

Breaking the Cycle of Addiction

- Addictions and Addictive Behavior: Threats to Wellness

Objectives

- Define addiction.
- Distinguish addictions from habits, and identify the signs of addiction.
- Discuss the addictive process, the physiology of addiction, and the biopsychosocial model of addiction.
- Describe types of addictions, including gambling, work, exercise, sexual, and Internet addictions, as well as codependence.
- Evaluate treatment and recovery options for addicts, including individual therapy, group therapy, family therapy, and 12-step programs.

Defining Addiction

- Addiction is continued involvement with a substance or an activity despite ongoing negative consequences.
- Four criteria as defined by the American Psychological Association
 - Physiological addiction
 - Withdrawal
 - Relapse
 - Tolerance

Defining Addiction

- **Addiction is a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry.** Addiction affects neurotransmission and interactions within reward structures of the brain, including the nucleus accumbens, anterior cingulate cortex, basal forebrain and amygdala, such that motivational hierarchies are altered and addictive behaviors, which may or may not include alcohol and other drug use, supplant healthy, self-care related behaviors. Addiction also affects neurotransmission and interactions between cortical and hippocampal circuits and brain reward structures, such that the memory of previous exposures to rewards (such as food, sex, alcohol and other drugs) leads to a biological and behavioral response to external cues, in turn triggering craving and/or engagement in addictive behaviors.
- The American Society of Addiction Medicine. (2019). Addiction Definition. Retrieved from <https://www.asam.org/>

Habit versus Addiction

- Habit is repeated behavior in which the repetition may be unconscious.
- Compulsion is present if considerable discomfort is experienced if the behavior is not performed.

