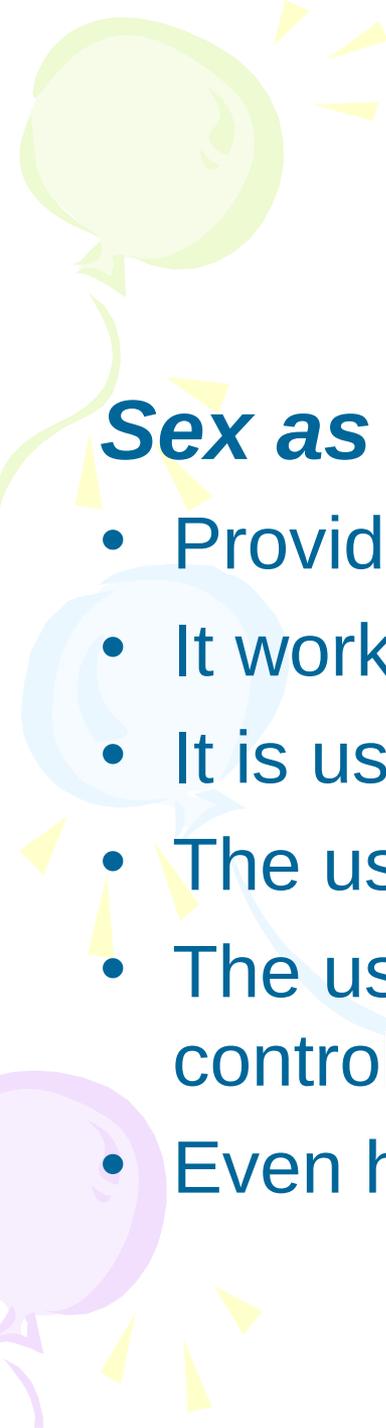
The background features several large, overlapping, semi-transparent swirls in shades of purple, green, and blue. Scattered throughout are numerous small, yellow, triangular shapes, some pointing towards the center and others pointing outwards, creating a dynamic and celebratory feel.

Addicted to “Love”

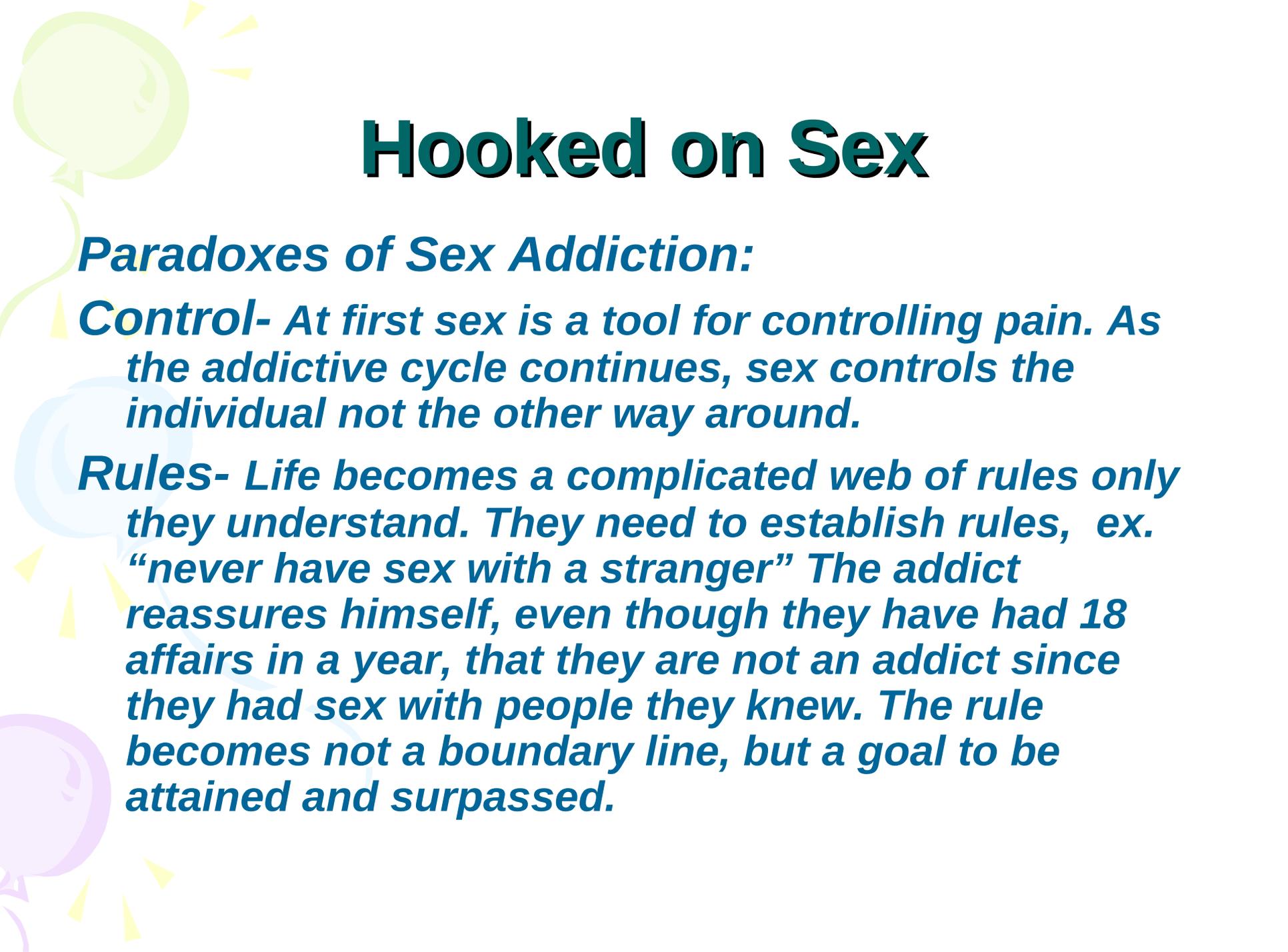
**Understanding Dependencies of
the Heart: Romance,
Relationships and Sex**



