

# **RELATIONSHIP ADDICTION – ADDICTED TO LOVE**

By ART ADAMS, LCSW, LCAC, CADACIV  
PowerPoint Presentation – [PowerPointPro.vpweb.com](http://PowerPointPro.vpweb.com)

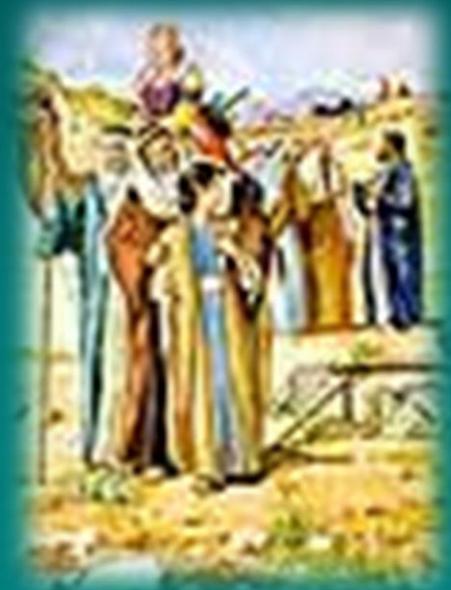
# INTRODUCTION

“Like many people in addictive relationships, she thought her relationship started out well – too well.

It was romantic, a whirlwind relationship where they wanted to be together every minute of the day. Declarations of love were made early – less than two weeks into the relationship. A month later it started to fall apart – he started criticizing the way she dressed, her laugh, being too needy, getting fat – he needed space. At that point she panicked and started chasing after him. Without him she felt like her world was falling apart.”

# INTRODUCTION

1. Courtship – dating – love relationship in our culture is unique. Other cultures and times have/had arranged marriages and one must learn to love the person sometimes after marriage (Gen. 2:18f ; I Tim. 5:14)
  - A. Consider Mary and Joseph and their pre-marital status.
  - B. Old Testament status of virgins/non-virgins.



# INTRODUCTION

2. This lesson deals with relationships in our American culture.
3. “Fish in the right pond” – Where do you find the person(s) you date?



OR

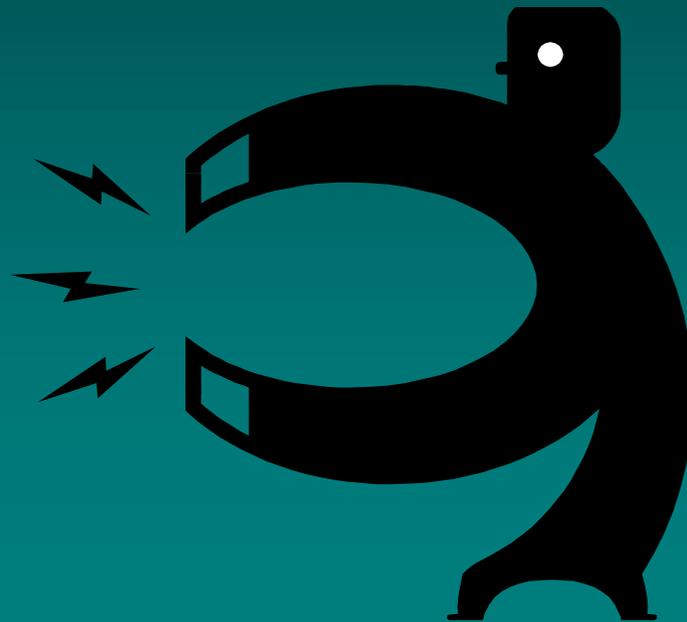


# INTRODUCTION

4. Relationship addiction may be called the “hidden addiction.”
5. Recall our definition of “addiction”.
6. This addiction usually has symptoms that are triggered by a certain type of person.

# INTRODUCTION

7. If you have ever thought “this relationship is sick” or “not good for me, but I can’t keep myself from going back – then, it might be time to recognize you are addicted to love.



# INTRODUCTION

- A. More in love with love than the person.
- B. Definition of “love”.
- C. Definition of “pity” – “sympathy or sorrow felt for the sufferings or unhappiness of another.” – Merriam-Webster
- D. Love addicts often confused the two definitions and set themselves up for dysfunction. One is about mutuality – the other about rescuing.

# INTRODUCTION

E. The chaos triangle –



F. The roles continue to shift (rescuer becomes victim, victim becomes the victimizer, becomes the rescuer, etc.)

# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

- A. To be in a relationship you must have something to offer (Matt. 22:39, Mk. 12:31). One must answer the questions “Who am I?” before he/she can answer “Who are you?” and “Who am I in relationship to you?”. Without this answer there is no anchor in the relationship. (I Cor. 10:14 – flee idolatry)



# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

1. With little or nothing to offer, one becomes a beggar for the other person to love them. Often willing to “do anything if you will just love me.” This puts the Christian in an extremely compromising position and makes an “idiot out of the targeted partner”.



