

10 Blatant Signs You Definitely Have an Addiction

For the most part, my career has been dedicated to helping addicts get sober and become amazing emotional, spiritual and moral adults. I see the miracle of recovery from addiction every week.

Having said all that, you must understand a significant side effect to having an addiction: Addicts stop developing emotionally. Regardless if they are a man or woman, and even if chronologically age 50, most are emotionally aged 14 to 16.

This emotional age represents the time when addictions became active, the response being emotional arrested development. They may be more mature in other areas of their life, but emotionally, they are an adolescent.

Characteristics of Addiction

I am going to briefly go over the 10 commonly associated characteristics of addiction so you can see if addiction may be a possible threat to your emotional fitness. If you come across an area of your life where you are struggling, be honest. If you are honest, you can heal and enjoy a life of freedom.

I am in recovery from several addictions: alcohol, drugs, sex, pornography, caffeine and sugar. I know better than most what it takes to get and stay free from addictions. Walk through the next few pages with an honest heart and see if you meet enough criteria to consider if recovery from addiction is a needed part of your path to emotional fitness.

1. Try to Stop

In any addiction, you would have made several attempts to stop. You might have even stopped for a day, week, months or

longer, but then you go back to the behavior to which you are addicted. You have some rationalization as to why you go back, but factually you have been unable to stop.

2. Promise to Stop

When you are addicted, you make several promises to stop the behavior. You might promise yourself. You might promise God, a spouse, a significant other or a family member. Despite the promises, you return to the behavior.

3. Consequences

Your addictive behavior or relationships bring into your life some sort of consequence. For some, the consequences are economic; for others, they are relational. Regardless of the type of consequences the addiction has brought into your life, you have paid a price for having this addictive behavior.

4. Use after Consequences

Even after a significant consequence such as a car accident, loss of a job, loss of a relationship or marriage, you continue to use. You may have had several cycles of consequences, but as you look back, you have continued to use even after each consequence.

5. Do More

In your addiction, you find yourself increasing more use and abuse of the substance, behavior or relationship. You started off with just a little bit and now, over time, you see a significant increase of how much you actually abuse the substance, behavior or relationship.

6. Tolerance

As an addict, you have an increased tolerance toward a behavior, substance, or relationship. Over time, it takes more of it or a higher form of it to get the same result.

7. Time

As you look over the past months, years or decades, you have dedicated more and more of your time to the behavior. This behavior might have started off an hour here and there, but since, it has become more regular.

8. Withdrawal

If you find yourself unable to access your substance, process or relationship you experience some form of withdrawal. Your symptoms can swing from crabby to hopeless. You will find this happening almost every time you are in circumstances that last longer than your usage patterns have been in the past.

9. Decreased Activities

Your addiction, over time, becomes more and more demanding of your time and energy. Over time, you begin to manage your life so there is less time with friends, family, hobbies, spiritual pursuits and physical activities. As you look back, you can see that you have decreased other activities in your life to accommodate more time for the behavior.

10. Secret

Most addicts keep their behavior a secret. The primary people in their lives do not know the total truth about how much they are using or doing. They often have secret accounts, cash, passwords or relationships that supply the substance or process. Having a secret often goes hand in hand with addiction.

If you struggle with an addiction, I recommend you get informed about it. Then join a support group to help you recover. Seek counseling with someone who specializes in that area of addiction recovery. Take the steps you need to address the issues you may be having. {eoa}

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