Hooked on Sex

Sex as an addictive drug:

- Provides a quick mood change
- It works every time
- It is used to mask pain
- The user becomes powerless over it
- The user loses control as the compulsion takes control
- Even harmful consequences cannot deter it

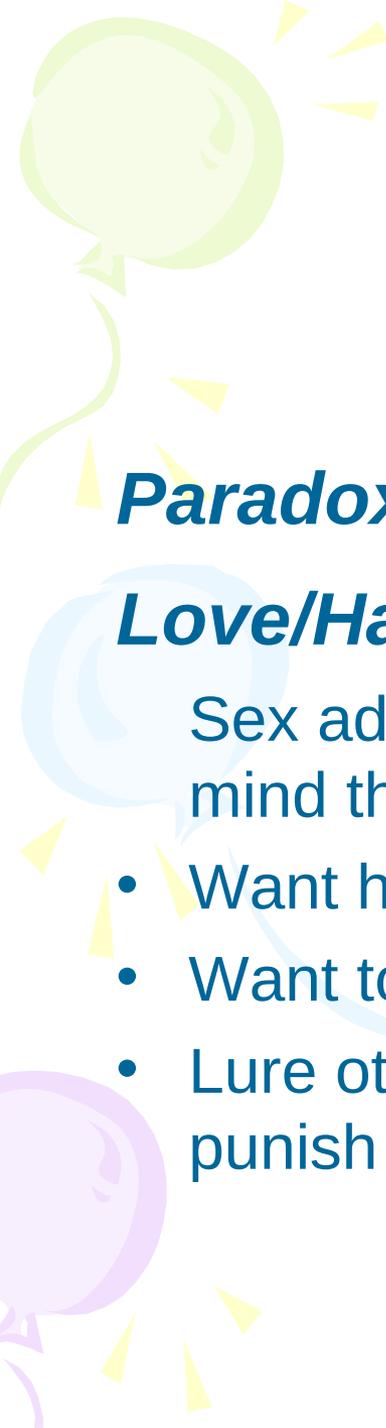


Hooked on Sex

Paradoxes of Sex Addiction:

Control- At first sex is a tool for controlling pain. As the addictive cycle continues, sex controls the individual not the other way around.

