



HEALTHY SEXUAL SOLUTIONS

## Addictive vs. Healthy Love

### Love Addiction and Healthy Love

The intensity of love addiction is often in direct proportion to the intensity of one's sense of unmet needs during childhood.

#### LOVE ADDICTION

Feels all-consuming

Cannot define ego boundaries

Elements of sadomasochism

Fears letting go

Fears risk, change, and the unknown

Allows little individual growth

Lacks true intimacy

Plays psychological games

Gives to get something back

Attempts to change the partner

Needs the other to feel complete

Demands and expects unconditional love

Appears anti-dependent, refuses commitment, "I can do it myself"

#### HEALTHY LOVE

Allows for individuality

Experience and enjoys oneness and separateness with partner

Brings out best qualities in both partners

Accepts endings and allows for grief

Experiences openness to change and exploration

Invites growth in the partner

Experiences true intimacy

Feels the freedom to ask honestly for what is wanted

Experiences giving and receiving in the same way

Does not attempt to change or control

Encourages self-sufficiency of partner

Does not insist on unconditional love

Can make commitment and be inter-dependent

Fears abandonment upon routine separation

Recreates old negative feelings

Desires, yet fears closeness

Tries to take care of partner's feelings

Trust memory of beloved; enjoys solitude

Expresses feelings spontaneously

Welcomes closeness, risks vulnerability

Allows partner to feel their own feelings, cares *about*, not *for*

### **ADDICTIVE LOVE**

Establishes "instant intimacy"

Lays aside own needs for sake of relationship

Compromises morality, needs, ethics, and values for the relationship

Fits person into romantic fantasies and/or erotic situations having special songs, props, and symbols for the relationship even when such trappings really have little meaning

Quickly recognizes a "cosmic mate" or "special connection" and yet has difficulty being friends

Confuses "high" or intensity with love and assumes that anything this strong must be love

Has the skills (imagined) to rescue the person from the life they have created for themselves

Ignores aspects of person you don't like or unshared values, sees other through eyes of illusion

### **HEALTHY LOVE**

Takes time for trust and intimacy

Meets their own needs in relationship

Maintains their own morality and follows conscience

Romance adds to the relationship, rather than holds it together

Allows for friendship and bonding to take place over time

Does not look for high, love is experienced as strong over time

Has no need to rescue

Can look honestly at relationship and both partners

"Hangs in there" much past the point of sanity

Recognizes when to take a break until the partner gets help

Enters into the other's world completely

Can experience partners world and their own world

Knows how to use the skills of communication to hide from true intimacy

Intimacy is primary, while communication skills are secondary

(Source: Erik Bohlin)