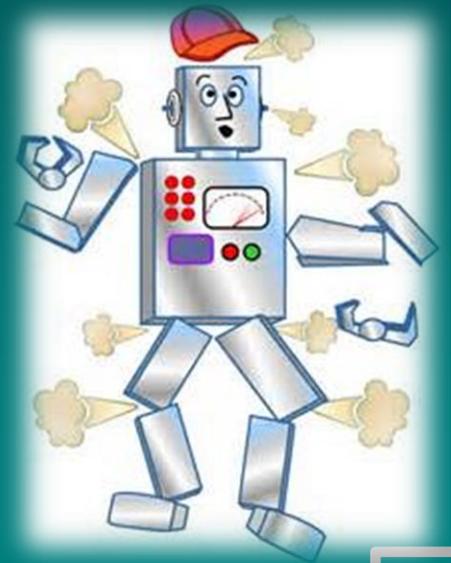
# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP



- a. The courtship and marriage relationship must always come second to one's relationship with the Lord (Matt. 10:37; Lk 14:26).
- b. Idolatry can and does happen in some relationships. "Flee idolatry" does not mean the one flattered accepts "worship" (Acts 14:15). Is the statement "he just worships the ground she walks on" reflective of what a Christian should be doing?
- c. Heroes fall – "knights in shining armour get tarnished" – No one is too good to be true. Ultimately, reality sets in.

# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

2. The answers to your issues do not lie in a relationship. They lie within you. The answers to your partner's issues do not lie within you. Too many get into dysfunction by fooling themselves into "if I just love him/her more" or "I can fix him/her". Sometimes, love is just not enough.



# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

3. Ironically the more the targeted person is pursued, the more they take the pursuer for granted and may even become very abusive. A “love you – hate you – need you – go away” syndrome. (Three legged dog).



# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

4. The relationship becomes “taken for granted” and loses its’ value to one (or in time both). Fear of loneliness or starting with someone new can often create a “stuckness” and settling for what one has.
5. OR, would you like a relationship that inspires you to be the best person you can be – feel safe enough to be vulnerable so you can grow, heal and feel secure? This is the model of Christ and the church.

# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

- B. Take an honest look at the value and purpose of the relationship(s) in your life.
1. What need or value does this relationship serve for you?
  2. Are you in it because of amazing chemistry?
  3. Are you in this relationship to avoid being alone?
  4. Are you in this relationship to escape something or someone?
  5. Not everyone who feels like your soul mate is right for you. A good date does not necessarily make a good mate.

# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

- C. Shared values (God, church, going to heaven, family, achievement, financial security, status, acceptance, physically fit, fun, honesty, employment, friends, belonging, loyalty, hardworking, flexible, frugal, communication, compassionate, challenge, goal driven, etc.) (Three primary values – Matt. 22:38)
- D. Select by compatible “traits” (examples: kind, leader, talented, selfish, arrogant, greedy, volatile).

# I. ESSENTIALS OF A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP

E. A simple test – The power of our role models (II Sam. 13 – diabolic advise; Prov. 1)

1. female – If your mom and his dad were married how would they get along?
2. male – If your dad and his mom were married how would they get along?

## II. LOVE ADDICT QUIZ

*It will help you start paying more attention to any tendency you might have for getting into unhealthy relationships.*

- A. Are you in a breakup and then make up cycle with a romantic partner?
- B. Do you often think to yourself that this person is not good for you?
- C. Do any of your close friends/family tell you that this person is not good for you?

## II. LOVE ADDICT QUIZ

- D. After you two have been apart for a few days, do you get to a point where you feel empty or lost without this person?
- E. During the days immediately following a breakup with this person, do you experience difficulty sleeping, eating, or carrying out other self-care activities?
- F. Do you need emotional intensity in order to feel alive?

## II. LOVE ADDICT QUIZ

- G. Do you feel “high” when the two of you reconnect after a fight or a falling out?
- H. Is “sex” the focus of your relationship?
- I. Are you asked or pressured to violate your values?
- J. If you answered “yes” to three or more of these questions what does the pattern tell you? (ex. Empty and lost without my person; avoiding my own feelings, need to feel special as compensation for deeper feelings of insecurity, feelings of abandonment or being alone, etc.)

# III. FLEEING FORNICATION

(I THESS. 4:1-8; I COR. 6:9-20; EPH. 5:3)

- A. Once a pre-marital relationship becomes sexual – communication, growth as a couple, usually cease. The focus is on the sex and the “pleasure principle” guides the relationships. There can become an ambivalence to “right/wrong” when hedonism dominates.
- B. Possessiveness – “men give love for sex; women give sex for love” – beware of the betrayal bond.