Rules- Life becomes a complicated web of rules only they understand. They need to establish rules, ex. “never have sex with a stranger” The addict reassures himself, even though they have had 18 affairs in a year, that they are not an addict since they had sex with people they knew. The rule becomes not a boundary line, but a goal to be attained and surpassed.



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Paradoxes of Sex Addiction:

Love/Hate Cycle:

Sex addiction sets up enormous **conflicts** in the addict's mind that produce self-contradictory behavior...

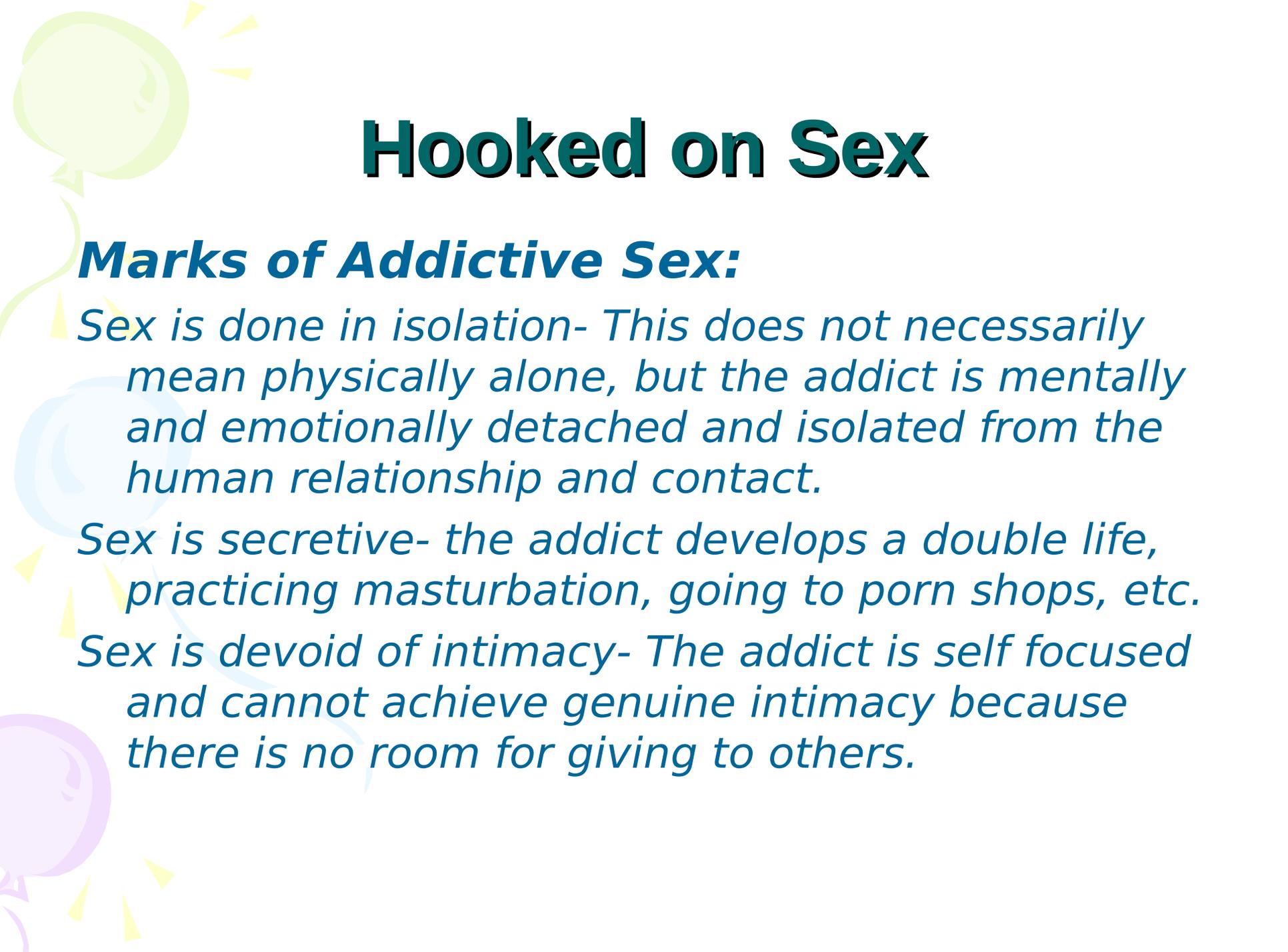
- Want help, but not the process of getting better
- Want to be caught, but avoid detection
- Lure others in for gratification, but are later repulsed and punish them,



