

Fantasies & Day Dreaming

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Some love addicts are not only addicted to romantic love or a person, they are addicted to a romantic fantasy left over from childhood. The day dreaming starts out as a coping mechanism for a difficult childhood and ends up in our adult life to be a nightmare and liability.

The most common fantasy for women growing up in a dysfunctional home is that we will grow up, meet our soul mate and live happily ever after. Our inner child creates the fantasy and then the person whom I call my fantasy lover, and my school-age child goes hunting. My fantasy lover is partly based on my dad, but also the movies I watched and romance novels. Romantic ideals are fostered by poets, writers, movies, fairy tales, and today's social media. Romantic ideals have a lot of misinformation like love is worth any sacrifice.

These romantic ideals, that become our fantasy lover, take over our brain if we are love addicts. They come up the very first time we meet with someone. Then the seed of obsession is planted and begins to take root. It grows until it strangles us. For some people therapy or 12-Step programs help nip this in the bud, but sometimes things go to far and love addicts actually die for love. I almost did.

In recovery we must discover, and then sever, these romantic ideals from our psyche. They must no longer be part of our ideals and vocabulary. When listening to love songs we can sing them to our Higher Power. On Valentine's Day we must send cards to ourselves and our friends.

In the Third Step we must surrender our fantasy lover, and any thoughts that we project on to the man or woman we are in love with. Once we tear out the root of our obsession withdrawal will be less painful and we can get on with our recovery.

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