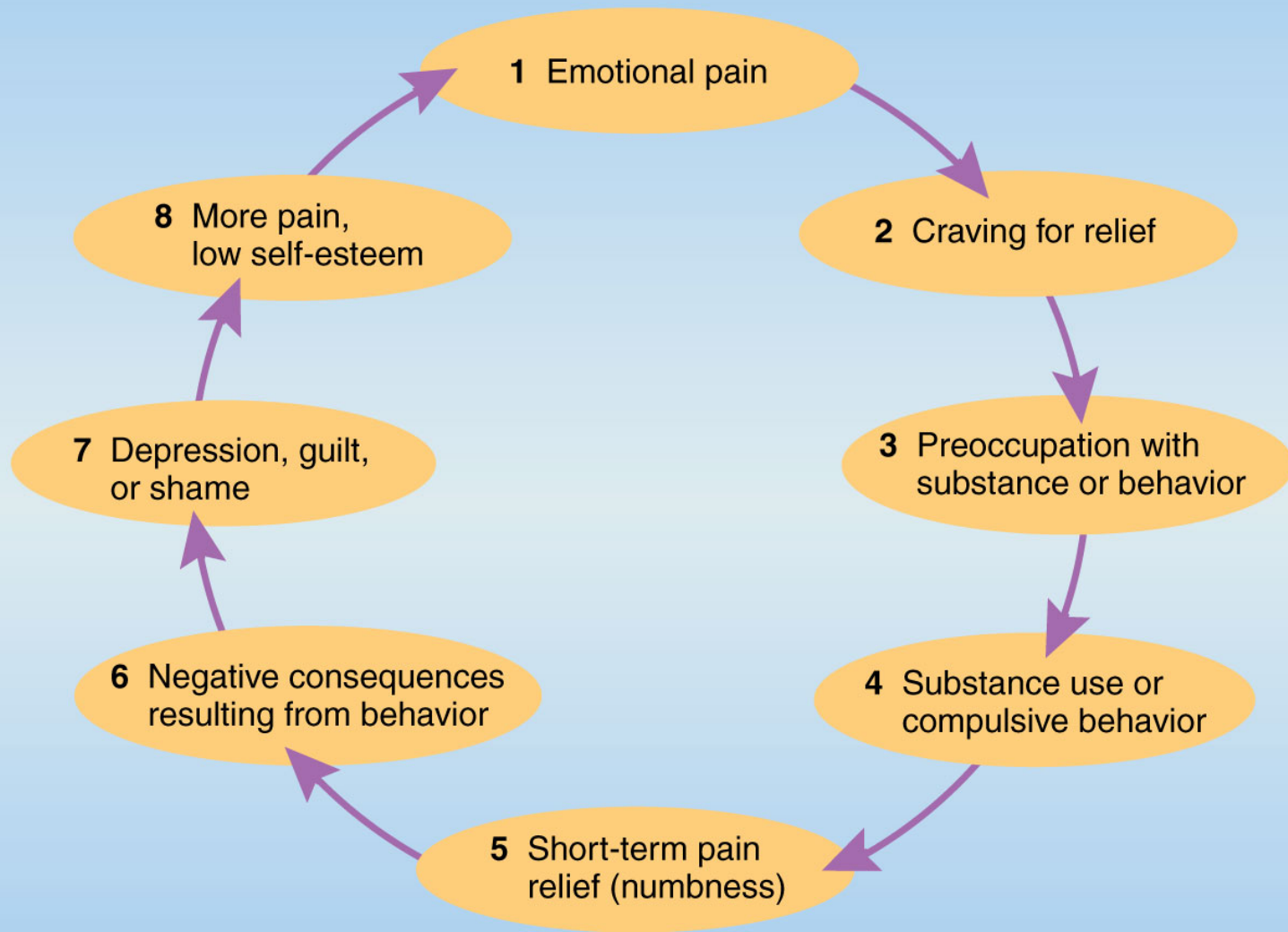
Signs of Addiction

- Four common symptoms
 - Obsession
 - Loss of control
 - Negative consequences
 - Denial

The Addictive Process

- Nurturing through avoidance
- The physiology of addiction
 - Neurotransmitters
 - Tolerance
 - Withdrawal

Cycle of Psychological Addiction



Model of Addiction

- Biopsychosocial model proposes that addiction is caused by a variety of factors operating together.
- Biological or disease influences
 - Serotonins and GABA
- Environmental influences
 - Cultural expectations, attitudes, and messaging
 - Social learning theory

Risk Factors for Addiction

Biological Factors

- Unusual early response to the substance or experience (e.g., easy development of tolerance to alcohol)
- Attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder and other learning disabilities
- Biologically based mood disorders (depression and bipolar disorders)
- Addiction among biological family members

Psychological Factors

- Low self-esteem
- External locus of control (looking outside oneself for solutions)
- Passivity
- Post-traumatic stress disorders (victims of abuse or other trauma)

Environmental Factors

- Ready access to the substance or experience
- Abusive or neglectful home environment
- Peer norms
- Misperception of peer norms
- Membership in an alienated, oppressed, or marginalized group
- Life events, including chronic or acute stressors

Addictive Behaviors

Process addictions are behaviors known to be addictive because they are mood altering.

- Compulsive gambling
- Compulsive shopping and borrowing
- Work addiction
- Exercise addiction
 - Addictive exercisers
 - Muscle dysmorphia
- Internet addiction
- Sexual addiction
- Multiple addictions

Compulsive or Pathological Gambling

- Over 2 million Americans are compulsive or pathological gamblers.
- Experts believe that compulsive gambling is like a drug addiction.
- More men than women have gambling problems.
- Gambling is on the rise on college campuses.
 - Easier to access (online, more casinos, lotteries, etc.)
 - Increasing popularity of poker

A person in a light blue shirt is shown from behind, covering their face with their hands in a gesture of despair or frustration. They are standing over a craps table. The table is green with white and yellow markings. In the foreground, there are several stacks of blue and white chips and two red dice. The word 'COMING' is printed in large red letters on the table. The background is dark, making the table and the person stand out.

DID you KNOW?

The average tuition for a 4-year public university in 2007–2008 was \$6,185. If you gamble and lose an average of \$120 per week for a full year, you'll have spent your entire year's tuition!

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Compulsive Shopping and Borrowing

- Compulsive spenders are on average \$23,000 in debt.
- Compulsive shopping can happen in cycles.
- Compulsive shopping frequently leads to compulsive borrowing.
 - Compulsive debtors borrow money, often from family, friends, or institutions.

