Intimacy Anorexia

The Workbook

Douglas Weiss, Ph.D.

Contents

Introduction 7

EXERCISES

1	Active Withholding Acceptance	9
2	Understanding that “I Am the Solution”	10
3	How Did I Get Here?	11
4	Recovery is Work	12
5	Maximized Thinking	13
6	Believe Behavior	14
7	Identifying My Anorexic Behaviors	15
8	Characteristic 1: Busy	16
9	Characteristic 2: Blaming	17
10	Characteristic 3: Love	18
11	Characteristic 4: Praise	20
12	Characteristic 5: Sex	22
13	Characteristic 6: Spiritual	23
14	Characteristic 7: Feelings	24
15	Characteristic 8: Anger/Silence	25
16	Characteristic 9: Criticism	27
17	Characteristic 10: Money	28
18	Take the Test	29
19	Top Behaviors	30
20	Examples	31
21	Anorexia as Addiction	34
22	My Cycles	37
23	Daily Checklist	38
24	The Sex Addict	40
25	Commandment #1: Pray	41
26	Commandment #2: Read	42
27	Commandment #3: Meetings	43
28	Commandment #4: Calls	44
29	Commandment #5: Pray Again	45
30	The 5 C’s	46
31	3 Dailies	48
32	You Initiate	50
33	My Sponsor	51
34	Consequences	52
35	Counseling	53
36	Affirmations	54
37	Step One	56
38	Types of Sex	57

39	Asking for Sex	58
40	Three Guidelines for Sex	59
41	Sexual Agreement	60
42	Real Consequences	61
43	Giving Your Heart	62
44	Staying Close	63
45	Punishing Through Sex	65
46	Finding Giving	66
47	Finding Sexuality	67
48	Intentionality	68
49	The Paycheck	69
50	Thank You Letter	70
51	Goodbye Letter	71
52	Victim Letter	72
53	Fantasy/Ideal Person	73
54	Fear of Intimacy Letter	74
55	Letter to Control	75
56	Independence Letter	76
57	Selfishness Letter	77
58	Letter to Blaming	78
59	Letter to the Wall	79
60	The Back Door Letter	80
61	Step Two	81
62	The Good Me	82
63	The Bad Me	83
64	Step Three	84
65	Value	85
66	Shame	86
67	Forgive Me	87
68	God Forgive Me	88
69	Step Four	89
70	Sharing the Flaw	90
71	Flawed and Loved	91
72	Being Beheld	92
73	Step Five	93
74	No Pain Rule	94
75	Reading Their Mind	95
76	Am I Right?	96
77	Practice Rejection	97
78	Empathy	98
79	Step Six	99
80	Higher Ground	100
81	Bad Spouse	101
82	Good Spouse	102
83	Affirmations About Spouse	103
84	Step Seven	104

85	Five Years From Now	105
86	Cause and Effect	106
87	Disorders	107
88	Step Eight	108
89	My Family	109
90	My Relationship History	110
91	Step Nine	111
92	Growing Up	112
93	My Relationship with Dad	115
94	My Relationship with Mom	118
95	My Relationship with God	121
96	Abuses and Neglects	125
97	My Perpetrators	126
98	What You Did to Me	127
99	Ranking My Perpetrator(s)	128
100	Letter(s) to My Perpetrator(s)	129
101	Anger Work	130
102	Forgiving Them	131
103	Step Ten	132
104	Step Eleven	133
105	Step Twelve	134
106	Free to Love	135

Appendix 137

Feelings List

Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous adapted for Intimacy Anorexia

Acting In Checklist

Resources

Introduction

Welcome to the *Intimacy Anorexic Workbook*. Congratulations to you for arriving here in your recovery; no doubt it has been quite a journey for you up to this point. You are holding one of the most powerful tools available to help you open your heart in relationship, especially with your spouse. Continuing to work on your recovery will pay off for the rest of your life and your loved ones, as they will also reap the benefits of your hard work creating a legacy of health and recovery for them to follow in.

This workbook is designed to be completed in the order it is written It can be completed on an individual basis or in the context of an intimacy anorexia recovery group. As with any tool, this must be USED to provide you with the desired outcome, which in this case is one of healing. Sharing your exercises with a recovery group, partner, or therapist is advised, as feedback will help you grow and see things from differing perspectives.

This book is truly a "WORK" book, as it will challenge you repeatedly and will be some of the hardest, most fulfilling work you have ever completed. I strongly encourage you to pray daily that you will believe that you are worth the efforts put forth on every page. When you are standing on the other side, after completing your journey through the workbook exercises, you will be able to see dramatic growth in your ability to give your heart to those you love most.

Be encouraged. The exercises in this book have been successfully completed by many intimacy anorexics before you. I have seen the miracle of recovery happen in those who take their recovery work seriously. If you are diligent and courageous, I believe that you, too, will experience a miracle!

