

# Sex Addiction: How to Know If Infidelity is a Symptom of Sex Addiction

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When you discover your partner's infidelity, you are shocked, confused, angry, immobilized, depressed, and feeling like you might lose your mind. Amidst this whirlwind, you keep hearing about "sexual addiction" in the media, and you wonder if it's what's at play here. How can you tell if the infidelity is a symptom of the more significant problem of sexual addiction?

Here are some indicators of infidelity as part of sexual addiction:

## **Patterns of Sexual Acting Out:**

If this isn't the first time you've suspected or discovered infidelity, it might indicate addiction.

## **Multiple Sexual Compulsions:**

Sex addicts often have more than one sexual compulsion. If your partner engages compulsively in other sexual behaviors, addiction could be involved.

## **Frequenting Certain Locations:**

Discovering your partner visiting strip clubs, adult bookstores, cruising spots like "pick-up bars," or other places conducive to acting out could be a sign.

## **Difficulty with Intimacy:**

Sex addicts often struggle with genuine intimacy. If you feel used, abused, or objectified sexually by your partner, it's a red flag.

### **Decline in Interest:**

If your partner shows reduced interest in sex with you and less interest in the intimacy of your relationship, it might be a sign.

### **Exaggerated Importance of Sex:**

For a sex addict, sex can take on an exaggerated level of importance. Constant thoughts, fantasies, planning, or obsession with sex are warning signs of addiction.

### **Using Sex as a Coping Mechanism:**

Sex addicts may use sex as a coping mechanism for life's stresses. If your partner turns to sex during times of stress and seems to feel temporarily better afterward, addiction might be the issue.

### **Cross-Addiction:**

Sexual addiction often coexists with other addictions like gambling, overeating, or substance use disorder. If your partner has other addictions, sexual addiction could also be present.

### **Financial Consequences:**

Discovering negative economic impacts of infidelity or other sexual acting-out behaviors could indicate addiction.

### **Family History:**

Coming from a family with a history of addiction to sex, alcohol, drugs, gambling, or work increases the likelihood of sexual addiction. People in early recovery from sexual addiction often discover a history of sexual acting out in their family of origin.

Infidelity, like sexual addiction, brings secrecy, dishonesty, shame, guilt, emotional turmoil, and intimacy issues in relationships. If you recognize some of these indicators, it's essential to encourage your unfaithful spouse to seek evaluation for sexual addiction from a professional. Educating yourself about this condition is crucial, not

only for making informed decisions but also for your own healing from the pain you're experiencing. Note: This article has been revised and edited from its original version, which was previously published in 2009 on this site. The content has been updated for clarity and accuracy.

Thank you for letting us be a part of  
your recovery and evolution.

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