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Eliminating Your Addictive Behavior



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Chapter 1: Are you predisposed to addiction?

By definition addictions are characterized by physical or psychological dependencies on things that negatively impact our lives. Many people associate addiction with substance abuse but in reality there are people who have what is called “addictive personalities”. These are people who are at risk to becoming addicted to anything including substances. The addictions of people with addictive personalities run the gamut from gambling, food, exercise, co dependency (in relationships), abuse, work, spending money, sex and the list goes on.

People with addictions plan their whole lives around the thing they are addicted to. It is the main focus in their lives. Without it they feel they do not have quality of life. Experts define five designated interrelated behaviors which define a state of addiction. These behaviors include:

1. Patterns
2. Habits
3. Compulsions
4. Impulse Control Disorders
5. Physical Addiction/ Psychological Addiction/Addictive Personality

A person who is considered an addictive personality that is at risk is one who displays any or multiple behaviors that are indicated above. When an addictive personality shows itself; the person will display impulsive behavior combined with non-conformity to what is considered socially acceptable. On top of those personality factors is added a weak commitment to goals that society feels a wholesome person must achieve or maintain to live healthy based on that

society. An individual with an addictive personality feels a sense of social alienation and a sense of heightened stress because they are alienated by their addiction.

A person with an addictive personality may have one or many addictions to various things. They may sustain various addictions at different times depending on what's going on at the moment in their lives. When a person has addictive behavior whatever activity, object, substance or actual behavior which is the source of the addiction; then becomes the center of person's life exclusively. Everything else becomes secondary or is excluded because the addiction comes first. An addiction as a result can ultimately hurt a person both physically, mentally and socially.

Compulsive behaviors cause the person to become addicted through repeating things and are rooted in the need for the person to relieve tension. This compulsive urge is driven by an inner feeling the person with the compulsive behavior wishes to avoid or control. So, by engaging in the addiction or compulsive behavior the urge subsides. Compulsive behavior is very ritualistic in nature. It is behavior that is repetitive and seemingly purposeful as the ritual behavior is executed.

It is believed through scientific research that these addictive behaviors produce beta endorphins which are the basis biochemically and neurologically for addictions in human beings. These bio chemicals the body produces make one feel "high" in the brain. Thus the person continues the addictive behavior to have the good feeling stimulated in their brains as a result of the addiction. They engage in the addictive behavior to create a sense of euphoria that is achieved in addictive practices of the addicted person. What also happens is the addictive person becomes addicted to their own brain chemicals physically which leads to the continuation of the

addiction. People don't really understand that this bio chemical occurrence happens also when someone has compulsive and psychological addictions as well. They think that because it is a psychological addiction and because there is no physical addiction of chemical dependency, the body is not addicted . But the truth is they don't understand the biochemical process involved in addictive behavior. In actuality it is the behavior that stimulates the brain also to release chemicals. This is why psychological addiction becomes compulsive or addictive just as strong as chemical addictions many times. The behavior creates the high in the brain bio chemically like taking a drug. The person becomes addicted to the behavior because it stimulates the bio chemical reaction like a drug that causes a high or elated feeling.

The difference between an addiction and compulsion is that an addiction escalates. As the addiction escalates the person tries to hide it from others and themselves by using deceit, denial, trickery and cover ups. These are all in an attempt to separate themselves from their addiction and appear normal. Plus they are ashamed that they are addicted and don't want others to know of their condition.

Harmful consequences from addictions range from job loss, accidents, illnesses at times death to things like detachment, severe depression and self hate. The National Institute on Drug Abuse categorize people with addictions as having a brain disease.

People with addictive natures are very sensitive to stress. They have trouble handling various situations that they deem frustrating to them. Mood swings and anti social behavior are some of the other visible traits that people with addictive behaviors display. Many times they will turn down a social invite due to the nature of their addiction. This is because they are fearful of being caught with the disorder by others deemed normal. Actually their sense of self

creates the tone for self imposed isolation which actually fuels the addiction. It adds to it because they will also feel low self esteem due to the nature of their problem. The addict then turns to the source of the addiction to alleviate the stress caused by the issues of non complying to society. They hope by doing things they are addicted to makes them feel good enough in order to feel normal and cope. This makes them feel a quick fix and able to cope while the mental or physical “high” lasts. When they come down they have to do what gives them that high again. And thus the cycle of addiction ensues.

People who suffer from APD/Addictive Personality Disorder have a hard time managing their stress levels. Lack of tolerance to stress is one of the tell tale signs of this disorder. They find it difficult to handle stressful situations and also to get out of the stressful situation. A person who suffers for APD has a painful time to achieve long termed goals because they are so focused on the stress that is part of process of achieving the goals also. What happens in this case is that as soon as the stress level becomes too high they switch to another addiction. And the cycle continues with a new set of enjoyments to mask the stress they feel.

Addictive people have a difficult time developing and maintaining relationships. This is because most are highly insecure. They tend to have trouble making commitments or trust their loved one due to the fact that they have issues with long term goals. They constantly seek approval from others which causes misunderstandings with their loved ones because they are always looking outside the relationship for reinforced approval. This destroys many of their personal relationships as a result. People who suffer from addictive personalities are often depressed and have anxiety because of their roller coaster. They get depressed and anxious, then do the addictive thing to feel better and then feel depressed and anxious all over

again because they did the addictive thing and the feeling wears off.

We as humans even the addictive type are a diverse group. So some can be around alcohol because they can control that but in a casino their gambling addiction comes to life. Different addictions fill different needs in an addictive person. What makes addictive people have something in common to classify them as addictive are the personality traits. Here are the main ones all addictive personalities display at various stages of their addictions:

1. **Anti Social Behavior** – The addictive personality keeps to themselves and deals only with those who are also either societal non conformists or addicts with like issues. This both reinforces and allows them to be themselves so to speak continuing their addiction. Even though they may have another addicted friend they may still suffer from isolation and lack of intimacy which makes them indulge more in their addictive behavior. Their addictive behavior becomes a substitute for lack of personal relationships and helps ease them if they have to deal in a social setting.
2. **Low Stress Tolerance-** Addictive personalities cannot handle stress. They have very poor stress management skills and do not have good coping mechanisms. This fosters the need for the addiction to feel they can function during stress.
3. **Difficulty Delaying Gratification-**Those who suffer with addictive personalities have difficulty thinking about the future and long term goals. They focus on short term things in general. They may exhibit impulsive behavior as a result or the need to seek sensations. This is because the need to gratify the addictive feeling becomes the satisfaction in the person's life.
4. **Compulsive Behavior-** People with addictive personalities

have a struggle to enjoy other things like social drinking in moderation. Their approach to life is black or white, either they guzzle down booze for example or abstain. They feel either in total control or utterly powerless. It is hard for them to control themselves. They view things as either perfect or a failure. Addictive personalities have trouble with finding the balance in things. Many times it is because of this that they feel compelled to repeat the addiction over and over again. They as a result feel powerless to stop.

5. **Substituting Vices-** An addictive personality will switch vices when their vice of choice is not available thus creating a new addiction. An example would be why many drug and alcohol abusers take up cigarette smoking when they are in rehab. They may also have a couple of vices for example; a person who over eats may also medicate themselves to try and not eat. So as a result will be addicted in between not eating on medications and gorging.
6. **Insecurity-**Many times compulsive and addictive behaviors are a mask for fear of failure. Ex. A person who has a fear of commitment may constantly seek approval from everyone they come across to feel they belong; or stimulate some form of self confidence because of their inability to have a meaningful relationship.
7. **Depression** – People with depression and anxiety are more prone to addiction to help deal with those difficult feelings. They have trouble coping so the addictions make them feel like they can handle those painful emotions they live with.

There are many reasons that a person develops an addictive personality. It can be from a trauma they cannot face, a childhood problem that was never resolved, poor parenting and upbringing

including child abuse and deprivation or over indulgence early in life as some of the main causes for addictive personalities. Also people who have mental conditions and receive treatments also may suffer from addictive personality disorders as well. People who have depression, attention deficit disorder, post traumatic stress disorder and things of that nature are also at higher risk of addictive behavior disorders.

Chapter 2: Physical versus Psychological Addiction

Both physical and psychological addictions affect a person's brain chemistry. However, the major difference between the two are the additional physical withdrawal symptoms that a physical addiction like a drug dependency produces. Make no mistake; a psychological addiction puts the body through changes also but not to the same level when the blood chemistry is altered by the constant bombardment of a substance. Things like alcohol and opiates leave an addicted person trying to kick the addiction with horrible physical withdrawal symptoms. In many cases people trying to kick substances that they are physically addicted to end up going back on the substance just for the withdrawal symptoms to subside. People who do this suffer from what is called the Tolerance-Withdrawal Addiction Syndrome.

