.
5. I sometimes think I stay in a relationship because I am afraid of being on my own.
6. I am afraid of my partner's anger.
7. I sometimes placate or manipulate my partner to avoid confronting things.
8. I find it easy to get into thinking that my partner is to blame.
9. My partner and I don't talk about our feelings about the relationship.
10. In my relationships one person is always less devoted than the other.
11. Either I feel superior to my partner or I feel my partner is superior to me.
12. I am dishonest with my partner at times to avoid upsetting him/her.
13. When I am in a relationship my partner and I don't socialize with friends as a couple very much.
14. Either I or my partner is always trying to get us into some kind of therapy.
15. I feel that having a good relationship is hopeless.

When you look at this list of statements, it should be clear that what I am calling addictive relationships are characterized by things like negativity, turmoil and alienation. In other words addictive relationships are dysfunctional because they lead to feeling bad, afraid or in conflict much of the time. An intimate partnership should be a good experience, not a bad one.