



Love and Addiction (Signet)

Stanton Peele, Archie Brodsky

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In *Love and Addiction*, published 40 years ago and sold as a mass-market paperback on love, Stanton Peele and Archie Brodsky laid out every major issue confronting the addiction field today. This pioneering classic, which was excerpted in *Cosmopolitan* and spawned the codependence movement, is the first—and still the definitive—book on addictive love. But it is much more than that; it is the book that explains why *addiction is not what we think it is*. *Love and Addiction* focuses on dependent love relationships to explore what both love and addiction really are—psychologically, socially, and culturally. Addiction is an overgrown, dependent, destructive relationship. Love is the opposite, a sharing, growth-inspiring one. The authors' analysis makes clear that an addiction is an experience that takes on meaning and power in light of a person's needs, desires, beliefs, expectations, and fears. By showing how addiction grows out of ordinary human experience, Peele and Brodsky offer a liberating understanding of *all* addictions—to alcohol, drugs, tobacco, food, gambling, shopping, electronic media, sex, or love. In 1975, *Love and Addiction* boldly proposed ideas whose truth is only now being recognized:

- **Addiction is not limited to drugs, and drugs are not necessarily addictive.**
- **AA's 12 steps are not the last word in addiction treatment. On the contrary, practically oriented addiction treatments are more effective.**
- **The goal of addiction treatment and recovery is not abstinence to the exclusion of all else, but to build a life that rules out addiction.**
- **Love is the opposite of the self-protective constriction of addiction; it is the expansion of your spirit with another human being.**

Remarkably, all of these issues—the widespread application of the addiction diagnosis, the limited value of AA and its disease theory, the possibility that people can continue using but still eliminate addiction (harm reduction)—*are as hotly debated today as when Peele and Brodsky first analyzed addiction forty years ago*. Most remarkably of all, the answers Peele and Brodsky arrived at in *Love and Addiction* are only now being embraced by progressive thinkers in the field. “Destined to become a classic!” *Psychology Today* proclaimed in 1975. Rereading *Love and Addiction* 35 years later, addiction researcher Rowdy Yates wrote that the book “still reads absolutely true as an understanding of addictive behavior.” Reading today this clairvoyant analysis of the most challenging issues we face in the twenty-first century—the meaning of love and the cure for addiction—you will recognize both the current relevance and enduring value of *Love and Addiction*, now reissued with a new (2015) Authors' Preface, the Authors' Preface written for the 1991 paperback reissue, and a brief new introduction to each chapter. Otherwise, nothing has been changed in the original book.

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