The “Tolerance-Withdrawal Addiction Syndrome Theory” fell to the curb when those addictions that don't display such withdrawal effects like cocaine came into play. Addictions of that nature are “Very” hard to kick because of the psychological factors of the withdrawal symptoms. In addition to what happens to the brain chemically also in a psychological addiction those type of addictions wreck havoc on a person's state of being when withdrawal occurs. Not with the obvious physical symptoms that opiates give an addict; but with excruciating withdrawal symptoms that stems from the brain. In this case the chemicals that the brain produce to feel good from the behavior is denied the person who is trying to stop the psychological addiction. The fact is that these kinds of psychologically implicated addictions may also required medical intervention just like physical withdrawal at times. Medication would be given in order for the person to successfully combat the addiction cravings that are painful to unbearable emotionally when

psychologically addicted to a substance or addictive behavior. Unfortunately the mentality to understanding addiction and withdrawal many times is not really fully fathomed. Because such drugs like marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamine and nicotine do not produce the flu like symptoms associated with opiates; many people really can't fully grasp the level of difficulty the withdrawal symptoms are as with other psychologically addictive things. Some of the milder symptoms of a psychologically addicted person includes but is not by any means limited to: Fatigue, depression, anxiety, sleep disturbances, and trouble eating. These are only some of the symptoms that tend to show up, the more severe are manic episodes, paranoia, violent outbreaks, self mutilation and suicidal tendencies to name a few.

Physical withdrawal is the bodies attempt to counteract the cessation of the drug that one is addicted to. Just as a drug addict or alcoholic builds up a tolerance for the use of the drug they are addicted to in order to function; the body reacts similar to a shock when that drug is suddenly gone. Getting addicted to a drug is a process involving the increase of one's tolerance level to the amount of the drug taken. The process of getting rid of the addiction causing the addict to use the drug and the bodies reaction to the withdrawal is a long and complicated process.

Physical dependence is easy to spot because once the person stops the withdrawal symptoms begin. Opiates, Amphetamines, benzodiazepines, barbiturates, alcohol and nicotine induce physical dependence. On the other hand, some categories of substances share this property and are still not considered addictive: cortisone, beta-blockers and most antidepressants are examples. So, physical dependency can be a major factor in the psychology of addiction and most often becomes a primary motivator in the continuation of an addiction. The initial primary reason a person uses an addictive

substance is usually because of its ability to induce pleasure. However what happens with continued use of the drug is dependency on that drug. The goal of the user then becomes not so much to induce pleasure as it is to relieve the anxiety caused by the absence of a given addictive substance. It then also becomes a compulsion to continue to use the substance.

A common example to illustrate the idea of addiction and compulsion would be nicotine. A cigarette can be described as pleasurable by the person smoking it, but is in fact fulfilling the physical addiction of the user. When the person doesn't smoke on cue as a response to their body they start to feel compelled by urges. The urges if left unaddressed start to develop into withdrawal. So the person lights up and the symptoms and urges subside. Therefore, the smoker is achieving pleasurable feelings relative to his/her previous state of physical withdrawal. Furthermore, it is the physical dependency of the nicotine addict on the substance itself which becomes an overwhelming factor in the continuation of use.

Now psychological addiction is based on psychological dependency. Psychological Dependence is a dependency of the mind, and leads to psychological withdrawal symptoms (such as cravings, irritability, insomnia, depression, anorexia, etc). The process of addiction in theory is derived from any behavior the person perceives as rewarding. It is also believed by scientific study to be associated with the dopaminergic system of the brain's reward system (as in the case of cocaine and amphetamines). In conclusion addiction is considered possible to be both psychologically and physically addicted to something at the same time. And interestingly enough some doctors, and especially scientists in related fields, make little or no distinction between the two types of addiction. This is primarily since the result of an addiction, is the same, and in terms of scientific as opposed to magical thinking, the "psychological"

dependence is entirely due to physical effects of a drug on the brain. With this idea one has to keep in mind that the brain creates chemicals while a person is addicted whether they are psychologically or physically addicted to something. Psychological dependence does not have to be limited only to substances; even activities and behavioral patterns can be considered addictions, if they become uncontrollable, e.g. gambling, internet addiction, computer addiction, sexual addiction / pornography addiction, reading, eating, self-harm, vandalism, drug addiction or work addictions also change during psychological addiction as well.

When there is a psychological addiction to a behavior as well the withdrawal symptoms are virtually the same to a psychological chemical addiction. It starts with cravings, urges, yearnings, desires and thoughts. When these feelings start to occur it is the mind's reaction to the need to either behave a certain way or ingest a chemical. One may also experience physical symptoms from a psychological addiction such as physical withdrawal (nervousness, irritability, grouchiness, tension, anger, rage, frustration, sweating, jitters, shaking, inability to concentrate and mind fog).

Any addiction whether from a behavior or substance makes the body and mind react very much the same as a Pavlov Dog. In Pavlov's study the dog began to salivate when a bell was rung because the dog associated the bell with food. The addict is conditioned by their behavior to get certain results which they actively crave. As a result of their cravings they see out what they are addicted to. It doesn't matter if the addiction is an addictive behavior or taking a substance.

The human mind is habitual and expects to be stimulated from that source which the addict craves. When it is not stimulated to fulfill the need its craving; the mind and body starts to feel uncomfortable.

Since it is uncomfortable for the addict now; the mind triggers urges which makes the addict feel desperate. The addict now has to either get the substance they crave or do the addictive behavior that urges them. They feel if they don't do what they are addicted to they are going to shut down because of the need. This is not true in reality. What they are starting to feel is in fact the withdrawal symptoms kicking in by not having the urge gratified. When the urge isn't satisfied the addict has an uncontrollable compulsive feeling to engage in the addictive behavior until it is met. If left unmet the withdrawal symptoms start to take effect.

When this happens either the person decides they are going to go through the withdrawal process to kick the addiction or have a failed attempt to stop the addictive behavior by continuing the addictive cycle.

Chapter 3: Denial - The Addict's Defense Mechanism

Denial is a defense mechanism we use when a person is faced with a fact that is way too uncomfortable or painful to accept. So, what the person does is instead of embracing the source of pain or that which is making them uncomfortable to accept the situation; they completely reject the reality all together. They will say that the situation even with overwhelming proof is not the truth, happening or real. Unfortunately it is not uncommon for those that suffer from addiction to be in denial about it.

The **three** basic kinds of denial are:

1. **Simple Denial** which is the denying of the unpleasant fact all together
2. **Minimization** which is the type of denial where one may accept the facts but minimize the severity of them. It's a form of denial and rationalization combined. An example of minimization would be an full blown addict saying “Oh yeah I like to do (whatever) but it doesn't control me. I do it when I feel like”. But, sadly they feel like it all the time.
3. **Projection**- The person will admit the reality of a situation and even that its serious but will not take any responsibility what so ever for it. Example: “It's your fault that I do (whatever the addiction is) because (they blame the other person for their predicament.)

People with addictive personalities and active addictions many times cope with their problem by denying it is a problem. Addictions do not discriminate, they do not care about race, age, sex or social status. An addict whether it is a psychological addiction to a

behavior or a physical addiction to a substance that is in denial is very hard to help because they will not acknowledge there is a problem. They will also deny that their problem is obviously affecting the people around them. By denying their addiction they don't have to stop.

The first sign that a person that is addicted to something is in denial is when besides the person saying they are not addicted to something; is they refuse to also take responsibility to the behavior the addiction is causing. They also ignore the effects of their actions in relation to the people who are affected by their addiction. Some of the effects that others who deal with an addict face are: financial problems, job loss, destruction of personal relationships and health issues. Denial can definitely interfere with someone trying to overcome their addiction so they can return to a healthy life.

Whether a person who has an addiction problem and is in denial; there are certain signs. These signs let you know someone is in denial but there is a problem. The first thing you will notice is the person is neglecting their responsibilities. Depending on the severity of the type of addiction, they will start missing days at work or school. It will be apparent that they are spending more time at home so they can engage in their addiction. If they have a family or children they will also neglect them too.

The next thing that occurs with an addict that is in denial is that their addictive behavior starts to display levels of risk factors. For example a drug addict may start spending the rent money; a person addicted to sex may start frequenting prostitutes and engaging in unprotected sex. The person may also start to have legal problems around the issue. They may get arrested for disorderly behavior or stealing to support their habit. The addiction will also cause the person to fight with their loved ones, family members, friends, co-

workers etc. They fight mainly with people because of the denial factor. People will notice something is wrong with them and they will adamantly deny it.

Denial behavior that an addicted person displays to indicating they have an addiction problem include:

1. **Their tolerance level to either the addictive behavior or substance increases-** They find themselves either needing more of the substance or having to engage in the addictive behavior more and more to achieve satisfaction
2. **The person continues doing the addictive drug or behavior** because they cannot handle withdrawal symptoms either on a psychological or physical level. They cannot stand the feeling of going through the withdrawal symptoms so opt to continue the behavior rather than go through withdrawal.
3. **They have completely lost control of the addictive behavior.** Even when the person says that they are not going to engage in the addictive behavior they end up doing it anyway. And, when they do engage they end up doing more than they planned to once they started. At that point, they may even want to stop but feel helpless to do so.
4. **Their life revolves around the addiction-** They either engage in the activity every chance they get that's humanly possible. If for any reason if they aren't able to engage in the addictive activity; they think about it around the clock until they can. An addict will try and figure out every opportunity that is available to them so they can actively engage in their addiction.
5. **They have abandoned activities they used to enjoy before the addiction-** A person who has an addiction problem no

longer does any of the other things in life that brought them enjoyment previously. Before the addiction they may have enjoyed hobbies, sports, socializing or using a talent to the best of Their capabilities. Now all they would rather do is their addiction activities instead.

6. **They continue engaging in the addiction even though they know it's hurting them.** It causes major problems in your life but you continue using it. You use it through feeling paranoid, blackouts, mood swings, depression, relationship losses etc. You don't care what it costs you and your life you are going to do the addictive thing anyway.

Even though a loved one or close friend may be in denial about an addiction there are signs that tell you there is something wrong.

