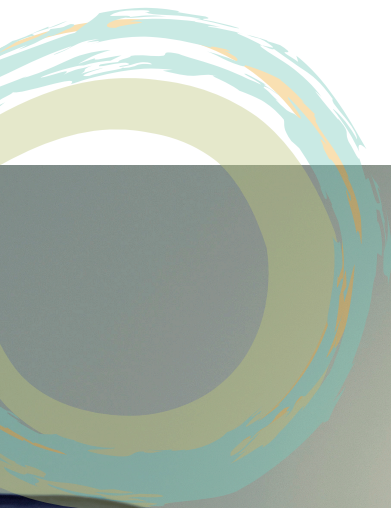




charis

A Care and Counseling Initiative



Supporting and Caring for People

Who Are Struggling With Addiction



Charis is an Urban Alliance initiative. www.urbanalliance.com

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Through Charis, Urban Alliance works with churches and parachurch organizations to help them communicate about mental health in ways that offer hope and create safe environments where people feel comfortable seeking help.

Many people who are struggling with their relational, emotional and mental health do not receive the support they need. They often do not know where to turn for help, or are embarrassed to acknowledge they are struggling. Additionally, a lack of resources in the community, poverty and stigma are barriers that keep people from receiving help.

Research shows that the church is one of the most common places people go to seek help when they are struggling emotionally. This is why it is so important for pastors and care providers to be equipped to offer care and connect people to appropriate help. Many churches offer support groups, care ministries or pastoral care. And, professional counselors who offer care from a Christian perspective provide services in the community.

Through Charis, Urban Alliance works with churches and parachurch organizations to help them communicate about mental health in ways that offer hope and create safe environments where people feel comfortable seeking help. Urban Alliance also equips care providers to respond sensitively, effectively connect people who are seeking care to appropriate support, and provide care, so they may cope well and heal.

The Charis website is a tool, managed by Urban Alliance, that can be used by individuals and organizations to help connect people in need of support to high-quality professional counselors, support groups and specialized support services offered from a Christian perspective.

These collaborative efforts have helped hundreds of people overcome barriers and more effectively cope, have ongoing support, strengthen their relationships, experience hope, joy and peace, and persevere despite life's challenges.

To learn more about Charis, visit www.urbanalliance.com/charis.

To visit the Charis website, visit www.charisnetworkct.org.



Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
The Addiction Cycle.....	3
Addiction and DSM-5.....	5
What Causes Addiction?.....	6
How to Think About Addiction from a Biblical Perspective.....	7
Idolatry as a Metaphor to Describe Addiction.....	9
Addiction and Families.....	11
Supporting a Family Member or Friend Who is Struggling With Addiction....	12
Treatment and Support for People Who Struggle With Addiction.....	14
Engaging in Community and Growing Spiritually.....	15
Helpful Resources.....	16

What is Addiction?

Addiction can be described as a condition that results when a person ingests a substance (e.g. alcohol, marijuana, or heroin) or engages in an activity (e.g. gambling, sex or eating) that is often initially enjoyable but becomes compulsive and causes harm over time. People who struggle with addiction have an intense focus on using certain substances or engaging in certain types of activities. In many cases, the substance or behavior interferes with overall functioning and a person's ability to carry out ordinary responsibilities such as work, relationships and maintaining their health. Often, people with addictions are not aware that their behaviors are out of control and causing problems for themselves and others.

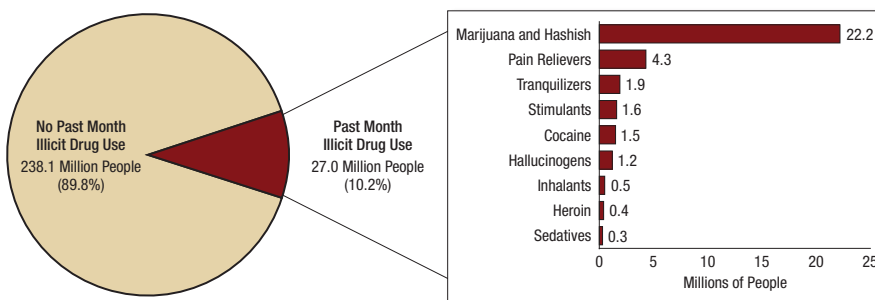
People who struggle with addiction often have distorted ways of thinking and unhealthy behavior patterns. Changes in the brain's wiring can cause intense cravings for certain substances or activities, making it hard to stop using a drug or engaging in an activity. Brain imaging studies show changes in the areas of the brain that relate to judgment, decision making, learning, memory and behavior control for people who experience addiction.

The Addiction Cycle

There are many forms of addiction and in general, they can be provided into two categories: substance-related and behavioral. Substance-related addictions include addictions to ingested substances such as alcohol, marijuana, heroin or tobacco. Behavioral additions include the compulsive engagement in activities such as viewing pornography, gambling, eating, social media, exercise or shopping.

According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, about 10% of the population age 12 and over used an illicit drug in 2014. The most common types of drugs used were marijuana and non-medical prescription pain relievers. See figure for more detailed information.

