



MEDIA RELEASE

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LOVE ADDICTION—WHAT IS IT? WHO GETS IT? And WHY?

(Minneapolis, MN)—Drug addiction, food addiction, work addiction, and now LOVE addiction? Is there really such a thing or has our growing list of “addictions” gone too far?

“Not at all,” says author and psychologist Brenda Schaeffer. “Love addiction is as real as these more familiar addictions and it shares many of the same characteristics.” As Schaeffer points out, “we use words such as obsessive, compulsive, attached, and dependent, when speaking of an alcoholic or workaholic. These are the very same words we use when talking about love. And the similarities don’t stop there. As in drug addiction or food addiction, people who are love-addicted understand intellectually that their behavior is self-destructive and even out of control. But, physically and emotionally they are still drawn to it. And they experience withdrawal symptoms when they move away from it. The number and variety of out of control behaviors when love is withdrawn are becoming legion in the daily news.”

Is there a definition? In her books, *Is It Love or Is It Addiction?*, *Love’s Way*, *Loving Me*, *Loving You*, and her four part pamphlet series, *Healthy Relationships*, Dr. Schaeffer identified love-addiction as a “reliance on someone outside of ourselves to meet our unresolved needs, to avoid emotional pain, to solve problems, and to maintain balance.” According to Schaeffer, the love addicted person is often one with an addictive personality. “It is not unusual for me to discover that my clients have been through chemical dependency treatment, diet clinics, or stop smoking programs. They succeed in giving up one addiction only to substitute it with another.”

Dr. Schaeffer is quick to point out that both men and women are likely candidates. “We can trace the difficulties of love addiction to early childhood development and cultural influences just as we do with other dependencies. We receive our early directions from our parents, and as often as not, because they received their direction from their parents, it is not perfect. In addition, movies, music and family and community tradition are major contributors to our adult addictive thinking and behavior.”

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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Titles by Brenda Schaeffer, D.Min., M.A.L.P.

Love or Addiction? The Power & Peril of Teen Sex & Romance (Expert Publishing)
Inner Reflections CD (SoulFood Music)

Love’s Way: The Union of Body, Ego, Soul & Spirit (Hazelden Publishing)

Is It Love or Is It Addiction? (Hazelden Publishing)

Loving Me, Loving You: Balancing Love and Power in a Codependent World
(HarperCollins)

The Healthy Relationship Series (Hazelden Publishing)

When asked whether men or women are more apt to be love addicted, Schaeffer answered that “there are no one-way dependencies. All dependencies are mutual. They go from generation to generation, and they are not gender selective.”

“This answers the ‘why’ of love addiction,” says Dr. Schaeffer. “From the time we are small we observe ‘big people’ and how they solve problems. Whether it’s Mom or Dad, a teacher, sports hero, politician, or movie star, these role models often lack the knowledge and know-how to support healthy relationships, problem solving, and the importance of individuality and autonomy. In short, though well-intentioned, our ‘heroes’ weren’t always the best teachers.”

Physically, we are drawn to the chemical highs that love, romance and sex produce. The neurochemistry of love can become a drug as difficult to give up as alcohol or cocaine. The difficulty with love addiction is that we cannot stop loving or relating! Nor should we! We must learn the difference between love and addiction.

The solution to an addictive relationship starts with identification. Dr. Schaeffer offers a free pamphlet with “yes” and “no” questions that help identify addiction in a relationship. She also includes the seven basic steps that can bring about change and a healthy love relationship.

For the free pamphlet, send a stamped self-addressed envelope to:

Healthy Relationships, Inc.
15798 Venture Lane, Suite 101
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Dr. Schaeffer’s books can be found available at your local bookstore, from Brenda’s website:

www.loveandaddiction.com, or directly from the publisher.



Dr. Brenda Schaeffer is a licensed psychologist, certified addictions specialist and best-selling author. With over 500,000 copies sold, she has helped countless people find their way from the trials and confusions of addictive love to the fulfillment of whole and healthy relationships. She has been featured on a variety of national broadcast programs, such as Fox’ *The O’Reilly Factor*, and in publications such as the *Washington Post* and *Fitness Magazine*. She is the founder of Healthy Relationships, a Minneapolis-based practice where she conducts therapy, training and workshops.

For more information on her work, visit her websites:
www.brendaschaeffer.com or www.loveandaddiction.com