Physical And Behavioral Signs Of Drug Abuse include:

1. The persons eyes are dilated, smaller than usual or red all the time They may have very dark circles underneath.
2. Changes in appetite or sleeping patterns
3. Sudden changes in weight, can be loss or gain
4. Deterioration of grooming habits and looks as in physical appearance
5. Unusual smells of breath, body or clothing
6. Tremors, Slurred Speech or impaired coordination
7. Drop in attendance and performance both at work or school
8. Unexplained need for money or financial problems. May borrow or steal to get it.

9. Engaging in secretive or suspicious behavior
10. Sudden change in friends, favorite hangout and or hobbies
11. Frequently getting into fights, arguments, accidents and even illegal activities.

Here are some more signs a person in denial may display for a addictive behavior:

1. Unexplained change in personality or attitude
2. Suspicious or sneaky behavior
3. Sudden mood swings, irritability, angry outbursts
4. Periods of unusual hyperactivity, agitation or even giddiness
5. Lack of Motivation
6. Appears spaced out
7. Appears fearful or paranoid for no apparent reason

When you or someone close to you has an addiction; the person's urge to continue the addiction outweighs the need for them to look at it honestly. A person in denial will underplay all the deterrents their live is going through because of their addiction. It's easier to say you do not have a problem than to say you do when it comes to addiction.

Here are some questions you can ask yourself or a loved one if there has been an issue of denial around you or a loved one facing an addiction problem.

1. Do you or the person feel like you cannot stop even if you want

to?

2. Does the one with the addiction ever feel bad or guilty about your addiction
3. Does the addicted person feel that they have to engage in the addictive behavior to relax or feel good?
4. Do your friends or family worry about the addiction in your life and tell you so?
5. Do you or the person feel you or they have to lie about the addiction in your lives?
6. Have you or they ever done anything illegal in order to do the thing you or they are addicted to?
7. Do you or someone close to you spend more money than either of you can afford on this addiction?
8. Do you or someone close to you have more than one addiction that either of you engage in at the same time?

If you answer yes to one or more of the questions you or someone close to you has a problem that you both need to address. If you are ready to admit that you or a loved one has an addiction then congratulations!!! When you admit you have an addiction then you can start to heal yourself and get the help you need to overcome it. It takes a lot of courage and strength to admit you have an addiction problem and even more to want to get help.

If you or your loved one can face the fact that there is an addiction problem then you will be ready to do something about it. You have to be able to face your addiction without minimizing it or making excuses about it. Even though it's frightening and overwhelming you

can recover but it will take help for you to do so. You have already made the first step by admitting you have a problem.

Chapter 4: Types of Addictions

As we know there are both physical and psychological addictions or a combination of both that a person can have. People who have addiction issues can be addicted to one or multiple addictions. Here is a list of some of the more common types of addictions.

1. Tobacco

There are about approximately 7.5 million tobacco users in the United States today. Of that number approximately 23.4% are men who smoke cigarettes and 18.5% are women. Interesting is the lowest amount of cigarette smokers are found in the Western States . However in the Midwest we find the highest percentage of smokers and they are among the ages between 18 and 25 years old at 44.3%. This is the Highest ranking among any age group period. Nicotine is the substance that makes one addicted to the tobacco. Every year worldwide people die of various cancers due to tobacco smoking.

2. Caffeine

Caffeine is the most widely used mind altering drug worldwide. It is ingested by 80% to 90% of Americans on a daily basis. Most Americans get their caffeine fixes via coffee and soft drinks. A daily cup of coffee which has 100 mg of caffeine is enough to create a caffeine addiction that has to be met on a every day basis. Between 40% to 70% of people who try to eliminate caffeine from their dietary intake experience withdrawal symptoms.

3. Food

Food addictions effect about 4 million Americans and is strongly associated with depression. Approximately 15% of mildly obese people are so because of compulsive eating addictions. Of the more commonly type of food disorders we hear about is Bulimia where a person Binges and then purges themselves of the food they have just

ingested. Another disorder that affects Americans as a eating disorder is Anorexia, where a person goes into starvation and then ceases to eat because of the fear of being overweight.

4. Gambling

It is believed that about 2 million Americans or 0.67% suffer from a gambling addiction. Their moods are based on the highs and lows of winning and losing. About 4 million to 8 million Americans are considered to be “problematic” gamblers. A person addicted to gambling will literally lose their shirts in the experience of the addiction. People can also lose their lives with this type of addiction because of the level of money they end up owing to the wrong people that they cannot pay back.

5. Internet

Internet addiction is in the same category as compulsive gambling. It is an impulsive control disorder that can destroy relationships. A person will spend all their time on the computer at the expense of what needs to be done in their lives. It costs them jobs, money and relationships when they are out of control.

6. Sex

Approximately 6 million Americans suffer from addictive sexual behavior. It is a compulsive behavior and not very understood. About a third of sex addicts or 60% which are women who were abused sexually mostly as children. Sex addicts depend on the retransmitted chemicals that are produced through their sexual encounters. Sexually addicted people are consumed by sexual thoughts day in and day out. They tend to indulge in promiscuity at the expense of safety to feed their addictive sexual needs. Sexual addiction can cost the addicts life either through a disease or having sex that is dangerous for safety issues.

7. Alcohol

There are about 18.7 million alcoholics in the United States. That's about 7.7% of the entire population is dependent on alcohol. Everyday 12,000 people try alcohol for the first time. Alcoholics anonymous serves 2 million people that are alcoholics a small percentage of those that need help for this addiction. Alcohol destroys the liver and eventually kills the person in addition to their brain cells and function.

8. Drugs

It is estimated that 3 million people are addicted to drugs. It is also estimated that 8000 try drugs for the first time every day. 700,000 are being treated for their addictions. More than half of the first time users are females under the age of 18. Marijuana, Cocaine and pain relievers are the most popular drugs used. Daily people die from using drugs and drug overdoses. Many long term addicts experience diseases that kill them and brain damage eventually. Dying from a drug addiction is a very painful sad experience that the loved ones who watch fall apart from being helpless and unable to save an addicted loved one.

9. Shopping

Stanford University studies point out that 1 in 20 Americans are a compulsive shopper. This addiction affects both males and females equally. It is fueled by cultural and media factors. The person buys things to stimulate happiness in the brain but fuels the addiction to keep buying without control. People who suffer from this buy in order to create a happy life for themselves but are miserable as they spend the shirt off their backs to do so.

Whether it's a physical or psychological addiction one is facing addictions occur in people despite their strength of character or best intentions. What happens is the human brain which is a network of complex and fine tuned neurons reacts in different ways to different

stimuli. Some people have a predisposition to give in to repeating things that the brain perceives as pleasurable. This is how addiction starts to occur. Eventually because repeated behavior stimulates the response to the behavior; addiction ensues to keep the feeling the behavior creates going. The more frequently the behavior is repeated the more the brain seeks to replace the normal needs and desires with the one tracked mission that addiction brings. When it gets to this point the person has an impossible road ahead of trying to complete normal daily life because the addiction takes presidency.

When a person engages in addictive behaviors and activities it activates the **same** circuits that the brain uses in survival mode. There is a surge in the dopamine levels that are released, making the person feel pleasure. Thus the brain wants the behavior or activity done over and over again. Just like the body and brain perceives food as a survival need, it also perceives the addiction as the same survival need. What happens is what was once a pleasure is becoming a necessity with increased levels of need to sustain the survival mode. Now, repeating the addiction is done to relieve the stress and anxiety as opposed to the previous enjoyment the addictive activity brings to the person. It's not a matter of pleasure any longer. The addicted person becomes so driven that they do not care about the consequences that their addiction is causing in their life. Finally all the choices and control that the person once held in value in their lives means nothing to them any longer. The person is in loss mode at the expense of their addictive behaviors or actions whether it be physical or psychological in nature.

Chapter 5: Addiction - A Disease Of The Brain

At this stage of the game its clear to see that addiction and the brain are strongly connected. When the brain releases neurons in the pleasure pathway we feel good. Addiction stimulates that process.

The neurons in the reward pathway release a neurotransmitter called dopamine. Dopamine is released into the nucleus accumbens and other brain areas. When neurons are in the reward pathway they communicate by sending electrical signals down their axons. It is passed along neuron to neuron across a small gap called a synapse. The dopamine is released into the synapse and crosses the next neuron and then attaches to receptor. When it binds this is what sends the jolt of pleasure. Any excess dopamine is then returned to the sending cell. Other nerve cells release GABA which is an inhibitor neurotransmitter. GABA works to make sure that the receptor nerve is not over stimulated in the jolt.

What happens in the addiction process is that the source of addiction be it physical or psychological causes the amount of dopamine in the synapse to increase; which as a result causes an increased sensation of enjoyment. However addiction disrupts the normal balance of the reward circuits due to repetition which addiction is contingent upon. When the disruption due to addiction sets in; the memory and cognitive abilities become distorted in response to the repetitive actions that addiction brings.

Twentieth century medicine places behavioral disorders in the same management arena as addiction; however, by neuronal biochemical function, neuronal circuitry and mesolimbic anatomical location the process of addiction uses the same electrical, plumbing, air, and food resources as neuronal circuits and neurotransmitters in our

brains. The scientific neuronal molecular and circuitry research technique that is used to diagnose brain behavioral disorders finds that addiction parallels the same circuit system as the behavioral disorders but are brain-addiction disorders (BAD). Research techniques and goals are the same relative to finding common neuronal molecular pathways, genetic function and neuronal circuits that threaten the patient's behavior, thought process, well being and life. The problem is that many of the treatments for addiction do not fully grasp this importance in the healing process. The brain chemistry is the key in what causes the addiction in the first place. So chemical balance has to be restored in the brain to help fight an addiction that sends the brain chemistry haywire to begin with.

