

4 Destructive Habits That Feed an Addictive Mindset

I posted this question recently, “Do people who are addicted to sugar or any other substance think differently than those who are not?”

I began answering that question in the previous article, “Overcoming the Addictive Mindset, Part 1.”

In the article, I quoted psychologist Dr. Lee Jampolsky in which he said that the origins of addiction are having the mindset that your happiness is “out there.”

In the case of the person suffering from addiction, they have learned to associate happiness with the substance to which they’ve become addicted. As a result, they will resist any effort to take the substance away.

After all, they’ve convinced themselves that they can’t be happy without it!

Now that we know the origins of the addictive mindset, let’s look at the mindset that feeds an addiction. Once again, Dr. Jampolsky shares his insight:

..what continues people in the path of addiction: it is their own self-judgment, their lack of forgiveness, their own criticism to themselves, their own belief that they have done unforgivable things, their own shame and their own guilt for all of the things that they have done. But they don’t want to look at that because they believe that it’s real. So they continue in the same patterns because it somehow pushes it away for a moment, a week or however long it might be.

I call thoughts like these “dark thoughts.” The devil lives in darkness. In fact, the origin of the word “devil” comes from

the Greek word “*diavolos*” which means “slanderer” or “accuser.”

Imagine someone pointing a finger at you, saying the worst things about you. Would you stand for that?

Unfortunately, many of us do because we allow a bully to live in our minds.

When you allow slander or accusation to rule your mind, mental strongholds are built. They make you feel so demoralized that they can even drive you into immoral behavior.

How can you overcome this pattern?

In Dr. Jampolsky’s statement above, he talked about the denial people with addictive mindsets have:

“But they don’t want to look at that because they believe that it’s real.”

To overcome, however, you must have the courage to look.

The Spirit showed me that our unwillingness to look inside ourselves to determine what’s going on in our minds compares to children afraid of the “Boogie Man.”

I wrote to a TBYT reader recently:

Do you know how a child might be scared to enter a dark room because they believe a “Boogie Man” lives in the closet or under the bed and is going to get them? The only way to dispel that child’s fear is to expose those dark places to the light so they can see that the “Boogie Man” was only in their imagination, not real.

There’s only one way to know the it. There is an old saying, ‘You cannot conquer what you will not confront.’”

2 Corinthians 10:5 describes this process as “casting down

imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ" (2 Cor. 10:5).

I recommend that you start writing down the thoughts you have every day through journalling. In this way, you'll see how you are thinking in black and white so that you can confront it.

Let's break down the addiction-feeding mindset that Dr. Jampolsky mentioned previously and provide answers for it from God's Word:

- **Self-criticism:** "I will praise You, for you made me with fear and wonder; marvelous are Your works, and You know me completely" (Ps. 139:14).
- **Lack of forgiveness of others:** "And be kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God in Christ also forgave you" (Eph. 4:32).
- **Self-judgment (condemnation):** "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit" (Rom. 8:1).
- **Lack of self-forgiveness, shame and guilt:**
 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).
 - "Such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, and you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).
 - "To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (Rev. 1:5b-6).

Now that you have read these truths from God's word, be diligent to plant them into your mind through daily meditation upon them.

Think of them as spiritual food. Just like taking in physical food, you need to take in God's Word, break it down for digestion and then assimilate it, which is making it a part of you through your daily actions.

This is not a "one and done" deal, especially if an addiction has been with you a long time.

Plus, know that even as you are renewing your mind to this new way of thinking, you'll still have the impulse to go back to your old addiction.

That's because you've trained your brain to react in that way.

However, just because you have the impulse does not mean you have to follow it.

Make it easier for yourself by identifying the things and/or people in your current environment that made it easy to practice your addiction and start setting boundaries to protect yourself.

You have a race to run in the Lord; you don't need anything in your life that would hinder you from finishing well.{eoa}

*Once 240 pounds and a size 22, **Kimberly Taylor** can testify to God's healing power to end binge-eating. She is an author and the creator of the Christian weight-loss website . Visit today for inspirational health and weight-loss tips.*

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