Douglas Weiss, Ph.D.
Heart to Heart Counseling Centers
heart2heart@xc.org
www.intimacyanorexia.com
719.278.3708

Active Withholding Acceptance

The beginning of the recovery journey from intimacy anorexia starts with the word "active" in the definition of intimacy anorexia.

Intimacy anorexia is the active withholding of emotional, spiritual and sexual intimacy from your spouse and possibly others.

Active withholding is visually evident in your marriage. If you are a man, your withholding is mostly or exclusively toward your wife. Everyone else might believe you to be and experience you as a wonderful guy. If you're a woman, your intimacy anorexia is active mostly or exclusively with your husband. Those on the outside of your marriage believe you to be and experience you as a wonderful woman.

That's the rub; anorexics actively starve their spouse and positively reinforce almost everyone else in their life. This starving or active withholding is intentional, although right now you might not want to believe this about yourself. Years of your spouse's attempts to get you to be intimate and your consistent failure (except for a week or two here and there) would be evidence that it is intentional.

This is the first step in this workbook, because unless you can see yourself and not your spouse as the reason you withhold, you cannot heal and you will still blame your spouse as an excuse for not accepting the full responsibility for your withholding behaviors.

Today, I believe I am _____% responsible for my intimacy anorexia withholding behaviors.

It may take you a while to get 100% responsible for your behavior. If you are not yet accepting 100% responsibility, flag this page and come back to record the date when you have come to accept full responsibility for your withholding behaviors. You might want to keep track of the percentage you believe daily until you reach 100%.

I became 100% responsible for my intimacy anorexic withholding behaviors on _____.

2

Understanding that "I Am the Solution"

Almost every day, I have intimacy anorexics sitting across from me in my office trying to convince me of how their spouse is the problem causing them to behave in an anorexic manner. This is intriguing, much like an alcoholic telling me that he or she drinks because of their spouse.

I kindly let them know that I have yet to meet someone with the power to make their spouse open a "liquor bottle" and make them get drunk into oblivion. An analogy of what they are basically saying is that their spouse uses this magical power to get them "drunk " so that they can become verbally or physically abusive just because they couldn't wait to clean up the after effects from their "drinking."

Trust me, if a spouse could stop you from withholding intimacy from them, then all of these frustrated spouses would stop this insanity in a minute, so they would be loved and feel loved like they really deserve.

Here is the upside. When you or I are 100% of the problem, then you or I are also 100% of the solution. As far as your withholding behaviors, those are choices you make, regardless of their influence, so you can choose not to withhold as well. So as I say to my clients, if you are 100% of the problem, you are 100% of the solution!

I understand that I am 100% of the problem for my withholding behaviors and 100% of the solution on this date _____.

How Did I Get Here?

If you watched the *Intimacy Anorexia* or *Married and Alone* DVDs, you will remember that I outlined the three primary causes for intimacy anorexia. Before I go any further, let me quickly separate sexual and intimacy anorexia. Sexual anorexics are intimacy anorexics whose stronger characteristic is withholding sex. Intimacy anorexics don't mind having sex, although they might not be that present emotionally during sex. Their stronger characteristic is withholding intimacy emotionally and spiritually. Our field uses these terms interchangeably although they have some slight differences.

Here are the four causes for intimacy anorexia.

1. Sexual Trauma: If you have been sexually abused

2. Sexual Addiction: Pornography, fantasy, lusting, sexually objectifying, masturbation, or sex with others outside of marriage. If you are not sure of this one, go to www.sexaddict.com and take the test.

3. Attachment Issues with Cross-Gender Parent: If the opposite gender parent was absent physically or emotionally, abandoned you, or was unsafe emotionally for you.

4. Poor Role Modeling: The child feels neglected, managed or not related to by one or both parents.

As you currently see it, the contributing factors for your intimacy anorexia are (check those that apply)

1. _____ Sexual Trauma

2. _____ Sexual Addiction

3. _____ Attachment Issues with Cross-Gender Parent

4. _____ Poor Role Modeling

4

Recovery is Work

I want to remind you right up front that recovery is hard work. Recovery from intimacy anorexia is extremely hard work. It took years of practice to build your wall and attack systems to keep your heart away from intimacy and it will take hard work and consistency to get your wall down and to keep it down.

it is necessary to make a time commitment to do recovery work each day such as completing workbook exercises, therapeutic reading, and doing exercises with your spouse. It will take time and hard work to experience recovery from intimacy anorexia. You are worth this recovery and so are those you love.

To get started, look at your schedule and find 15 to 30 minutes daily to commit to recovery. I know we are all busy and some anorexics are professional black belts at being busy, but recovery will take daily time to recover. Below, write out your daily time for recovery. Commit to this and do not be deterred - the pay-off will exceed the commitment!

Monday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm	Tuesday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm
Wednesday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm	Thursday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm
Friday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm	Saturday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm
Sunday	____:____ to ____:____ am/pm		

Example: 6:15 to 6:45 am