Before the brain-addicted drug or behavior is executed by a person, all the presets for addiction to occur are present. Humans are very vulnerable to addiction states because the neuro transmitters, by genetic control, are primed for this neuro adaptation from the environment. The addictive reward and craving cycles are already operating and brain-addicting drugs that the body produces fuel a potentially abnormal system already present in individuals with preclinical (pre-drug) genetic brain-addiction dispositions.

Brain-addictive disease pulls the body, the brain and the mind together in one fluid continuum, and further research will give the single underpinning process that will be very treatable and potentially curable. BAD or Brain Addictive Disorder revolves around a triangle of stress (environment), the addictive brain drug (toxin) or behavior and the host (genetically vulnerable brain). The right situation, gene expression and concentration/frequency of use or behavior will turn on the BAD process. This helps explain why one dose of methamphetamine can change the brain and the person forever. Addictive brain disorders may be a genetic disorder!

Research shows that the brain is a very rapid neuroadaptive structure and is made up of over 100 billion cells with 70,000 of the 100,000 genes in the body, having some neurons (brain cells) with up to 10,000 communicating dendrites. One neuron can communicate with up to 50,000 other brain neurons. Brain cell transmission can occur at 270 miles per hour; it is very plastic, adapting to any challenge and surviving. These basic facts give an optimistic future view that brain-addiction disease occurs in the brain and by the brain; therefore, treatment of this disease lie within the brain. The brain learns how (neuroadapts) to addict itself, learns (neuroadapts) to have tolerance, so the brain can neuroadapt to a new neuronal transmission process.

Neuronal bio behavioral molecular research has pushed us out of the 19th-20th century mode of arguing about whether addiction is a disease, a choice or a willful misconduct. The terms "use," "abuse" and "substance abuse" will become passé, as the 21st century neurochemistry terminology gives us the scientific phrasing for addictive brain disorders. These old terms do not describe what goes on in the brain; their references are like calling a patient with coronary artery disease a "cholesterol abuser" and passing judgment on his/her cholesterol diet. One certainly can't save a patient's life with intravenous bias and moral fiber.

The addictive brain gets the brains attention via the source of the addiction be it physical or psychologically; makes it captive to the addiction, makes it a slave to it and then eventually kills off the person. The brain of a person who is addicted to a substance or behavior looks and functions differently from a normally functioning person. There are noted changes in the brain's metabolic activity, receptor availability, genetic expression and the reaction the brain has to environmental stimuli when addicted.

It is the activation of the reward center that seems to be the main point of focus in an addiction. Since the memory and pleasure zones in the brain intertwine the psychological component of addiction manifests itself. When a person gets cues from the environment or their feelings then the craving ensues in the brain for the addictive action to be done. The external cues stimulate the brain to want to do the addictive behavior or take the substance. This is why withdrawal becomes so difficult because the bombardment of the external stimulation that makes the addicted person crave the addiction. Because of this factor, many times no matter how much rehabilitation a person undergoes to beat their addiction; when they get around those environmental cues they start to either do the addictive behavior or take an addictive substance again. The memory is stimulated by the environment to remember the pleasure the addiction brought to the person and that's their cue to activate their addiction again.

When a person has an addiction the brain becomes wired to tolerate higher levels of dopamine neurotransmitters. The addiction then requires more and more of those transmitters to satisfy the need for the pleasure tolerance level. As we know there are various factors that go into the equation of making a person become addicted to something. Addiction is a behavior syndrome where the person entertains the addiction which dominates them in terms of their motivation where normal behavior constraints no longer apply or are effective in the person's life. Factors like personality traits, peer pressure and psychological stress all go into the equation of the early stages of addictive behaviors.

The above three factors are not as key as the fact that the repetition of the addictive behavior stimulates the constant need for the addicted person. It is the brain's reaction that causes the addiction. As the brain's chemistry becomes more changed the stronger the

addiction becomes, it's at this point that the social and environmental factors become secondary and the person has a full blown addiction on their hands. At this stage the normal behavior socially and psychologically for the addicted person goes out the window.

The brain is wired naturally to reward us for survival behaviors. This includes things like the intake of nutrients and procreation which ensure survival of the species. Activation of this system ranges in feelings from pleasure to intense Euphoria. It is this brain activation and elevation of mood that drives humans to help direct their behavior to natural rewards.

Its humans repetitive behavior and the rewards it gives that leads one to become addicted to either a behavior or substance. The thoughts that have led to addictive behavior are engrained in the brain of the addict. This is how the addiction in thought becomes habitual. So in order for an addict to help get off of the source of their addiction they have to consciously make an effort to change their neuron path. This is commonly called a learning process that we humans do every day without thinking once the thing we learned is mastered. So part of the process of being able to overcome an addiction besides the physical craving is to change the thought pattern that stimulates the bio chemical neurological response.

Chapter 6: Handling The Cravings

In order to understand the dynamics and difficulties associated with trying to overcome an addiction one has to understand what a craving is. When you are addicted to something be it a behavior or a substance when you try to stop that addiction you crave what you are addicted to. A craving is a strong sensation of wanting something very badly. It urges you to go after it and won't stop until the urge is satisfied.

If you are a non addicted person the body naturally has cravings for things that we biologically need and want such as food and sex. It is part of being human. Our brains are wired for us to seek natural rewards such as food and sex because they have a survival factor. We need food for nourishment and sex for procreating the human race. Addictions trigger the same brain circuits that are wired for food and sex. When a person has an addiction; the addiction activates those circuits either by an addictive action or substance. There are certain things either in our environments or even within our thoughts that cause us to respond to the urges. The responses that our brain stimulates wants us to satisfy the urges caused by addiction. These are called “cues or triggers” that urge the addict to entertain his or her addiction.

Cues or triggers are signals that are stimulated by sights, sounds, smells or thoughts. They are the things that activate the brain to want what a person is addicted to. When the person wants it so strongly and the urge is overpowering we have what is called a craving. It's a consuming longing both psychologically and physically to what the person is addicted to in this case. The cravings for those addicted to substances can even be stronger to the ones we naturally have in relation to food and sex.

Managing one's cravings are handled through the inhibitory circuitry system in the brain. Research has shown that some people are able to put the stop brakes on their cravings better than other people. It's the people who have a weaker inhibitory system that have trouble fighting their cravings associated with their type of addiction. And, for those who are addicted to substances those substances may actually weaken that system as well to break down the resistance to the substance or action further.

Recent brain imaging research has shown that the brain responds to drug and sex cues as fast as 33 milliseconds which is long enough to trigger a craving even without the person being conscious of it. This substantiates the theory that cravings may actually begin in our subconscious or before we are even aware of the craving.

In addition to a person being “trigger” induced into a craving; urge or desire can also be triggered by just a small taste so to speak of the addictive behavior or substance. A good example of this is how a non addicted person may have one potato chip and then crave more and more because the taste of the salt triggered the urge for a whole bag. Like the Lays commercial says “Lays potato chips you can't just eat one”. In addition, an addicted person may give in to the craving just not to experience the psychological or physical torment of withdrawal. By not doing the thing that they are addicted to the craving develops into withdrawal systems if left unsatisfied. This is by the way how many people relapse, they either have a little taste of the behavior or substance they crave and then binge out on it. Or, while in withdrawal relapse to alleviate the symptoms.

So if you are an addict and you are trying to stop what do you do? You have to avoid triggers like the plague. Its suggested by experts

that if someone is facing an addiction, the addicted person needs to write a list of their triggers to remind them of what sets them off. This is so in case they feel the urge they can go through the list to make sure they are not around a trigger to stimulate the addiction. Some addicts are overwhelmed when asked to identify their triggers. In this case it is helpful to identify the craving and cues that are the most recently apparent for the addict as they occur. The list should be used daily and new triggers added to help curb the cravings as they arise.

Once the triggers are identified; strategies can be implemented to avoid them. This may include breaking ties with people who also reinforce the addiction on any level. It means getting rid of the paraphernalia associated with the addiction, could be drug paraphernalia, cigarettes, porn, whatever the person is addicted to. Any physical reminder that is concrete can be removed from the persons presence and life at the time. Places where the activity was conducted should be avoided as well. You can't stay out of your home but, if you did the addiction in other places you should not frequent them at all. For example an alcoholic would not visit a bar.

If you have any patterns or routines associated with the addiction it is recommended that you change them at this time. For example if you got high every day at three o'clock in front of the mirror, make it your business not to be at the mirror at three o'clock and fully engaged in a positive activity at that time. There are some other things to help you cope when the craving hits also. They include:

1. **Distraction-** Distracting yourself with another activity can help reduce the craving particularly a physical activity. It is also recommended to make a list of all the things you like or can do so when a craving hits you can engage in one of them. You may

even have to force yourself to look at the list in order to engage in that activity. It's important to keep busy. The busier you are the less time you have to give in to the desires of your addictions. When a craving hits at a time you have nothing planned go clean the closets or do something that will take all your attention in the moment. Cravings can last up to 15 to 20 minute intervals before they can subside enough to cope.

