Considering Initial Sexual Abstinence

A 90 day of total sexual abstinence is strongly recommended as a part of treatment of sexual addiction.

* Sex addicts have sought to gain sexual satisfaction through unhealthy means (pornography, affairs, prostitution, masturbation) and the brain becomes conditioned to respond to these stimulations. Abstinence will remove the addict from trained responses so he/she can be more available to normal sexuality.
* It give a couple a new chance to get to truly know each other at a deep heart level – to become better soul mates and friends.
* Helps the couple to develop a normal, healthy sexual attraction to each other.
* Abstinence is as crucial to sex addicts as detoxification is to drug addicts. As the addict abstains from sex, the his/her brain will detoxify from all of the neurochemical pleasure pathways that have been created and readjust to a normal level of sexual expectation.
* Abstinence will weaken unhealthy pathways while newer and healthier pathways become strengthened.
* Abstinence is intended for the healing of both partners so that they can be mutually vulnerable again. Using abstinence prior to disclosure is helpful to both partners.
* The most difficult time of abstinence typically occurs between the 7th and 10th days. If the addict can make it through the first two weeks, the ability to abstain will get stronger.
* Spouse/Partner needs to recognize that their partner’s sexual addiction is not their fault, and that they do not have the power to change their partner’s addiction, even through sex.