Work Addiction

Healthy work

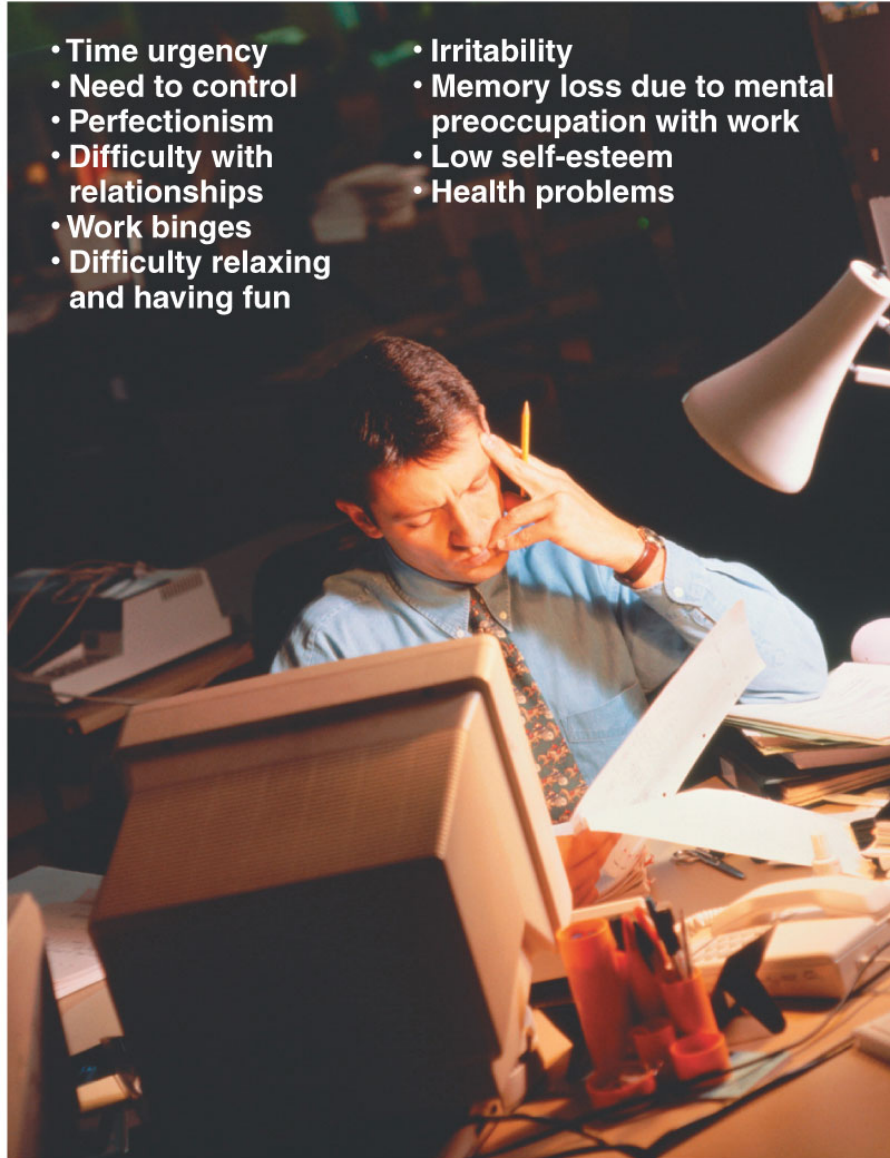
- provides a sense of identity.
- develops our strengths.
- is a means of satisfaction, accomplishment, and mastery of problems.

Work addiction

- is characterized by a compulsive use of work and work persona to fulfill needs of intimacy, power, and success.
- is a major source of marital discord and breakup.
- often affects those who come from alcoholic or dysfunctional homes

Signs of Work Addiction

- Time urgency
- Need to control
- Perfectionism
- Difficulty with relationships
- Work binges
- Difficulty relaxing and having fun
- Irritability
- Memory loss due to mental preoccupation with work
- Low self-esteem
- Health problems



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Exercise Addiction

Addictive exercisers

- use exercise compulsively to meet needs of intimacy, nurturance, self-esteem, and self-competency.
- are traditionally women, but men too are developing more unhealthy exercise patterns.
 - More men are abusing steroids and overexercising.

Negative consequences include

- alienation of family and friends.
- injuries from overdoing it.
- craving for more.

Internet Addiction

Internet addiction

- Cybersex addiction
- Cyber relationship addiction
- Net compulsions
- Information overload
- Addiction to interactive games
 - As many as 15 percent of college students report that Internet use and computer games interfere with their academic performance.

Sexual Addiction

Sexual addiction is a confusion of the intensity of physical arousal with intimacy.

- **Sex addicts**

- are incapable of nurturing another because sex is the object of their affection.
- frequently have episodes of depression and anxiety.
- have high suicide rates.
- often were in a dysfunctional family during childhood.

Kick Your Habit—Soft Addictions

Discussion Questions

1. What is the difference between a bad habit and an addiction?
2. In what way do soft addictions affect friends and family? Is it better or worse for friends and family than if the addict had a “hard” addiction?
3. How do you recognize a bad habit? How do you go about changing it?

How Addiction Affects Family and Friends

- In codependence, a person is “addicted to the addict”; the person assumes responsibility for meeting the addict’s need and neglects his or her own needs.
- Enablers are people who knowingly or unknowingly protect addicts from the natural consequences of their actions.

Treatment for and Recovery from Addiction

- Intervention

- Planned process of confrontation by people who are important to the addict. Its purpose is to allow the addict to see the destructive nature of the addiction.

- Treatment

- Abstinence is refraining from the addictive behavior.
- Detoxification is adjustment physically and cognitively to being free from the influence of addiction.

Choosing a Treatment

- The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)—Project MATCH
- Three strategies for addiction treatment were studied
 - Cognitive-behavioral therapy
 - Motivational psychology
 - 12-step programs
- Patients did equally well in each approach. The focus for treatment selection should be on choosing a program that was competently run.

Relapse

- Relapse is isolated or complete return to addictive behavior.
- Relapse prevention requires the addict and significant others to recognize the signs of imminent relapse and to develop a plan for responding to the signs.
- Relapse is not a failure to change or a lack of desire to stay well.