Hooked on Sex

Parallels to other addictions:

- Addiction is progressive
- Addiction Builds Tolerance
- Addiction Produces Withdrawal
- Addiction follows an obsessive/compulsive pattern
- Addiction Produces Shame



Hooked on Sex

Marks of Addictive Sex:

Sex is done in isolation- This does not necessarily mean physically alone, but the addict is mentally and emotionally detached and isolated from the human relationship and contact.

Sex is secretive- the addict develops a double life, practicing masturbation, going to porn shops, etc.

Sex is devoid of intimacy- The addict is self focused and cannot achieve genuine intimacy because there is no room for giving to others.



Hooked on Sex

Marks of addictive sex:

Sex is devoid of relationship- sex is just sex for its own sake. This is clear in regard to fantasy, pornography and masturbation. Even when a partner is involved, they are not a “person” but an interchangeable part in an impersonal, mechanical process.

Sex is victimizing- the obsession blinds the addict to the harmful effects of their behavior on others and themselves





Hooked on Sex

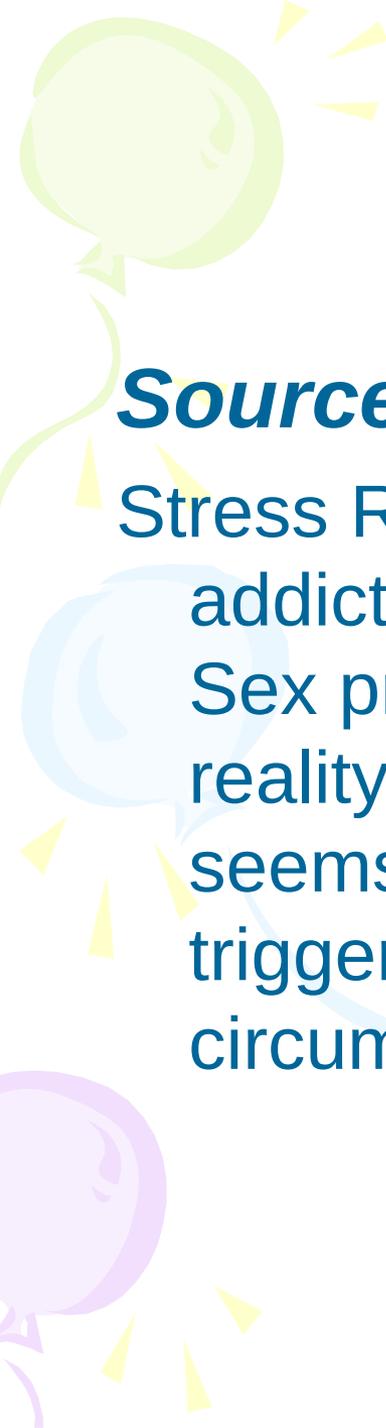
Marks of addictive sex:



Sex ends in despair- the addicts end feeling guilty, regretting the experience feeling more empty than fulfilled.



