

The 3 C's: Craving Loss of Control, and Negative Consequences.

Many people ask how they can determine whether they have the process addiction known as sexual addiction. Theorists in the field explain that there are 3 areas that they assess to identify whether someone should be treated for sexual addiction. The framework for addiction is comprised of the 3C's (1) craving; (2) loss of control; and (3) negative consequences. If your behavior as a potential sex addict meets these 3 criteria, then it is likely that you need to be seen by a Certified Sexual Addictions Therapist who can further assess your behaviors and determine a treatment plan that will best assist you and your family in getting help. Let's imagine that you spend hours on the internet and you wake up thinking about pornography, think about it during your work day and go to bed with the fantasies of what you have viewed. This, very simply meets the criteria for craving. Most addicts take more advanced risks with porn and they purposely try to "steal" opportunities to get a quick fix...wife jumps in the shower and you hop on the internet before work. Or maybe you purposely leave late so that you can spend 20 minutes getting your fix only to find that 20 minutes turned into an hour and 20 minutes which then means you don't get to take your shower and you spend your entire drive time making up excuses as to why you were late (again) for work. Perhaps you got a smart phone and you find yourself isolating at work or going out to your car instead of eating with your buddies because you would prefer checking the sites to see what is new. The allure of finding things that are new keeps your brain craving more opportunities for porn.

And as the addiction worsens you find yourself giving into the addiction. You tell yourself 100 times that you won't get on Craig's list or that you will stop being a voyeur or that you won't check in with the newest porn site and then no matter how much you mean it, you succumb to it's seduction and you are right back where you started or worse....staying up all night to chat with other adults in the chat rooms or you sneak out after church to head to the new massage parlor. It is baffling how you could be so addicted to the behaviors that you love and hate at the same time.

And then it happens. The wife gets a call from your mistress or your children find your emails or you are arrested for prostitution and you hate yourself because you have not only ruined your life but you have tarnished the family's ideal of what a father should stand for.... you become so despondent that you promise never to act out again and then the despair which is part of the addiction cycle begs for medication and you use your sexual addiction to medicate the pain that was created by the sexual addiction and the cycle continues.

Despite the negative consequences, you continue to act out until you find the resources that are strong enough to ally with you to fight this battle. That might look like a specialist ----- a trained certified sexual addiction therapist who can help you navigate to the right resources. That might be a workshop designed to give you the basic principles to maneuver you into recovery. That might be the 12 Step Program where you can find men who have been where you are at and want to help you find the 12 step formula that can guide you into an improved life. Or it may require a hospitalization in an addiction

facility that has a specialized treatment program that will help you to heal your wounds and heal your life.

Ask yourself if you are a victim of the 3 C's and if it sounds like I am describing your life, you need to address this now because it never gets better without outside resources and specialized services. You deserve to be free of this compulsion and replace it with a healthy sense of yourself, your behaviors for YOU and your family.