

# Defining Sobriety



**L.I.F.E. RECOVERY**  
INTERNATIONAL

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*Healing Broken Relationships, Fostering Integrity, and Developing Warriors in the  
Fight Against Sexual Addiction*

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# Comparisons:

## **Disease Model** (Alcoholic's Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous):

Sobriety is based on an absolute abstinence from a particular substance. Disease Model believes that the abuse of substance is the core issue. New thinking is expanding the concept to include using *any* substance that alters the addicts mood or numbs their feelings. Recovery seems to be based on repetitive character transformation principles (12 Steps) with an acknowledged lifelong identity as an addict.

## **Trauma Model** (L.I.F.E. Recovery):

Sobriety is based on abstinence from substance *and* behaviors but believes that deeper core issues drive the behaviors as a means of coping with the core issues. The Trauma Model seeks to uncover and heal the core issues with the belief that healing will alleviate the craving for the use of a substance or the need to behave addictively.



# The Facilitator's role in assisting a group member establish sobriety :

- To establish that co-addiction/codependency and sexual addiction are similar to each other and that they both need treatment and support from a trauma based model approach.
- To educate the group member that co-addiction/addiction is an intimacy disorder.
- To help the group attendee acknowledge and identify his/her codependent/addictive behaviors.
- To help the addict/co-addict comprehend the negative consequences of addictive/codependent behavior and how it plays into the addict/co-addict cycle (IE: enmeshment, enablement, rationalization and entitlement)
- How to be cognizant of the cycle of co-addiction/addiction, it's rituals and acting out behaviors.
- To assist the group member in understanding the definition of sobriety and installing an accountability/support system within a small group or recovery community.



## **Definitions:**

### **Sex & Love Addicts Anonymous:**

Member creates own definition: Identifies the addicts Bottom Line behaviors and defines sobriety on abstinence from those.

### **Sex Addicts Anonymous:**

Member creates own definition: Identifies compulsive behavior and abstains from those.

### **Narcotics Anonymous:**

“Sobriety is abstinence from all mood altering substances.”

### **Sexaholics Anonymous:**

“Sexual sobriety for sexaholics of our type means no sex with ourselves and no sex with any partner other than the spouse.”

### **L.I.F.E. Recovery:**

Sobriety means no sex with self, no sex with anyone outside of marriage, no pornography, and no fantasy.



## L.I.F.E. Ministries Definition of Sobriety for Sexual Addicts:

-“no sex with self” primarily means masturbation but may include any activity or behaviors that are intended to induce sexual arousal (with or without the intention of producing an orgasm) without any direct assistance from another person.

-“no sex with anyone outside of marriage” primarily means the act of coitus (or intercourse) taking place with anyone before being married, while engaged (to include the betrothed), or separated, but may include any activity in which orgasm may or may not be achieved.

-“no pornography” primarily means media based imagery or peep shows, strip clubs or any other establishment or service that provides anything sexually visual but may include *anything* used to induce sexual arousal.

-“no fantasy” means any deliberate and sustained thoughts or mental preoccupation about sex for the express purpose of becoming aroused.



# Can Codependency or Co-Addiction sobriety be defined?

YES...

In his now famous book: “Don’t Call it Love” based on a 1991 study of nearly 1,000 sex addicts and their partners/spouses, Patrick Carnes writes:

*“The most startling part of talking to the partners of sex addicts was that coaddicts are mirror images of the addicts themselves.”*

- Both came from the same type of family or origin.
- Both had siblings, parents or family members with addictions.
- Both reported history of emotional and physical abuse.
- Both seek false solutions or quick fixes to medicate or cope with reality.
- Both suffer from poor core beliefs.

(Page 145 & 146, Table 5-1, Don’t Call it Love, Bantam Books)



# Co-Addictive Acting Out Behaviors:

## Fear / Anger Based:

- Pre-occupation with the addict.
- Snooping/Being the Detective.
- Control & Manipulation.
- Rage
- Surrendering Values / Sacrificing or loss of Self
- Withdrawing
- Verbal / Emotional Abuse (Transference)

## Self Medicating:

- Overeating
- Work-a-holism
- Fantasy
- Excessive Television



## **L.I.F.E. Recovery Definition of Sobriety for Co-Addicts:**

- No Controlling & Manipulative Behavior.
- Sets boundaries and respects boundaries of others.
- Doesn't surrender values or self.
- No self-medicating or escape behavior.
- No enabling.
- No fantasy.
- No snooping or playing The Detective.
- No transference.