2. Talk About the Craving

Another effective strategy is to have a support system of people you can call on when you are going through a craving. When you talk about a craving as you experience it; you help diffuse the intensity of anxiety and vulnerability you experience while it lasts. You have to talk about it with someone you trust; it may not necessarily be a family member or a loved one because it may distress them and upset you that they are upset. Choose a friend who can handle your addiction and be a source of support. Some people don't have anyone to talk to; in this case they may want to consider a therapist that can be of assistance when these situations arise. If not another type of substitute may serve to help like taking up a hobby.

- 3. Go with the craving-** Sometimes just to experience the craving is necessary, going through the ups and then the down of the urge to get past it. It occurs, it peaks and then passes. This is done for the person to experience to take the sense of danger, anxiety and provoking feeling that comes with the craving and de power it when it occurs.

In order to go through the sensations of a craving without giving in to it; you first have to pay attention to it. Find a place where you can experience it, if you aren't home find a quiet place to ride it out. When you are in as comfortable a spot that you can find try to relax, focus on the feelings that you are experiencing, identifying them as

the craving. Locate where in your body you feel the urge and identify it. Is it physical or in your mind? How strong is the sensation. Then identify how it makes you feel. Describe how it feels, where it is located, does it move or change? Where else does it occur. Addicts have said that the craving had passed when they did this effectively enough for them to go on with the rest of their day at that time until the next urge hit. Some even rate the intensity of the cravings from 1 to 10 in order to identify the strength of the craving at a given time.

4. **Self Talk-** Because many addicts report that there are a variety of automatic thoughts that are so deeply ingrained in the person; that they are not even consciously aware of them as they happen. Automatic thoughts while experiencing a craving include a sense of urgency and an exaggeration of consequences. Examples of this type of thought would be if “I don't do (whatever the addiction is) right now, I will die for sure”. In trying to manage cravings in addiction it is also important to pinpoint these thoughts as they occur. The person may even say something without really grasping that they are saying it as part of their craving. Once they realize that their speech includes these kind of things they can start to change that pattern of their speech. They use positive language in place of those things that reinforce their cravings. So next time the urge hits instead of saying what they said before now they can say “ I won't die this minute if I don't (whatever the addiction is)” instead.
5. **Try to view the craving as a matter of fact thing-** Because you are experiencing a craving does not mean you are not motivated or weak. It does not mean you cannot beat the craving or are doomed to a relapse. As you learn your triggers and how to manage them you will begin to recover.

6. Another anti craving exercise you can do is to try a 5 minute contract with yourself not to act on the urge for the following 5 minutes as you feel an urge hitting you. You then busy yourself until the urge passes.
7. There is no shame in using anti craving medications to help you with your addiction. Cravings can erupt quickly and be quite overwhelming. It's hard to enforce the anti craving behaviors and sometimes a little medication help may be needed also.

As you are trying to fight your cravings keep in mind all the reasons you want to end your addiction. Remind yourself of all the ugly things giving into that craving brings to your life and your body. Aside from what it does to you; it also affects your family and friends. It hurts them as much as it hurts you. Lastly be patient with yourself. It is not easy to beat an addiction. And every step you take you should be proud of because it is a milestone. Keep that in mind when you feel weak or vulnerable. There is nothing wrong when you are going through a craving and it's okay to say "I feel weak right now." Take each day as it comes. Eventually the cravings will become weaker and weaker as you get stronger to fight them.

Chapter 7: An Addictive Personality

Whether someone has an active addiction or not; its important if you suspect that you or someone close to you has an addictive personality that you identify it to keep it under control. What an addictive personality means is that people that are classified as such are more prone to addictions than other people. Addiction in an addictive personality type develops because of dependence on habit forming behaviors. It's the combination of the repetitive actions and the predisposition that creates an addiction in addictive personalities.

Alina Hospitals and Clinics who work with addictions say that the addictive personality forms after an addiction begins. People with an addictive personality who are actively addicted to something:

1. will show signs of mood swings
2. will be secretive and isolate themselves
3. their sense of guilt will keep them from getting close to others
4. ultimately their habits will harm themselves or others.

Here are 5 symptoms associated with an addictive personality:

1. **Mood Swings**- A person who is out of control will get defensive if a friend or family wants to discuss the noticed or perceived addictive behavior. Keep in mind that the consequences of addiction affect everything in an addictive personality's life. The addictive personality will be suspicious of everyone's motives and feel they are being persecuted because of their behavior.
2. **Guilt**- Guilt goes hand in hand with an addictive personality. They will feel guilty about lying to family and friends because they are ashamed of their lack of control. They feel extremely

bad that their money and time is being wasted to no end on the source of their addiction. They may also feel guilty about ignoring family, friends even their children because of their addictive personality..

3. **Secrecy**- Addictive personalities are secretive because they are driven by fear. They are fearful that people will find out they are out of control and will go all out to hide the addiction from family and friends.
4. **Loss of Control**- Once an addictive personality sets in, the person loses control over their life. For example once a person has lost the ability to control things like gambling, drugs or the computer people around them start noticing signs that the person is displaying erratic behavior. The addictive person may no long be reliable, may not be able to focus, disappear for days at a time, not respond to phone calls or answer the door, prone to accidents, absent from work and the list goes on.
5. **Isolation**- Because the person doesn't want to be found out, they will start to avoid people and family. It usually starts by refusing invitations to go out or meet with friends. Then they progressively isolate themselves in ways so people will not detect that they have an addiction.

A person with an addictive personality doesn't have to be addicted to drugs, sex or gambling per say. A person who has to go to the gym a few times a day every day all the time has an addictive personality if it meets the criteria of an addiction. If it becomes to the point that the gym out ways all the other aspects of the person's life then they have an addiction issue.

If you suspect yourself or another of having an addictive personality the first thing is to look at how you or this person spends the

majority of their time. Are you or the person spending all your time on one thing at the expense of everything else in your life? Are you neglecting or avoiding other aspects of your life because of it? Do you notice you or the person engaging in inappropriate behavior or acting differently?

The next consideration is do you or the person spend your first waking moment on the thought of the behavior you are consumed by? Is your thoughts when you get up centered on starting that behavior as soon as you can? If so you may be facing a possible addiction issue. It is a tip off you or the person you know are getting addicted to a behavior or activity.

If you or the person is actually re-arranging their previous activities or excluding other things to partake in this behavior; it is telling you that this behavior is taking up too much time in you or the person's life. There is nothing wrong for making time for a hobby, but when it is the only thing that consumes you that is a red flag for possible addiction. This is especially true if you are neglecting other important aspects of your life for this behavior or activity.

The next thing in assessing if you or someone you know is displaying signs of an addictive personality issue is; you have to evaluate the effects of the behavior on you or the person's life. Does the activity or behavior promote a healthy growth in one's life? If it doesn't then it's another cue something is wrong. If the activity or behavior is shutting out loved ones and interfere with normal relationships its telling you that this is not a healthy behavior or activity for you to be pursuing. You may have to consciously make an all out effort to curtail the time you spend doing whatever it is that is consuming you; or may have to stop all together to control the situation.

If it's a new interest that you love that's turning into an addiction but not physically or emotionally harming you; like the gym, then consciously limit your time that you entertain the interest. If you see you are going overboard then re evaluate how you want to go to the gym making sure you don't let it to take over your life. An addictive personality tends to over indulge in everything they find enjoyable adding it to the list of their addictions. It doesn't matter if the behavior or activity is illegal or ultimately harmful. If you spend 8 hours a day only playing video games on the computer exclusively there is a problem with that hobby.

Another good practice for a person that has an addictive personality is to get out of the habit of making excuses to get out of regular responsibilities to pursue the addictive behavior or activity. If you have to lie in order to do that behavior or activity at the expense of something else; there is something wrong. And, it should be addressed immediately. This doesn't mean an occasional white lie because you don't feel like going to your mother's house for dinner on Sunday and rather do something else. This is consciously making up lies to others because you are setting yourself up to do that behavior or activity that is addictive for you.

It's good for those with addictive personalities to make an effort to balance their interests. Addictive personalities have to find a way to relax and enjoy a lot of things in their lives. If you notice as an addictive personality that you are leaning a little too far in one direction; step back for a minute to regain control. Make Conscious choices on how you spend your time. You can include the interests that you really enjoy without becoming addicted by spreading them out and doing other things as well. Nothing is set in stone and there is nothing wrong with doing something you love and are passionate about on a regular basis. It's the addictive factor because of an addictive personality that one has to address.

When you have an addictive personality you have to be aware of your tendency towards addictive behaviors. It is those behaviors that can rob you of the valuable time you could be spending with someone you love instead. If you are aware of those tendencies you can control them by seeing the triggers in your personality and behavior. When you identify the triggers in your personality you can make an effort not to turn the triggers on. If for some reason those triggers are hard to control then you may want help dealing with them in order to combat your tendency towards becoming addicted to things.

Chapter 8: Personality Types and Addiction

In classic psychology they use 9 prototype personalities to identify different types of people. They are called Enneatypes based on the Enneagram of Personality theory. This theory categorizes nine ego archetype personalities and place them on various points of a diagram. Based on the nine types of personalities here is a breakdown of how they are when there is an indication that the personality type is in an addictive mode. In reality any type of personality can be addiction prone if they have the predisposition for it. Here are the signs based on the basic personality types.

