

## LOVE OR ADDICTION ?? -- CHARACTERISTICS

some excerpts from material supplied by Tice Elkins, L.C.S.W., Roseville, CA

### LOVE (OPEN SYSTEM)

Room to grow, expand; desire for the other to grow

Separate interests; other friends;  
keep other meaningful relationships

Encouragement of each other's expanding;  
secure in own self worth

Trust; openness

Mutual integrity preserved

Willingness to risk and be authentic

Room for exploration of feelings  
in and out of relationship

Ability to enjoy being alone and enjoy  
doing things alone

### ADDICTION (CLOSED SYSTEM)

Dependent, based on security and comfort; use  
intensity of need and infatuation as proof of love (may  
really be fear, insecurity, loneliness)

Total involvement; limited social life; neglect old  
friends, and interests, isolate from all except  
relationship

Preoccupation with other's behavior; dependent on  
other's approval for own identity, self worth and self  
esteem

Jealousy, possessiveness, fears of competition,  
"protects supply"

One partners needs suspended for the other's comfort

Search for perfect invulnerability -- eliminates  
possible risks

Reassurance through repeated and ritualized activities  
and behavior

Intolerance for enduring separations even in conflict;  
hang-on even tighter. Undergo withdrawal, loss of  
appetite, restless, leathargic, disoriented agony

### BREAKUPS

Accept break up without feeling a  
loss of own adequacy and self worth

Feel inadequate, worthless, often one-sided decision

Wants best for partner, though apart;  
may become friends eventually

Violent ending - often hate the other; try to inflict pain;  
manipulation to get the other back.

### ONE- SIDED ADDICTION

Denial, fantasy; over-estimation of others  
commitment. Seeks solutions outside of self - drugs,  
alcohol, new lover(s), change of job or situation



OPINIONS AND FEELINGS ARE FREQUENTLY A PERSONAL TRIUMPH OVER GOOD THINKING  
YOU DEFINE REALITY BY WHAT YOU KNOW, WHAT YOU BELIEVE, AND WHAT YOU DO ABOUT IT.