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Westside Notes

*The Opposite of Addiction is Not Sobriety.
The Opposite of Addiction is Connection. — Johann Hari*

Book Review: *It's Not About the Sex*

by Scott Brassart,

Sex and Relationship Healing Blog

Andrew Susskind is a clinical social worker, certified group psychotherapist, and somatic experiencing and brainspotting practitioner in the Los Angeles area. He specializes in relationships, sexual recovery, addictions, trauma, and mid-life transitions. After working with hundreds of sex addicts in his career, he realized that there was a gap in the clinical literature on sexual recovery. Lots of books and articles have discussed what sexual addiction is and how to overcome it – but very little has been written about how sober sex addicts can move forward into living healthy, happy lives.

Susskind's book, [*It's Not About the Sex: Moving from Isolation to Intimacy after Sexual Addiction*](#) addresses this gap. In a nutshell, he answers the question: "What happens *after* I get sober from my sexual addiction?" In so doing, he recognizes that at some point in the process of recovery it no longer matters if your pain is the cause or effect of compulsive sex. Either way, it's time to move forward with purpose and direction.

Moving forward with recovery and life is the clear purpose of this work. In his introduction to the book Susskind writes, "Think of *It's Not About the Sex* as your gentle companion. It's meant to remind [you] that healing from the agonizing pain and isolation of compulsive sex requires daily practice and a new lifestyle."

Most importantly from our perspective, Susskind clearly understands that long-term healing and sobriety requires the development of healthy intimate connections. As we have stated on this site repeatedly, the long-term antidote to addiction is not education or willpower or babysitters, it's the development of healthy interpersonal connections. Each chapter in Susskind's book pushes readers in this direction.

A sampling of topics covered includes:

- Developing emotional sobriety
- Finding gratitude
- Reducing shame
- Recognizing and overcoming narcissism
- Healing the central nervous system

- Breaking down walls
- Setting healthy boundaries
- Finding meaning, purpose, and legacy

All of these concepts are essential for long-term recovery and healing from sexual addiction. Susskind covers these and other topics in detail, yet in easy to read and comprehend language brought to life by real-world examples of recovery.

Andrew Susskind's *It's Not About the Sex* is recommended for anyone interested in sexual recovery. Whether you're long sober from sexual addiction or just getting started, this book is a must-read. Clinicians who work with sexual addicts will benefit in equal measure, as will spouses, partners, and other loved ones of sex addicts.

Scott Brassart is a writer, editor, and content creator. As Director of Content Development for Seeking Integrity LLC, he oversees the creation, production, and dissemination of online information, treatment manuals for Seeking Integrity treatment programs, and other written materials. A graduate of Brown University (BA), Emerson College (MA), and Indiana University School of Law (JD), he has been a writer and editor for more than 25 years. (<https://sexandrelationshiphealing.com/>)

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