



EMPATHY or the LACK THEREOF

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Do you really understand what your sexual addiction has cost her? How far do you think you have come in appreciating and validating all the losses your spouse has had to face because of your selfish actions? Let's see the level of empathy or lack there of.

Definition: Empathy is the ability to understand another person's thoughts and feelings in a situation from their point of view, rather than your own. It involves looking and feeling life from their perspective – It is consciously thinking about how this is affecting them – how does this make them feel.

The opposite of empathy is not just callousness, heartlessness, or cold-heartedness. It is also being oblivious, unaware, unmindful & blind.

You cannot empathize if you are constantly minimizing, downplaying or even denying your negative behaviour and its impact on your partner. You cannot empathize if you are self-centered and self-absorbed. When stuck in this mindset, life is ONLY about you. Many addicted men are so locked into viewing life from their perspective that in virtually any discussion, they can only look at things from one viewpoint – THEIRS. They shift discussion on to how it impacts them, how it makes them feel and how hard recovery is to them.

Why the Addict isn't Empathetic...

- Empathy thinks for others first – Addicts think of themselves first.
- Empathy is other's-centered – Addicts are self-centered.
- Addicts serve one person – themselves and their needs. Empathy serves others.
- Addicts shape a world that revolves around them where as empathy revolves around others.
- Addicts by nature are selfish and driven to gratify their needs
- Addicts don't seem to be able to count the cost of their behavior on others.

How to Measure If You Are Growing in Empathy

1. The greater the empathy – the greater the admission of offences committed.
2. The greater the empathy – the greater the avoidance of minimizing, downplaying wrongs.
3. The greater the empathy – the greater the understanding of the trauma you have caused.
4. The greater the empathy – the greater the willingness to take responsibility for wrongs.
5. The greater the empathy – the greater the remorse toward your spouse.
6. The greater the empathy – the greater the humility and the killing of pride.
7. The greater the empathy – the greater the willingness to be accountable to others.
8. The greater the empathy – the greater the repentance and confession before God and Man.
9. The greater the empathy – the greater the patience in her healing journey.
10. The greater the empathy – the greater the hate toward your addiction
11. The greater the empathy – the greater the commitment to recovery and personal healing.
12. The greater the empathy – the greater the resolve to not hurt her again this way.

God See Empathy as Maturity – Philippians 2:3,4

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.” NIV

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit [through factional motives, or strife], but with [an attitude of] humility [being neither arrogant nor self-righteous], regard others as more important than yourselves. Do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.” AMP

“Be free from pride-filled opinions, for they will only harm your cherished unity. Don't allow self-promotion to hide in your hearts, but in authentic humility put others first and view others as more important than yourselves. Abandon every display of selfishness.” TPT

“Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too.” NLT

HOW TO EMPATHIZE with the Hurt You Have Caused

1. Ask how she is doing and then shut up and really listen to her.
2. Listen to defend yourself or brush off her pain but to try to feel her experience.
3. Stay right there in the discomfort of sensing the hurt you have caused her. Don't run.
4. Ask her to share other ways that you have hurt her. Listen more without defence.
5. Give her what she needs. Space? Attention? Warmth? Time?
6. Don't try to fix things or explain things or suggest why it's hard for you. No speeches.
7. Don't make it about you in any way other than owning the pain you have caused.
8. Never try to transfer blame to her or to others in any way.
9. You don't have any right to be angry about what you have to go through now.
10. Don't apologize right away and only once to be done. It feels too cheap, canned and easy.
11. Be patient in her journey to healing. Give her time. Stay in your lane.
12. Let others help you in seeing the hurts you have caused her.
13. Write out your ownings and take a step of full and sincere apology.
14. See the connection between her healing and your honest commitment to recovery.
15. Ask God to help you see and experience the trauma you have created.
16. Ask what you can do to help her? Ask what would help in matter things better