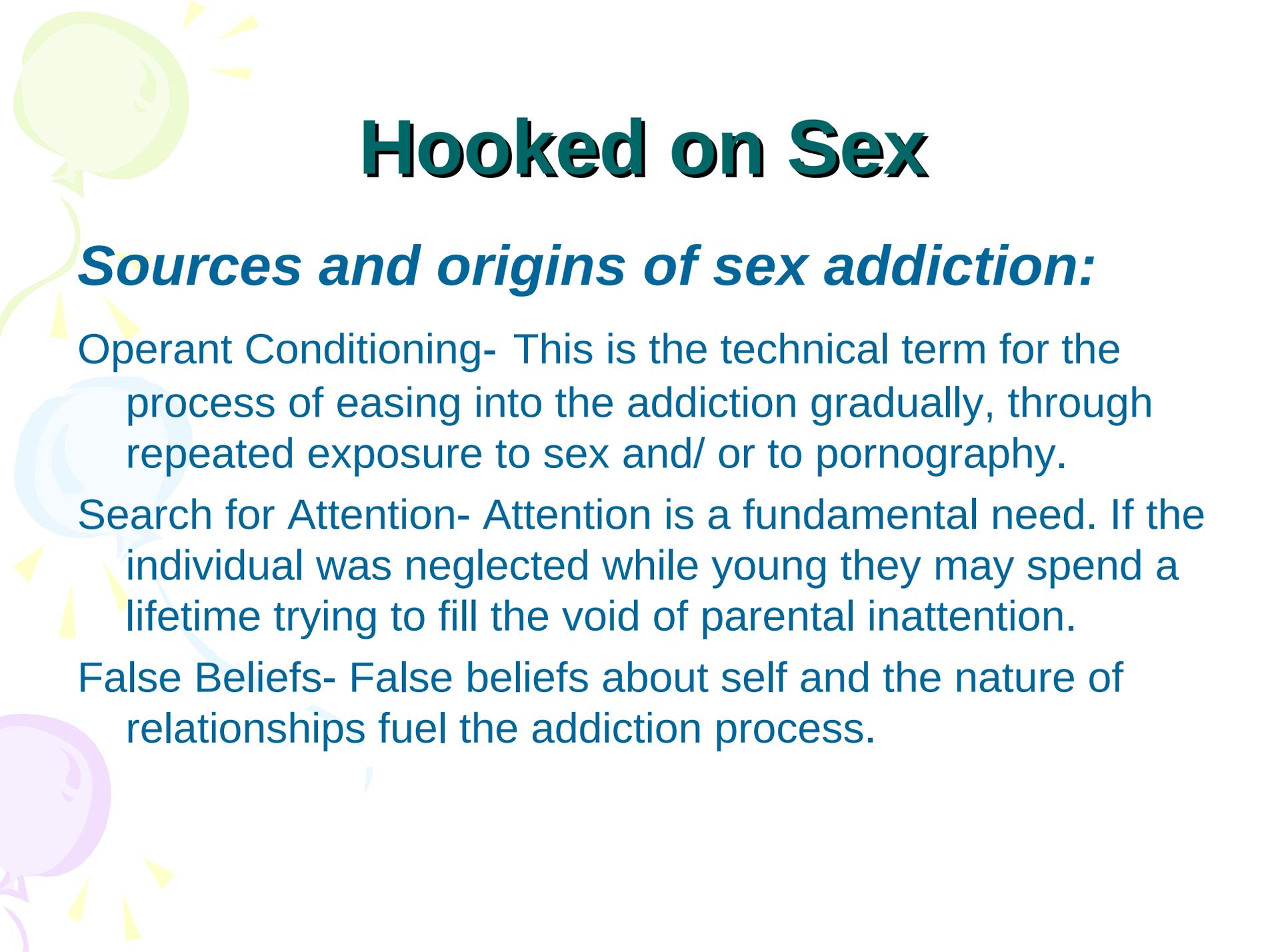
Sex is used to escape pain and/or other problems



Hooked on Sex

Sources and origins of sex addiction:

Stress Reaction- the initial experiences of addictive sex often occur during times of stress. Sex provides an escape from an unpleasant reality. When stress is relieved, the addiction seems to have lifted, but it is ready to be triggered by the next set of difficult circumstances.