Figure 1. Numbers of Past Month Illicit Drug Users among People Aged 12 or Older: 2014



Note: Estimated numbers of people refer to people aged 12 or older in the civilian, noninstitutionalized population in the United States. The numbers do not sum to the total population of the United States because the population for NSDUH does not include people aged 11 years old or younger, people with no fixed household address (e.g., homeless or transient people not in shelters), active-duty military personnel, and residents of institutional group quarters, such as correctional facilities, nursing homes, mental institutions, and long-term hospitals.

Note: The estimated numbers of current users of different illicit drugs are not mutually exclusive because people could have used more than one type of illicit drug in the past month.

According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, people begin taking drugs for a variety of reasons, including:

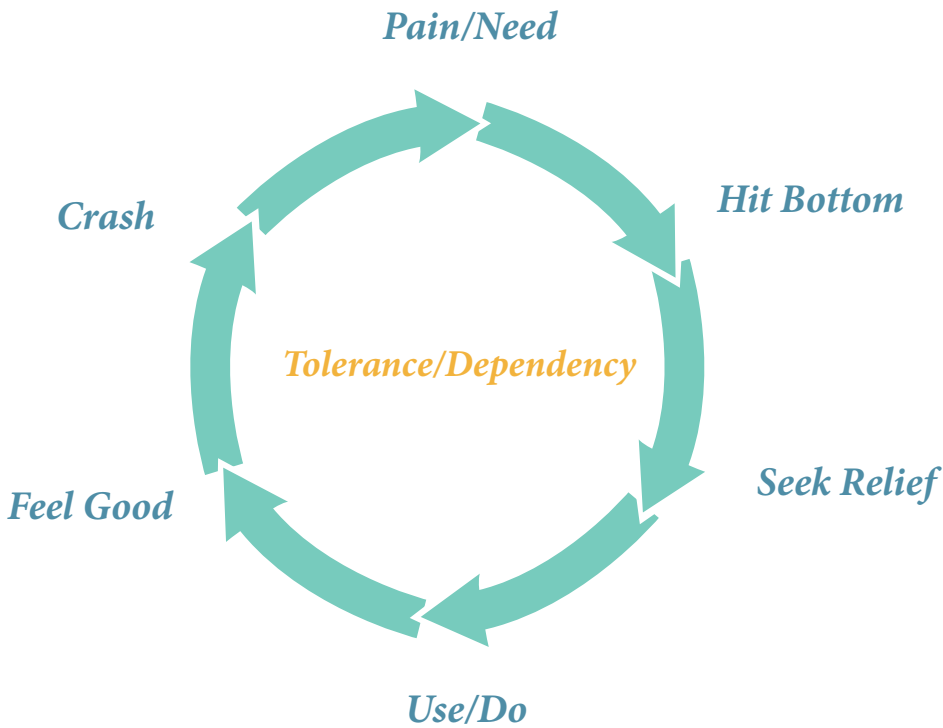
- To feel good (feel the pleasure of getting “high”)
- To feel better (relieve stress and emotional pain)
- To do better (improve performance)
- Because of curiosity and peer pressure

While these reasons were initially developed for substance-related addictions, they can also be applied to behavioral addictions.

Many people who struggle with addiction do not begin using a substance or engaging in a behavior with the intent to become addicted. Rather, over time they find themselves stuck in a cycle and feeling out of control.

People who struggle with addiction often have distorted ways of thinking and unhealthy behavior patterns. Changes in the brain's wiring can cause intense cravings for certain substances or activities, making it hard to stop using a drug or engaging in an activity.

The Addiction Cycle



Many people who struggle with addiction do not begin using a substance or engaging in a behavior with the intent to become addicted. Rather, over time they find themselves stuck in a cycle and feeling out of control.

In many cases, the cycle works like this:

1. A person has an unmet need in their life or a significant source of pain or distress that is physical, emotional, relational or spiritual.
2. The person becomes preoccupied or fantasizes about behaviors (i.e. substance use, pornography, food) that they believe will ease the pain or tension.
3. The pain, distress or need becomes overwhelming.
4. The person begins using drugs or engaging in unhealthy behavior to ease their pain and distress.
5. Initially the person feels good and experiences relief.
6. Unfortunately, the relief is short-lived and the pain, distress or need returns. Additionally, the person may feel shame, guilt and other negative emotions as a result of their choices. Sometimes, the pain they feel is even greater and they find themselves once again looking for relief.

Addiction and DSM-5

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5) is the manual used by clinicians and doctors to diagnosis mental health conditions. This manual no longer uses the terms substance abuse or substance dependence, rather it refers to substance use disorders, which are defined as mild, moderate or severe to indicate the level of severity. The level of severity is determined by the number of maladaptive behaviors related to the use of a substance. DSM-5 has established nine types of Substance-Related Disorders:

1. Alcohol
2. Caffeine (substance use disorder does not apply)
3. Cannabis
4. Hallucinogens
5. Inhalants
6. Opioids
7. Sedatives, hypnotics or anxiolytics
8. Stimulants
9. Tobacco

Gambling disorder is currently the only non-substance related condition classified as an addictive disorder in the DSM-5. Other behavioral addictions such as internet and pornography, sex, shopping, eating and exercise are currently not considered diagnosable conditions in and of themselves.