Type 1 or The Reformer

Ones are conscientious and ethical, with a strong sense of right and wrong. They are teachers, crusaders, and advocates for change: always striving to improve things, but afraid of making a mistake. Well-organized, orderly, and fastidious, they try to maintain high standards, but can slip into being critical and perfectionist. They typically have problems with resentment and impatience. *At their Best they are:* wise, discerning, realistic, and noble. Can be morally heroic.

Type 1 Personality Addictions :

Excessive use of diets, vitamins, and cleansing techniques (fasts, diet pills, enemas). Under-eating for self-control: in extreme cases anorexia and bulimia. Alcohol to relieve tension.

Type 2 or The Helper

Twos are empathetic, sincere, and warm-hearted. They are friendly, generous, and self-sacrificing, but can also be sentimental, flattering, and people-pleasing. They are well-meaning and driven to be close

to others, but can slip into doing things for others in order to be needed. They typically have problems with possessiveness and with acknowledging their own needs. *At their Best they are:* unselfish and altruistic, they have unconditional love for others.

Type 2 Personality Addictions:

Abusing food and over-the-counter medications. Bingeing, especially on sweets and carbohydrates. Over-eating from feeling "love-starved." Hypochondria to look for sympathy.

Type 3 or The Achiever

Threes are self-assured, attractive, and charming. Ambitious, competent, and energetic, they can also be status-conscious and highly driven for advancement. They are diplomatic and poised, but can also be overly concerned with their image and what others think of them. They typically have problems with workaholism and competitiveness. *At their Best they are:* self-accepting, authentic, everything they seem to be—role models who inspire others.

Type 3 Personality Addictions:

Over-stressing the body for recognition. Working out to exhaustion. Starvation diets. Workaholism. Excessive intake of coffee, stimulants, amphetamines, cocaine, steroids or excessive surgery for cosmetic improvement.

Type 4 or The Individualist

Fours are self-aware, sensitive, and reserved. They are emotionally honest, creative, and personal, but can also be moody and self-

conscious. Withholding themselves from others due to feeling vulnerable and defective, they can also feel disdainful and exempt from ordinary ways of living. They typically have problems with melancholy, self-indulgence, and self-pity. *At their Best they are:* inspired and highly creative, they are able to renew themselves and transform their experiences.

Type 4 Personality Addictions:

Over-indulgence in rich foods, sweets, alcohol to alter mood, to socialize, and for emotional consolation. Lack of physical activity. Bulimia. Depressants. Tobacco, prescription drugs, or heroin for social anxiety. Cosmetic surgery to erase rejected features.

Type 5 or The Investigator

Fives are alert, insightful, and curious. They are able to concentrate and focus on developing complex ideas and skills. Independent, innovative, and inventive, they can also become preoccupied with their thoughts and imaginary constructs. They become detached, yet high-strung and intense. They typically have problems with eccentricity, nihilism, and isolation. *At their Best they are:* visionary pioneers, often ahead of their time, and able to see the world in an entirely new way.

Type 5 Personality Addictions:

Poor eating and sleeping habits due to minimizing needs. Neglecting hygiene and nutrition. Lack of physical activity. Psychotropic drugs for mental stimulation and escape, narcotics for anxiety.

Type 6 or The Loyalist

The committed, security-oriented type. **Sixes** are reliable, hard-working, responsible, and trustworthy. Excellent "troubleshooters," they foresee problems and foster cooperation, but can also become defensive, evasive, and anxious—running on stress while complaining about it. They can be cautious and indecisive, but also reactive, defiant and rebellious. They typically have problems with self-doubt and suspicion. *At their Best they are* : internally stable and self-reliant, courageously championing themselves and others.

Type 6 Personality Addictions:

Rigidity in diet causes nutritional imbalances ("I don't like vegetables.") Working excessively. Caffeine and amphetamines for stamina, but also alcohol and depressants to deaden anxiety. Higher susceptibility to alcoholism than many types.

Type 7 or The Enthusiast

Sevens are extroverted, optimistic, versatile, and spontaneous. Playful, high-spirited, and practical, they can also misapply their many talents, becoming over-extended, scattered, and undisciplined. They constantly seek new and exciting experiences, but can become distracted and exhausted by staying on the go. They typically have problems with impatience and impulsiveness. *At their Best:* they focus their talents on worthwhile goals, becoming appreciative, joyous, and satisfied.

Type 7 Personality Addictions:

The type most prone to addictions: stimulants (caffeine, cocaine, and amphetamines), Ecstasy, psychotropics, narcotics, and alcohol but tend to avoid other depressants. Wear body out with effort to stay "up." Excessive cosmetic surgery, pain killers.

Type 8 or The Challenger

Eights are self-confident, strong, and assertive. Protective, resourceful, straight-talking, and decisive, but can also be ego-centric and domineering. Eights feel they must control their environment, especially people, sometimes becoming confrontational and intimidating. Eights typically have problems with their tempers and with allowing themselves to be vulnerable. *At their Best:* self-mastering, they use their strength to improve others' lives, becoming heroic, magnanimous, and inspiring.

Type 8 Personality Addictions:

Ignore physical needs and problems: avoid medical visits and check-ups. Indulging in rich foods, alcohol, tobacco while pushing self too hard leads to high stress, strokes, and heart conditions. Control issues central, although alcoholism and narcotic addictions are possible.

Type 9 or The Peacemaker

Nines are accepting, trusting, and stable. They are usually creative, optimistic, and supportive, but can also be too willing to go along with others to keep the peace. They want everything to go smoothly and be without conflict, but they can also tend to be complacent, simplifying problems and minimizing anything upsetting. They typically have problems with inertia and stubbornness. *At their Best:* indomitable and all-embracing, they are able to bring people together and heal conflicts.

Type 9 Personality Addictions:

Over-eating or under-eating due to lack of self-awareness and repressed anger. Lack of physical activity. Depressants and psychotropics, alcohol, marijuana, narcotics to deaden loneliness and anxiety.

These are just guide lines with which to identify peoples general personalities with. There is nothing written in stone when it comes to personality types. Some people may be a combination of types. This is useful just to give us an idea of what type of personalities develop in most cases what particular addictions based on the personality pre disposition. It is a well know fact that certain personality types are more prone to addictions than others.

Now you can take this little test or give this test to assess someone's proneness to addiction. Each answer that you say yes to equals 2 points.

1. Persons with addictive personalities will drink until they are intoxicated. Ordinary people will drink a maximum of two drinks and be satisfied. They do not need to be intoxicated. If you or the person has to drink until you are drunk give yourself or the person 2 points for this question.
2. Most socially responsible people will have 2 drinks at the most. They will then stop consuming more than they have intended to consume. People with addictive personalities tend to drink more than they set out to. They may say one or two drinks is their intention and drink 4 instead. If this is you or the person in question add 2 points
3. An addictive personality will work or entertain under the

influence of a substance regularly. People ordinarily can do these things and other activities they enjoy without having to ingest an intoxicating substance. If you answer yes it fits then that's 2 points.

4. As time passes an addictive person builds a tolerance to the substance of their choice. Ordinary people seldom build their tolerance to an intoxicant by increasing the amount when using even recreationally a substance. If this fits 2 points.
5. Slowly but surely an addictive person increases their substance intake or increases the behavior or activity of addiction. People who are not addictive in nature will not increase their usage over time. If they drink one drink when they socialize it stays at one drink primarily. Because their addiction starts to cause adverse effects they find themselves missing work or their responsibilities at the expense of doing the addiction . If this is you or the person then give 2 points.
6. People with addictive personalities tend to lie about it when confronted. A normal person who feels they are starting to drink too much will address their issue immediately and seek help if necessary. An addictive person will not seek help in order to continue the addictive behavior. If this fits 2 points.
7. People who drink on a regular basis a lot of alcohol tend to experience more frequent hangovers and side effects than people who don't over drink. If this fits 2 points.
8. Another tell tale sign of an addictive personality is someone who likes to do the activity of addiction alone. They partake in the addictive activity to stave of boredom and loneliness as well. This is not the person who may have a beer at home once in a while, this person partakes in full out addictive behavior

and seek out to be alone to do it. (If it applies 2 points)

9. People that are chronically addicted to something start their day with that thing they are addicted to. After a while it affects their job and income. It also adds to their social isolation. (If it fits 2 points.)
10. An addictive personality will spend a lot of time thinking and talking about the thing that they are addicted to. For instance they will always talk about sex or wanting a drink, or wishing they were high all the time. As soon as they wake up they are looking for the source of their addiction to partake in. (2 point if it applies)
11. A person who is addicted to something will always choose that addiction as opposed to a social event or responding to an invitation. They spend very little time with family or friends. (Applies? 2 points)
12. People with addictive personalities are human too. There are times that they will try and kick their addiction. But many times they take up the addictive activity or substance again at the same level they did before they tried to stop. (If it applies 2 points)

If after taking this assessment you scored between 0 and 8 then it's great to say you are at a low risk for addiction. If you scored between 8 and 15 you are at a moderately high risk of addiction. If you scored over 16 you have the tendencies to become addicted to something. If you scored 20 chances are you have an addictive personality. This is just an assessment. All this implies is the higher you score the more likely you have addictive tendencies and should be aware of them.

If upon taking the assessment you are in agreement that you are in an addictive state or in the danger of becoming addicted to something here are some things to consider.

