



Partners

Healing from His Addiction

Douglas Weiss, Ph.D.



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Introduction

Sexual addiction is growing rampantly across our nation. Men are viewing porn at greater rates than at any other time in history. The effect on our culture because of this growing epidemic of sexual addiction is immeasurable. The silent pain that partners of sex addicts experience day after day because of his addiction has not been unmasked until now.

Over eighty-five women helped us compile the most current data on the effects of sex addiction on a partner. In the 2nd edition of this book, in 2011, another 39 brave women contributed to its impact on them and the relevance of intimacy anorexia in their lives. The issue of depression is a very common reaction for partners of sexual addicts, and we address their responses in our study. Some of the other issues partners responded to in this book are self-esteem, eating disorders and sexuality. *Partners: Healing from His Addiction* is the first book to bring you statistical detail from the hearts and lives of these women we call partners.

As these partners journey from the devastating effects on their lives from sexual addiction and move on into their own personal recovery program, the statistical trail indicates there is much hope as she embarks on her journey towards healing. The results from this research demonstrate that significant progress and healing can be obtained by following a recovery path.

The hope of this book is that any woman in a relationship with a sexual addict can feel that she is not alone in this silent addiction. She can now not only reach out, but she can genuinely heal from the effects of his addiction on her life.

Doug Weiss



Brenda's Story

My name is Brenda. I am 36 years old and married to a sex addict. We have been living together now for eight years and were married four years ago. My husband and I met at work; both of us were married (to someone else). Michael presented himself as Mr. Wonderful. His behavior led me to believe he was in love with me. He told me all the right things I wanted and needed (or so I thought), to hear in order to feel celebrated, loved, and wanted. He pursued an adulterous affair with me; I was eager to respond. This affair led me to choose to leave my first husband, who was emotionally abusive and, I believe, a sex addict as well. Michael left his wife and we moved in with each other.

During our adulterous affair, sex was very connected, passionate, loving and intimate. He treated me like his dream come true: he was kind, gentle, compassionate, patient, and led me to believe that he was a good income earner. Upon moving in with each other, everything changed. I could not put my finger on what the exact problem was. Michael was fired from his job, filed bankruptcy, and had very irresponsible spending habits. I resented his obsessive spending (of my money). I financially supported us with my cashed out 401K, savings, credit cards, and current job.

Michael was "an independent contractor" in a business earning NO income! He had a lot of unaccounted for time. He was vague

in discussing his whereabouts, and avoided discussion about these issues. He soon introduced pornography into our sexual relationship, stating that it would heighten our sexual satisfaction. I did not want to participate, but went along with it. After all, didn't everyone watch it?

He persuaded me to participate and imitate the sexual activities of the actors. This included sexual devices and books with sex stories for additional fantasy. Sex turned from pleasurable to both mentally and physically painful. I was used in a very degrading, objectifying and painful way. It was a crime against my body and my spirit. When I would not participate, he continued with it, on his own, in secret. He would sneak up in the middle of the night, while I was at work, and every time I went out of town, to act-out with pornography and masturbate. On many occasions, I confronted him and told him I would not tolerate his behavior. He would apologize and throw out the pornography; then immediately sneak it back in, and the same cycle would repeat itself. It wasn't just the sexual relationship that had now failed. He was emotionally unavailable, controlling, manipulative, and unkind to our children (his son, now 13, my daughter, now 9, both from our previous marriages). He was rude to friends, coworkers, family members, and me. If I was not ready or willing to participate in his sexual desires, he treated me like garbage. In my need to be loved, I would set aside my self-respect and participate, enabling his addiction. I no longer liked anything about him; but I was unable to do anything about it. I was immobilized to the point of going through with marriage to him, unable to say no!

I believed that I was the problem. If I were more physically attractive, lost weight, and worked out, were more mentally stimulating-the list goes on-then he would stop. I compared myself to every attractive woman I saw, whether he was present or not. I checked up on him, looked in his briefcase, wallet, and car, fantasized about him acting-out, staked out his favorite porno shop, called the video rental for his account activity, and could not sleep at night. I obsessed about him 24 hours a day. I did not realize I had become addicted to him and his behavior. I tried to medicate my pain by "checking out" emotionally and drinking

alcohol to avoid feeling the loneliness, emptiness, and desperation. I wanted to just kill the pain. By now I had quit my job and had become financially and emotionally dependent upon him; which is the addict's plan. I had lost my identity, did not know who I was, and most certainly did not like who I had become. I was neglecting my daughter and myself to the extreme. Life continued like this for six years.

After our first wedding anniversary, I confronted Michael with the option of a divorce, so he would be free to pursue his sexual interests. He declared his love for me and that he could give up his inappropriate sexual activities. This was the beginning of a year of him getting better at hiding, more daring in his activities, and my continual drinking of alcohol, obsessing about him, and neglecting my daughter and myself. I began fantasizing about entering into an affair with someone I knew. I imagined that he would love me. I would show Michael that someone saw value in me. I started planning how I would enter into my next adulterous affair. Thankfully, I came to my senses and realized that this was exactly the way I started my relationship with Michael, medicating myself with a man that I believed would love me. I recognized a destructive pattern of my own and chose not to continue in it. In realizing what was happening, I committed to do everything possible in this relationship to bring forth resolution. Meanwhile, his addictive behavior continued getting worse; I would catch him, he would ask for forgiveness, and I would forgive.

*"In realizing what was happening,
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relationship to bring forth resolution."*

He went to counseling for his problem, fooled the counselor, and pacified me. Finally, I recognized that I was at the end of my ability to continue in this addictive, crazy life. I made a decision