

Warning: You Might Suffer From One of These 6 Serious Addictions

Addictions can involve both substances (alcohol, drugs, sugar, carbohydrates, caffeine and others) and processes (gambling, relationships, love, work, sex and more). In these short descriptions, I will not be able fully detail your particular addiction. That's one of the limitations of writing a general addiction article. If you find the biological aspects of addiction interesting, there are many books that focus on specific addictions that you may find helpful.

1. Biological Addict

The condition of the body is a key factor in one becoming addicted to a substance or process. The first kind of addict starts life chemically or hormonally challenged, which causes discomfort, imbalance or depression. This person will definitely look for a biological solution for his or her nagging problem. The first time this person ingests alcohol or drugs, they engage in a process that causes the chemicals to rise that they need to compensate for the deficit in their bodies, and they feel whole or great. They repeat ingesting the substance or engaging in the process to continue getting that elated feeling. That is, until they become addicted. In this case, the "medicine" (addiction) for the body's imbalance becomes the problem.

The second kind of addict from a biological aspect has a relatively healthy body, but through repetition creates a dependence on a substance or process to feel a certain way. In some cases, like sex and substances, the neuropathic highways of the brain can be hijacked. When this happens, one's body becomes the enemy, demanding the candy (addiction) that you

have been reinforcing to feel the mood state it creates, whether a substance or process.

The body part of “spirit, soul and body” has been largely overlooked in Christian recovery models. Christians like to just focus on only the spiritual. However, Paul encourages us to look at the whole person. This approach to healing and obtaining recovery makes more sense to me than focusing on only one dimension of our three-dimensional being.

You need only see someone go through withdrawal, whether from drugs, alcohol, sex, relationships or work, to realize that the body aspect is real. Addicts have withdrawals that are partially physical, such as convulsions, sweats and shakes. This is important to understand, particularly if physical aspects are part of your addiction process. Also, if you are a person who grew up in a healthy family with no trauma or abuse, it is important to know you might have become addicted purely due to biological reinforcement.

2. Psychological Addict

Research related to addiction has found that generally, a larger population of addicts has suffered some form of abuse or neglect. These people find the combination of messages in the fantasy world and the chemical cocktail to the brain to be a salve unto their hurting souls. Simply put, they medicate the past or the pain in their souls by acting out, which is their form of medicine.

In my clinical experience, 80 percent of addicts (or more) have abandonment, abuse or neglect issues of some type in their past. These painful events will ultimately need to be addressed for the addict to fully heal. Some of these issues are addressed in the *Recovery for Everyone Workbook*.

3. The Spiritual-Based Addict

This addict is looking for a spiritual connection in all the

wrong places. In recovery, we talk about our spiritual hole. Such addicts put their addiction (whether chemical or process) in a hole but find it doesn't scratch the itch over time. Should they have a spiritual awakening of some type, their addictive behaviors cease because they have filled their spiritual hole. They then pursue life in a healthy manner.

These are the people who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and their addictions stop instantly. This is what happened to me and my addictions to alcohol and drugs. My addictions left when I became a Christian, though my sex addiction stayed, and I needed to heal from that.

I tell my Christian clients, "If He didn't deliver you, He wants to heal you through the recovery process. Either way is a miracle!"

4. The Trauma-Based Addict

The trauma-based addict has experienced sexual trauma as a child or adolescent. This trauma becomes the major pain they are medicating. For some addicts, this is their biggest secret. They suppress the pain. However, this pain must be addressed and healed.

If you have suffered the trauma of sexual abuse or rape, you absolutely must tell someone so you can begin to heal. This secret lodged in your spirit, soul and body needs to be exposed to be healed. I was abused in my early years. It wasn't my fault. Victims of sexual abuse often take false responsibility for the abuse, and this must be worked through. If you were abused or raped, it was not your fault: You were not responsible for it.

The trauma-based addict has to address the abuse they suffered to stop the acting out, be it substance or process addiction behaviors. Find a pastor, recovery person or counselor of the same gender with whom you can be honest.

This category of trauma includes those who have experienced abortions. Women especially suppress this trauma, so their secret can be the core of the pain they are medicating. When men who willingly participated in an abortion hold onto their secret, it often becomes a big factor in their addiction behaviors. If this is your trauma, again, speak to someone of the same gender and start to expose your secret.

For the trauma-based addict, the trauma determines the flavor of the addiction. This trauma must be addressed for the addict to heal.

5. The Intimacy Anorexic Addict

Intimacy anorexia is an addiction process all by itself. However, from my experience working with addicts of various kinds, this addiction cannot only coexist with, but exacerbate a chemical or process addiction in one's life.

Look at the list of intimacy anorexia characteristics below. Which of these would your spouse or partner say apply to you? If you believe five or more of these apply to you, you are probably an intimacy anorexic.

1. Withhold love from your spouse.
2. Withhold praise or appreciation from your spouse.
3. Control your spouse by way of silence/anger.
4. Criticize your spouse without grounds, regularly.
5. Withhold sex.
6. Blame spouse for everything.
7. Stay very busy to avoid your spouse.
8. Control/shame with money issues.
9. Are unable to share feelings with your spouse.
10. Withhold spiritual connection from your spouse.

Many addicts who try to get sober but keep having what I call "flat tire" recovery (relapse regularly) meet the criteria for intimacy anorexia. If you have been sober from addictive acting-out behaviors for a year, but your spouse wants to

leave you because “nothing’s changed,” you too might be an intimacy anorexic.

6. The Addict With Mood Disorders

Some adolescent or young adult addicts have chemical imbalances. These young people find the addictive chemical or process offers them a way to medicate or alter their chemical imbalance. They use this medicating response quite regularly, and over time, create an addiction. In a journal article I wrote called, “The Prevalence of Depression in Male Sex Addicts Residing in the United States,” I discovered that 28 percent of male sex addicts suffered from depression.

A second common chemical imbalance I see in my practice with addicts is cyclothymic disorder. This is a slight up-and-down fluctuation in mood addicts usually experience on roughly a weekly basis (a funky day). This type of addict will need to do all the recovery work discussed here and in the exercise workbook. In addition, he or she should see a psychiatrist for medication for the mood disorder. {eoa}

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