# IV. BACK TO BASICS – PUSHING OUR YOUTH INTO RELATIONSHIPS

A. Does a person have to be in a female/male relationship to be considered “normal”?

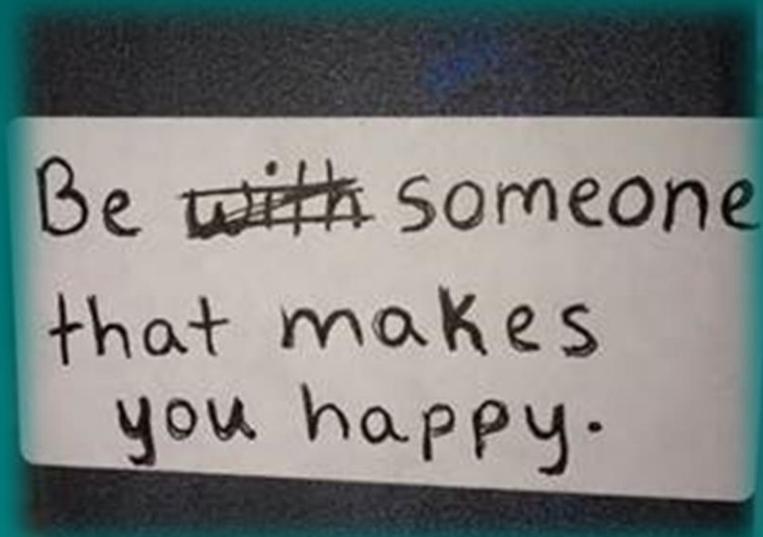
1. Bible clearly teaches against female/female and male/male sexual relationships. (Rom. 1:28-32)

Aside from that, does one have to marry to be “normal”?  
(Gen. 2:18f; I Tim. 5:14)



# IV. BACK TO BASICS – PUSHING OUR YOUTH INTO RELATIONSHIPS

- B. The single life is an acceptable way of happiness, too.
  - 1. Being single is not a curse – it is better to be single and wish you were married than to be married and wish you were single.



# IV. BACK TO BASICS – PUSHING OUR YOUTH INTO RELATIONSHIPS

2. Paul (I Cor. 7:1, 2, 32-35, 40)
  - a. In some conditions it is best not to be married.
  - b. A single person can channel all their energies into spiritual.
  - c. Serving God is a privilege which yields satisfaction far exceeding the joys of married life.



# IV. BACK TO BASICS – PUSHING OUR YOUTH INTO RELATIONSHIPS

3. Matthew 19:12
4. The single life has its' problems as does any lifestyle.
  - a. Loneliness – God made men and women to be social beings. Making “loneliness” into “opportunity”.
  - b. Self-pity. (I Kings 19 – “I’m the only one”)
  - c. Jealousy. (Gal. 5:20)
  - d. Cultivate friendships – there are other singles.

# IV. BACK TO BASICS – PUSHING OUR YOUTH INTO RELATIONSHIPS

## 5. Personal Purity

- a. Submitting to a sexual arrangement is the one most defeating things one can do in single life.
- b. I Thess. 4:1-8; I Cor. 6:9-20; Eph. 5:3.
- c. To cope with improper advances or desires one needs to avoid: persons, places or things and draw need to Christ for strength of character.
- d. One who loves the Lord avoids the very appearance of evil (I Thess. 5:22).

# IV. BACK TO BASICS – PUSHING OUR YOUTH INTO RELATIONSHIPS

5. Joy in the single life
  - a. Independence (freedom to go where one wishes, less check in).
  - b. Free time is more readily available.
  - c. Mobility (travel, help a specific need, etc.).
  - d. Financial (without a family to support, may have opportunity to help support an evangelist, dedicate to a cause, etc.).
  - e. Peter was married and evidently settled into eldership role in local church.
  - f. Paul was more active in moving around to different places as a single man.

# V. STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS

- A. Make spirituality and recovery the main priorities in your life – what brings you peace and serenity – commit to communion with the Lord at least an hour each day.
- B. Focus on reclaiming and building “yourself” – fill in gaps that cause you to feel undeserving or bad about yourself.  
(Matt. 22:39)
- C. Learn to stop managing and controlling others by being focused on your own needs.

# V. STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING RELATIONSHIP ADDICTIONS

- D. Learn not to get “hooked” into the games of relationships and roles you have fallen into in the past (rescuer – helper; persecutor – blamer; victim – helpless one)
- E. Find a support group of friends who understand – be productive.
- F. Share with others what you have experienced and learned.



# FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. We tend to marry someone we date. So, be cautious who you date.
2. Fish in the right pond.
3. Fornication is sinful – Marriage is not the punishment.



# FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

4. The difference in what we have discussed in this hour and relationship in marriage is this – once a person has made a commitment of marriage he and she are in a “leaving/cleaving” bond and must make it work. Marriages that start with dysfunction have more complicated issues than those discussed in this lesson. But, when the couple is willing to do the corrective work the upside down marriage can become right-sided. If this is your marriage – God made you a promise (Gal. 6:9,10). Do the work! Do not look for a **way out**, but a **way in** the home as God would have it.

# FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

- A. God hates “putting away” (Mal. 2:16), but He hates one thing worse – a cheating mate (Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mk. 10:11; Lk. 16:18).
  - B. Divorce is for one reason and one reason alone.
3. The mate selection process is one of the most critical decisions that two human being can make. It must be done with “God first” thinking, wisdom, and knowledge (Ecc. 11:9ff).