



TOP CAUSES OF SEXUAL ADDICTION

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People addicted to sex get a sense of euphoria from it that seems to go beyond that reported by most people. The sexual experience is not about intimacy. Addicts use sexual activity to seek pleasure, avoid unpleasant feelings or respond to outside stressors, such as work difficulties or interpersonal problems.

This is not unlike how an alcoholic uses alcohol. In both instances, any reward gained from the experience soon gives way to guilt, remorse and promises to change.

The following characteristics are indicative compulsive sexual behavior:

- When repetitive sexual activities become a central focus of the person's life. Often to the point of neglecting health and personal care or other interests, activities, and responsibilities.
- There are numerous unsuccessful efforts to significantly reduce repetitive sexual behavior.
- They continue the repetitive sexual behavior despite adverse consequences or deriving little or no satisfaction from it.
- They show a pattern of failure to control intense sexual impulses or urges and the resulting repetitive sexual behavior over an extended period, for example, 6 months.
- They show persistent behaviors that cause marked distress or significant impairment in their personal, family, social, educational, and occupational function, as well as in other important areas in their life.

8 Top Causes of Sexual Addiction:

This list is based upon my 30+ years in private practice from what I have observed working with thousands of patients.

1. History of Sexual Abuse

Research also has found that sex addicts often come from dysfunctional families and are more likely than non-sex addicts to have been abused.

One study found that 82 percent of sex addicts reported being sexually abused as children. These people that were sexually abused learned early on in life to associate sex with secrecy. The secrecy itself becomes the excitement factor whether it is secretly doing porn or secretly acting out with other people face to face or virtually.

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2. Other kinds of childhood trauma/abuse.

Other kinds of childhood abuse and trauma can create Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. This can lead to difficulties regulating one's anxiety or other kinds of pain. For some, the way to manage the pain of PTSD and the attachment wounds they have experienced is by escaping through sexual compulsivity.

3. Had parents who were distant

Sex addicts often describe their parents as rigid, distant and uncaring.

Children who have their needs met inconsistently or not at all fall into this category. This is related to the attachment wounds I mentioned in # 2 above. They have a hard time being vulnerable and recreate distance in their own intimate relationships. A substitute, even though a poor substitute for this feeling for adult closeness is to act out sexually. Arousal and orgasm can be a temporary respite from feeling so alone.

4. Prone to substance abuse

These families, including the addicts themselves, are more likely to be substance abusers.

One study found that 80 percent of recovering sex addicts report some type of addiction in their families of origin. The dopamine reward system that is involved in the drive and rewards of taking drugs is the same system in the brain that is involved with sexual addiction.

5. Have difficulty giving and receiving love

People who have a difficult time giving and receiving love can be at more risk for sexual addiction.

This is not separate from some of the items above. When you come from a family where there was not a lot of love expressed, you may have a difficult time being vulnerable as mentioned before which in turn leads to a lowered capacity to give and receive love.

6. Mental Health Issues

Anxiety, depression, personality disorders, poor impulse control, and performance anxiety are often simultaneous issues that one struggles with alongside sex addiction.

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People who have been diagnosed with Bipolar Disorder, or have a tendency toward “manic” states, are much more likely to engage in excessive or risky sexual behavior.

7. Genetics

You may have a genetic predisposition to emotional dysregulation, impulsivity, or sensation-seeking behavior. You may also have a predisposition to other traits that are commonly associated with sexual addiction, like anxiety or depression.

8. Hormones:

As one might expect, higher levels of sex hormones like testosterone or estrogen can affect libido. If you are inclined towards impulsive behavior and have high levels of sex-related hormones, you may be more likely to engage in excess sexual activities.

Treatment Options:

Compulsive sexual behavior can be difficult to treat, as a person may rationalize their behaviors and thought patterns. People who engage in compulsive sexual behavior may deny that there is a problem.

Some treatment options include:

Individual therapy

30-60 minute sessions with a certified mental health professional, focused on your sexually compulsive behaviors and any co-occurring disorders.