The first thing you need to do is look at the underlying cause that is creating the addiction. An addictive personality is not the only factor that causes a person to have an addiction. It just means that their temperament is more susceptible than those that don't. To battle an addiction you have to ask why are you doing the thing that is causing you to be addicted. What is the psychological reason underneath? For example a substance abuser may use a drug for a psychological issue to relieve the pain it causes and to feel euphoric. If you have to always be in a chat room and it gives you a rush, you may have socializing issues if you can't talk to people in the real world. The point is that in order to really cure an addictive issue you have to address the underlying thing that is also there prompting you to do the addictive behavior or substance.

Once you start to analyze the underlying causes (and you may have to have professional help to do this) you can start to change your outlook on life to a more positive one. If you can start to feel more happy and content with your life you will be less likely to turn to an addiction to fulfill your needs. In this case you have to find and focus on positive things about yourself. You need to remind yourself of the positive things you have going for you when you feel your addiction pulling on you. This is why it's important to have a positive support system to help you when you feel the cravings. They can help you focus on a different activity and the good you have so as not to get pulled back into your addiction.

It's important that a person who has an addictive personality does not replace a current addiction with a new one. For example some people turn to religion to get off of drugs and end up in fanatical

cults as a result. So if you stopped getting high but are obsessing about having to go to church 3 times a day you are replacing the drug with the church and becoming addicted to something else. In this case you have not really done anything to change your addictive nature. You have replaced one addiction for another. An addictive person has to focus on incorporating moderation with things they turn to as they change their lives.

It is suggested that a person with a serious addiction get professional help. Addictions interfere with your health and life. You want to get help before you do harm to yourself or a loved one because of the addiction.

Chapter 9: Helping A Loved One Who's Addicted

It's never easy to have to accept that someone you love may have an addiction or addictions for that matter. When we see someone we care about start to fall apart as a human being to an addiction it can make our hearts break and make us angry as well. Each addiction is different for an addict but there are some general guidelines you can use in getting help for them and yourself. It's never easy. And you have to expect the addicted person to give you a lot of difficulties when you are trying to help them with their addiction issues.

First and far most they may totally disagree that they even have a problem to begin with. The other thing with addicts is many times they refuse to give up the addiction because they tell themselves they are dealing with it just fine. Also making someone come to terms with an addiction can be embarrassing for them. They may feel vulnerable and exposed. In their minds they may have thought they hid it well, but it was obvious they did not.

Another consideration is the reason for the addiction in the first place. Your loved one may have turned to an addiction as a way to cope with a problem that bothers them far more than the addiction itself. In these type of cases you may have to suggest professional help to your loved one so they can really deal with the problem they have. They may tell you they feel uncomfortable talking to you about it; and they may also tell you they feel uncomfortable discussing it with a professional. Both answers are quite normal. They may be so ashamed of you acknowledging their addiction that they may not want to talk about it at all and brush the conversation completely off.

There is no quick fix to help someone overcome an addiction. The

“*desire to stop*” has to come from the addict or quitting the addiction will not happen. Overcoming an addiction takes unbelievable will power on the part of the addict. This is where the saying “you can lead a horse to water but cannot make him drink” clearly applies. No one can make an addict give up an addiction unless they are ready to do so. If they are not willing or ready there is nothing you can do at all. Persuasion won't work. However there are things you can do that will help your loved one start to make changes and it will also help them deal with their addiction. Hopefully it will help them make the decision to quit.

The first step is to establish trust between you and your addicted loved one. This is very hard to do. Chances are that your addicted loved one has most definitely (because of the addiction) violated the mutual trust you may have had in the past. You have to trust them and they have to trust you; the trust has to be mutual for anything to work. Keep in mind that trust is one thing that is easily undermined in a relationship where there is addiction involved. Even when your intentions are to help the person they may violate the trust because the urges of the addiction are stronger.

Here are some things to *Avoid* that are **Trust Destroyers**:

- 1. Nagging, criticizing and lecturing the addicted person**
- 2. Yelling and name calling** (even because the situation totally stresses you out too)
- 3. Engaging in addictive behaviors yourself even if they are in moderation** (you lead by example; they will see you as a hypocrite)

You have to keep clearly in mind that even though you are trying to

help the person because you care about them, they may feel you are trying to control them. This can actually lead them to acting out on their addictive behaviors even more.

Understand that they may be using their addiction as a way for them to handle stress. If there is a lot of stress between you and this person then they are going to want to engage in addictive behavior to relieve some of the stress they feel from you. Trust has to be a two way street. It does not mean that you tolerate bad behavior either. In reality you cannot believe a word that person who is addicted to something actively tells you. You have to see that their actions back their words up. Addicts are notorious liars.

Usually if a person with an addiction is asked to choose between the addiction and you they will choose the addiction hands down. Also you cannot let them bribe you into letting them do the addictive behavior or substance. They will plead; “this is the last time, I will die without it” etc. Don't accept that behavior as being truthful. They will use or do the addictive activity any chance they get that will not be the last time. If you cannot trust your loved one then you may need to get some help first yourself in order to deal with them better.

Know that many times an addicted person will not change until they actually see consequences based on their addicted behavior. If you have a loved one that is addicted to something do not try to protect them from falling down on their own accord. They may need to fall in order to start picking themselves up again. Unless their behavior puts you or them in actual harm let them be after you stated your case.

It is clear that being in a relationship of any kind with an addicted person is very stressful for the person who is not as well. If you love this person and want to stay with them; then you must understand

that it is going to be stressful for you and accept the stress as part of the healing process for the addictive party. You, yourself will need to find some sort of professional help so you can handle your situation with this addicted loved one better. You will feel tempted to let it all hang out and let your loved one know that this addiction is a big problem but in reality the change can only come from them. It's okay to share communication with them but try not to threaten them because people even when they are not addicted to something do not take well to being threatened.

Once your loved one does make up their minds to get some kind of help there are different treatments available based on the type of addiction your loved one has. Many treatments also include the loved ones family so, you may also be involved in that as well. Communication is important. It's important to tell your addicted loved one and the counselor or doctor in their treatment program honestly. You will have the chance to say what has happened in relation to you and your loved one because of the addiction and what the addiction has been like for you. It's important not to blame, criticize or humiliate your loved one in counseling together. Just state what it's been like to you. On the other hand don't be surprised while in counseling or treatment your loved one says you have contributed to their addiction by your behavior as well. Listen with an open mind. If you want them to change; chances are you will have to change also even though you are not addicted to anything yourself. If you show that you are willing to try they will be more inclined to try also.

If your loved one prefers to have treatment or counseling alone respect their right to privacy in your daily lives. Don't inform family and friends of their treatment. You have to also respect their right to privacy in relation to therapy. If they do not want to discuss it with you don't push them about it. Remember change does not happen

overnight, it is a process and sometimes a very long one.

When we see someone we love with a serious addiction we want to help bail them out because we feel their lives are going down the toilet. This is a recipe for disaster for addicts in general. You have to be able to help them without drowning yourself. When you are involved with someone who is an addict it is very important that you set clear boundaries with them. If they are not ready to change they will lie, have tantrums, withhold love and do virtually whatever it takes for you to give in to what they want from you. If you are living with an addict the boundary should be for them to quit. You can't make them quick but the atmosphere has to be conducive for that goal.

There are times when there is no other means to get help for a loved one but through an intervention. An intervention is a well planned out strategy where other loved ones, friends, colleagues and a professional who deal with addictions come together and confront the addicted party. In the confrontation they ask the addict to accept help for their addiction. An intervention is one way for an addict to actually hear and see how their behavior is affecting all those around them. It shows them through other people both close and objective to their addiction that they clearly need treatment to overcome their addiction.

During an intervention specific examples of the persons destructive behavior is discussed in terms of how it impact both the addict and those who love them lives'. It also offers the addict a pre arranged treatment plan. An intervention also spells out what each person will do if the addicted person does not accept treatment at this time. An intervention can be good for someone who is in complete denial about their addiction and its impact on others. It can also help those addicts who's behavior is over the top but are not willing to get the

help they need.

Many times people with addictions really don't see or care to see how their behavior impacts those around them in particular loved ones. Sometimes it's better not to wait until the person hits bottom when it's at that point (bottom could mean death), in this case it affords them the opportunity to get help before it's too late.

If you feel it's gotten to the point with a loved one where the regular treatment routes have not been effective you may want to consider an intervention. Here are the steps involved in setting up one:

1. **Planning-**A family member or friend proposes an intervention and starts to plan with the family or friends as a group what is to come in relation to the addicted party
2. **Gathering Information-** The members of the group start to find out the extent of the loved one's problem and their condition and then look into the various treatment programs available for them. The group may have to make arrangements to pre enroll the loved one in a treatment program or even facility.
3. **Forming the Intervention Team-** The planning group forms a team which will be responsible for the actual intervention. Team members set a date and location and work together to present a consistent message, treatment plan and changes each person will make if the addicted person doesn't seek treatment. The plan is kept confidential until the day of the intervention so the addicted person doesn't know.
4. **Deciding on specific consequences.** If your loved one doesn't accept treatment, each person on the team needs to decide what action he or she will take. Examples include asking your loved

one to move out or taking away contact with children.

5. **Writing down what to say.** Each member of the intervention team should detail specific incidents where the addiction has resulted in problems, such as emotional or financial issues. Discuss the toll of your addicted loved one's behavior while still expressing care and the expectation that your loved one can change.
6. **The intervention meeting.** Without revealing the reason, the addicted loved one is asked to come to the intervention site. Members of the core team then take turns expressing their concerns and feelings. The loved one is presented with a treatment option and asked to accept that option on the spot. Each team member will say what specific changes they will make if the addicted person doesn't seek care.
7. **Follow-up.** Involvement of a spouse and family members is critical in helping someone with an addiction stay in treatment and avoid relapsing into old patterns. This can include changing patterns of everyday living to make it easier for the addicted person to abstain from the destructive behavior, offering to participate in counseling with your loved one, seeking your own therapist and recovery support, and knowing what to do if relapse occurs etc.

