



More On Relationships...

The actual title should be “Moron Relationships” as this exercise again looks at the ever present issue of how poorly chosen relationships can adversely impact progress. This is particularly true when it comes to the stupid decisions people make when it comes to allowing attraction to another person affect reason and decision making. In this case, nothing offensive or inappropriate is meant by using the word *moron*. The word moron once was a considered a specific derogatory term but now is simply used to generally mean “stupid” and nothing more than that. (*Def: Moron (informal) – A person lacking in good judgement*)

Just about everyone has made stupid, foolish or otherwise ill-advised decisions at one time or another when confronted with the enticing interest from someone who is alluring, tempting, attractive, charming or otherwise appealing on an interpersonal level.

When it comes to the struggle with substance use issues, relationship problems quite often is a contributing factor when it comes to setbacks and relapse. An old proverb says: “Can a man (or woman) embrace fire and his (or her) clothes not be burned?” – Proverbs 6:27. It can be foolish to think that when it comes to our dealings with other people, we can maintain complete control over the outcome. The reality is that associating with the wrong kinds of people is just like playing with fire. Countless individuals have tried to play with that fire and have gotten badly burned by making ill-advised decisions based simply on feelings of attraction or romance.

Group Exercise – *Opening up about our past mistakes...so we can learn from them today*

What are some mistakes that you have made when it comes to attraction, romance, or spontaneous feelings of “love” (infatuation)?

Start with discussing a few common examples – Share whether you have ever done any of the following (and what did you learn?)

- ▶ **Thinking you can hang with a person who gets high but it won’t influence you at all**
- ▶ **Starting a relationship where you or the person of interest (or both) are cheating on your current relationship partner(s) from the start**
- ▶ **Letting someone’s good looks, attractiveness or charm to blind you to “red flags”**

Further Discussion -

What kinds of stupid things have you done in your life due to feelings of attraction toward another?

How have you learned from your mistakes?

Why do you think that some people make the same relationship mistakes over and over?

The truth is that there are many parallels between addiction and bad relationships, such as:

- A feeling of being in control in the beginning but later learning you are spinning out of control
- Both relationships and substance use can feel exciting and fun at first but over time things can get a lot less fun and enjoyable as things get more stressful
- In both addiction and relationships, you can find yourself in too deep before it’s too late, thus leaving you feeling stuck in a bad situation that is tough to get out of
- Bad relationships and addiction can lead to pain, remorse and regret

(For more read “The Relationship Analogy”)