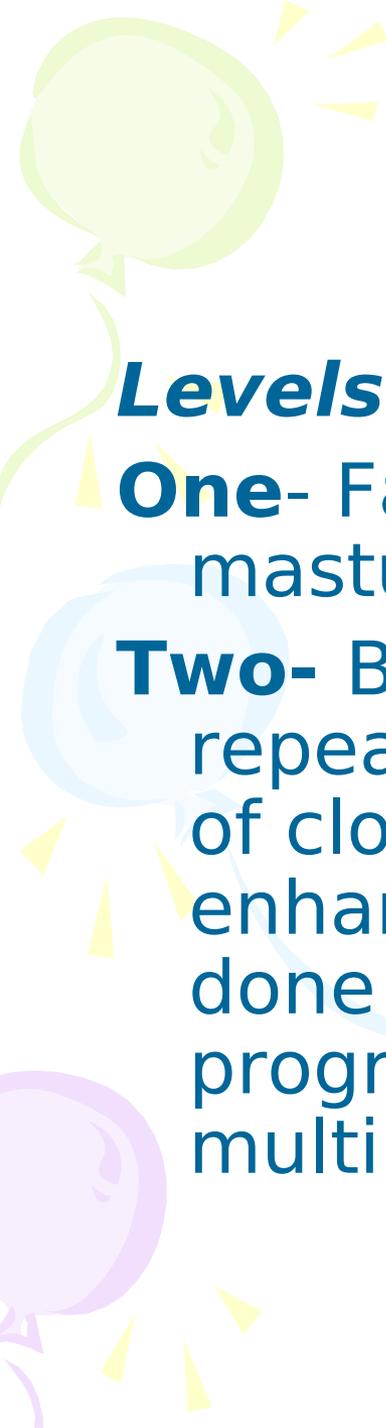
Hooked on Sex

Sources and origins of sex addiction:

Operant Conditioning- This is the technical term for the process of easing into the addiction gradually, through repeated exposure to sex and/ or to pornography.

Search for Attention- Attention is a fundamental need. If the individual was neglected while young they may spend a lifetime trying to fill the void of parental inattention.

False Beliefs- False beliefs about self and the nature of relationships fuel the addiction process.

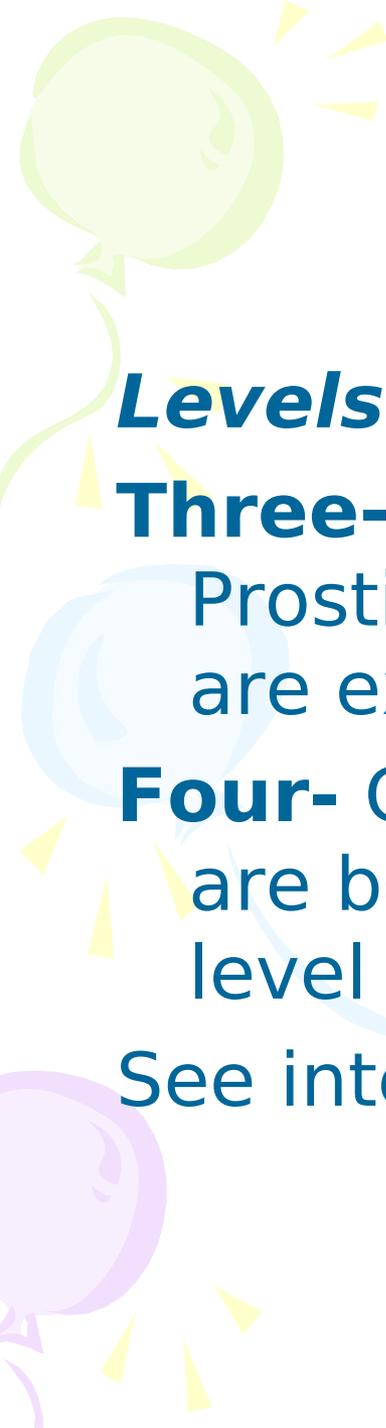


Hooked on Sex

Levels of Addiction:

One- Fantasy, pornography and masturbation

Two- Bars that feature nude dancing to repeated affairs, fetishes in terms of items of clothing or belongings as an erotic enhancer, phone sex and sexual touching done “accidentally on purpose”. It can progress to bondage, masochism, sadism, multiple partners and seeing prostitutes



Hooked on Sex

Levels of sex addiction:

Three- The criminal line has been crossed. Prostitution, voyeurism and exhibitionism are examples.

Four- Child molestation, incest, and rape are behaviors that characterize the fourth level of addiction.

See interview with Ted Bundy

Hooked on Sex