Consulting an intervention professional (interventionist), an addiction specialist, psychologist or mental health counselor can help you organize an effective intervention. It's a good idea to get professional help if your loved one has a history of violence, has suicidal tendencies, may be taking serious mind altering drugs or is in serious denial with the possibility of uncontrolled anger as a result.

Chapter 10: Enablers

A person who loves an addict and overlooks their addiction allowing the addict to continue at their expense is an enabler. By definition an enabler is a person who makes it easier for the addict to continue their addictive behavior. They can enable a person by either rescuing them or criticizing them. Many times enabling and co dependency go together. Co dependency is when one or both parties in a relationship allows the other to act in manipulative or detrimental ways to them in order to keep the relationship going. What happens a lot of times is that the enabler satisfies a need for a codependent person because the enabler's behavior fosters a need from the other party in the relationship.

A person in a relationship with an addict can be an enabler; they are also displaying mutually co dependent behavior in relation to their addict partner. Many times the enabler will make excuses and lie for their addicted partner which enables the addiction to continue. The codependency is reinforced because to be a codependent one has a need to be needed. The enabler has clouded vision because they tell themselves they can have a healthy relationship with an addict which is based on manipulation and control on behalf of both parties. The codependent fosters the addicts behavior which is a form of manipulation to keep the addict there with them. A household that functions on codependency and enabling does so to avoid conflict and problems. It rather allow the bad behavior to continue and pretend there is a sense of peace. Both the enabler and codependent make excuses for the destructive and hurtful behavior present in the household and the relationship.

When you allow an addict to continue his addictive habits; you are supporting their destructive behavior as well as their need to control

things inappropriately by staying addicted. The person who is co dependent on an addict is given unclear and contradictory messages by the addicted person. They are told that they are loved but must put up with unbearable circumstances to continue receiving the love from the addicted party. This gives way to a relationship full of irrational thoughts and behaviors without any clues of what's right or wrong in a relationship after a while. The person may be allowed to steal things under your nose, sleep with people in your face, not go to work, etc. all in the guise of an addiction.

Any time you permit, assist or allow a person to entertain an addiction with your full knowledge whether actively or passively you are enabling them. Even when you say nothing you are enabling the behavior to continue. Many times an enabler will keep silent out of fear. They may fear many things:

1. **Fear of Physical Reprisal** from the addict such as being hit or hurt
2. **Fear of Hurting** the addict
3. **Fear the addict will hate you** or not like you anymore
4. **Fear of being accused** of meddling or not minding your business
5. **Fear of the relationship ending**

Sometimes enabling may take the form of the enabler doing something for the addict that they should be doing for themselves. In cases like this the enabler will make excuses for the addict saying they can't do it because of their addiction. An example would be

calling their boss because they are high out their minds and telling their boss they were hospitalized for pneumonia or something ridiculous to cover for them.

Most enablers are “enablers” because their own esteem is low. They don't think enough of themselves to do better. The enabler has not gained the ability to say no to the addict because they are scared they will lose the love from the addict if they put their foot down or maybe worse. In order to stop enabling the first thing you need to consider is your own worth. If you understand you deserve better than crappy behavior and treatment from an addict and that you are better than that you won't stop enabling them.

Unfortunately an enabler sweeps things under the rug in hopes that they will go away. It is the enabler who gets the brunt of all the crap an addict dishes out because the addict expects too much from them because they allow the addict to be an addict. The bottom line is that the enabler needs just as much help to deal with the addiction as the addict does.

Here are some classic signs that may let you know if you are an enabler or not:

1. **Cover up for the loved one**-Provide alibis, make excuses, or complete tasks for them rather than allowing them to suffer the consequences.
2. **Rationalize**-Develop reasons why the person continued use is understandable or acceptable.
3. **Blame**-Get angry at the individual for not trying hard enough to control his or her addictive activity.
4. **Control**-Trying to take responsibility for the person's addiction

by cutting off the source or supply of the addict. Ex. Throw their paraphernalia away, drugs, porn whatever enables the addictive behavior.

5. **Threaten**-Say that they will take action (e.g., turning the person in) if he or she does not control his or her use, but not following through when he or she continues to use.

When you keep silent you are also condoning the addicts behavior. You are rescuing the addict by minding your business. As long as you continue to ignore a problem that is that serious the problem will continue or get really worse. You have to gather every ounce of strength in your being to start using tough love if you do love this person and want a chance to save your relationship with them.

Tough love means when the addicted loved one asks for money to get high or for something to enable their addictive behavior you say "NO" and stand by the no. Do not feel guilty either, you are doing the right thing. You may not be able to control the external factors of their addiction but you can control yourself and your home. The next thing is you have to seek professional help for you and the addict. It's crucial. Under no circumstances should you live in fear for your physical safety. **IF** you do call 911 or whatever is appropriate in your state and get that person out of the home immediately. **NO** one should cost you your life.

Chapter 11: Conclusion - There is Help Available

Providing you or a loved one who is addicted is ready for help with their addiction; there is help available. One of the first places you can go to is your Doctor and tell them the situation. They may be able to give you some help with places to go that offer treatment. If you don't feel comfortable with that then you can go online to:

<http://nationalsubstanceabuseindex.org/gethelp.htm>

<http://www.addictionhelpservices.com/>

http://www.recoveryconnection.org/addiction_treatment/addiction-treatment-programs.php

<http://www.spiritualriver.com/addiction-help/>

The first web address is a national data base of over 10,000 treatment facilities. Also there are free hot line numbers and referral services available through search engines, directories and links that are connected with the site.

You can go directly on line to the various treatment center sites that meet your criteria although they do not have listings of success rates. There is also the government agency SAMHSA with help line access to further assist you if necessary. Many help lines are actually affiliated with treatment centers.

There are also counseling services that you can go on line to look up for addiction and help support groups. Some of the more popular groups are the AA, NA, Al-Anon, and the various other Addiction Anonymous Groups that offer support for various addictions. Many of the large hospitals psychiatric departments may have services available for the type of addiction you are dealing with.

If for any reason it is an addiction emergency then call 911 do not hesitate. It can save their life or even yours if the person is violent for any reason.

Dealing with an addiction can be extremely hard without professional intervention at some point. In most types of treatment programs however, the premise is based on bringing those with the same type of addictions together so they can be a source of support and understanding for each other while trying to kick the addiction.

In this way the person battling the addiction doesn't feel alone or like they are the only one's struggling with an addiction like theirs. Many of the treatments also incorporate buddy systems between the addicts so if they need to contact one another for support outside of the treatment facility they can.

When choosing a rehabilitation option for an addict you want to consider location and cost as well. Some may choose a more economical type of set up to suit their finances and some can afford high end treatment facilities. Peer Support groups are often a more economical choice. Many peer support groups can be found in local papers and on the internet to find out where the meetings are held. Many of these meetings are free and work on a donation basis. They are usually opened to anyone who wants to attend.

IOP's or Intensive outpatient programs are usually affiliated with a hospital or clinic. They tend to offer more in facility support than peer based support groups. IOP's usually meet a few times a week and the visit spans several hours. Many of the IOP's require a certain attendance rate to be in the program. This helps guard against relapse. Also since they are in clinics or hospitals there may be medication available to the addict in the program. IOP's may include therapy as well.

Therapy is one of main tools used in treating addiction both

individually or as part of a program regimen. With therapy the addict works on the underlying causes of their addiction. Usually an addiction is caused because of both emotional and psychological issues that need to be addressed. It is believed that if one is to have a serious chance at overcoming their addiction that they must have therapy as part of the rehabilitation process. Behavior modification therapy is also one of the tools used in rehabilitation of addiction. It teaches the addict how to change their learned behavior that goes with their addiction. This helps them control the triggers that life bombards addicts with everyday.

Residential treatment facilities can be very costly. They involve the addict living in a facility for a specific amount of time to overcome their addiction. The amount of time a person stays at the facility depends on both the person and the type of addiction they are trying to kick. Different facilities have different programs and methods of rehab. Many are structured like camps, with specific schedules and activities for the patients enrolled. They also have counseling, therapy, group sessions and may give medication to the patients enrolled depending on their condition.

For those with addictions that make them feel vulnerable because of their privacy, there are self help forums on line available to help addicts. In this way they can consult with others under a screen name for privacy purposes. There are also self help books and dvd's available where a person can use them in the privacy of their home.

Its not easy to admit that you or a loved one may be addicted to something and need help. Its a process, and there are times that the person may fall occasionally backwards when they were making progress. All you can do is try and get them or yourself the help that is needed and take one day at a time. After a while when the

withdrawal starts to ease you will see light at the end of a long dark tunnel. This lets you know that you are getting your life back. Being able to kick an addiction is something to be proud of. It takes a lot of strength and courage to be able to beat an addiction. For those who have come out of the tunnel into the light; they emerge stronger than they were even before they got addicted to the thing that held them captive. It's found that once a person truly can overcome an addiction they don't look back once they come out on the other side. It's the getting to the other side that's the hard part. Staying there isn't, getting there is.

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