EMDR:

EMDR stands for Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing and it is a complete approach designed to help people process and heal from trauma and usually works far more effectively and quickly than simple talk therapy.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT).

In CBT therapy we focus on the idea that our behaviors, emotions, and thoughts are all interrelated and works to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts and self-talk.

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Psychodynamic therapy.

This type of therapy is built around the premise that unconscious memories and conflicts affect our behavior, Psychodynamic therapy uncovers early childhood influencers of current habits or present factors that contribute to the current sex addiction.

Dialectical-Behavioral Therapy (DBT).

DBT has four components: skills training group, individual treatment, DBT phone coaching, and consultation team and these four components are designed to teach four skills: mindfulness, distress tolerance, interpersonal effectiveness, and emotion regulation.

Group therapy

Led by qualified therapists, group therapy is designed to replace negative and detrimental behaviors with prosocial and positive ones. It provides the addict with assurance that he or she is not alone in his or her experiences.

Couples counseling or Marriage counseling.

This can be very beneficial for the sex addict and his or her partner. Couples counseling can help to improve communication skills, trust, and healthy sexual functioning between partners.

12-step recovery.

Sex Addicts Anonymous imitates the 12-step program of Alcoholics Anonymous and is a group-based model focused on acknowledging one's powerlessness and willingness to live a life free of addiction.

Inpatient therapy.

There are some inpatient recovery centers designed to treat sex and porn addiction. The patient resides at the recovery facility for the duration of treatment so that he or she can focus on the healing process without the distractions and temptations of everyday life.

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Todd Creager is an experienced relationship therapist & coach

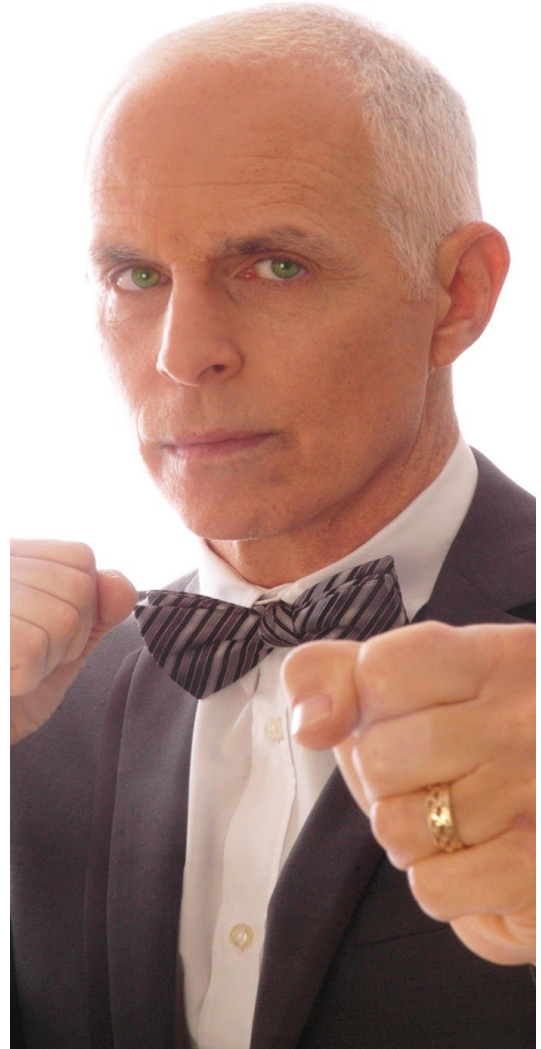
He specializes in marriage, sex and couples counseling.

From increasing intimacy, to a 90% success rate helping couples overcome infidelity, Todd has helped countless couples beat the issues that they face and as a result develop a deeper more satisfying relationship with their partner.

Author of the Long Hot Marriage, Love, Sex and Karaoke: 52 Ways to Ignite your Love Life, Todd spends much of his time helping long-term partners create passionate & thriving relationships.

He provides unique and powerful insights that lead to breakthroughs which result in his clients getting closer to each other and getting the love they want.

Need help? Todd can work with you in person, via phone or skype.



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