Maladaptive Behaviors Related to Addiction and Gambling

Regardless of the particular substance, the diagnosis of a substance use disorder is based upon a set of maladaptive behaviors. A minimum of 2-3 criteria is required for a mild substance use disorder diagnosis, while 4-5 is moderate and 6 or more is severe (American Psychological Association, 2013).

1. Taking the substance in larger amounts or for longer than you're meant to.
2. Wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to.
3. Spending a lot of time getting, using or recovering from use of the substance.
4. Cravings and urges to use the substance.
5. Not managing to do what you should at work, home or school because of substance use.
6. Continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships.
7. Giving up important social, occupational or recreational activities because of substance use.
8. Using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger.
9. Continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the substance.
10. Needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance).
11. Development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance.

Addiction and DSM-5

A person is experiencing gambling disorder if they exhibit four or more of the following behaviors over a 12-month period.

1. Needs to gamble with increasing amounts of money in order to achieve the desired excitement.
2. Is restless or irritable when attempting to cut down or stop gambling.
3. Has made repeated unsuccessful efforts to control, cut back or stop gambling.
4. Is often preoccupied with gambling (e.g., having persistent thoughts of reliving past gambling experiences, handicapping or planning the next venture, thinking of ways to get money with which to gamble).
5. Often gambles when feeling distressed (e.g., helpless, guilty, anxious, depressed).
6. After losing money gambling, often returns another day to get even.
7. Lies to conceal the extent of involvement with gambling.
8. Has jeopardized or lost a significant relationship, job or educational or career opportunity because of gambling.
9. Relies on others to provide money to relieve desperate financial situations caused by gambling.

If a person is exhibiting the behaviors listed above related to substance use or gambling they should be referred to a mental health professional for an assessment.

What Causes Addiction?

The bio-psycho-social-spiritual approach embraces a holistic understanding of mental, emotional and relational struggles. This approach systematically considers biological, psychological, social and spiritual factors and their complex interactions in understanding addiction or any other mental health condition. This model indicates that in most cases, a combination of issues contributes to the development of addiction, including:

Biological/Genetic: Some people's brains are wired in such a way that they are deeply attracted to the high created by certain substances or behaviors. Further, using certain substances or engaging in certain behaviors actually changes the brain's chemistry, communication patterns and structures. Additionally, having a close relative who struggles with addiction may increase the likelihood of developing an addiction.

Psychological: Sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, natural disaster, combat experiences or any other exposure to trauma can contribute to the urge to use drugs as a coping mechanism. In many cases, people use substances to self-medicate in order to dull painful emotions.

Social: A lack of healthy connection and support can contribute to struggles with addiction. Further, growing up in an environment (i.e. family, community) where substance use occurred may contribute to the development of an addiction.

What Causes Addiction?

Spiritual: It is important to understand a person's view of God and sources of meaning, hope and strength. Engaging in unhealthy behaviors can be understood as a struggle with temptation and sin. Often, it is an indication that a person is experiencing pain and brokenness and uses addictive behavior to self-medicate. Further, spiritual warfare and strongholds can fuel addictions.

Each of these factors should be considered as a person seeks treatment. It is important for a person to not only acknowledge their addiction, but also understand the reasons behind it and address each of the components listed above during the recovery process.

How to Think About Addiction from a Biblical Perspective

Addictive Behavior is a Form of Sin. While the Bible does not specifically use the word addiction, there are many passages that help us understand the concept of addiction and compulsive maladaptive behavior. The Bible clearly states that addiction and compulsive behaviors are a significant problem. These types of struggles (e.g. drunkenness, gluttony or sexual immorality) are generally referred to as sin.

- *“Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.” (Galatians 5:19-21)*
- *“And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit.” (Ephesians 5:18)*
- *“Be not among drunkards or among gluttonous eaters of meat.” (Proverbs 23:20)*

Addiction as a Struggle with Temptation. Addictive behavior involves choosing to act in a way that is unwise and harmful to oneself and others. Temptation is the inclination towards sin that comes from the desires of a person's heart (James 1:13-15). The struggle to resist the urge to use drugs or engage in unhealthy behaviors can be thought of as a struggle to resist temptation. All people struggle with sin and temptation. Even Paul describes his own struggle with sin in Romans when he says:

- *“For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?” (Romans 7:15-25)*

How to Think About Addiction from a Biblical Perspective

The Holy Spirit Helps People Resist the Temptation to Sin. Because all Christians struggle with sin, and are actively fighting a battle to resist the temptation to sin, the church is an ideal place for struggling addicts to find hope and support. We know from Scripture that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). All Christians are in desperate need of God to give them strength, grace and forgiveness when they fall short.

There is Much Debate about the Best Way to Understand Addiction. Some consider addiction to be a brain disease because the consistent use of substances can alter brain structures and functioning. While this may be important to consider when treating and providing support to an addict, and understanding their compulsion to use, at various points there is a decision to act in a certain way. Clearly, the temptation and compulsion to engage in addictive behaviors is overwhelmingly strong and in many cases people feel they cannot control the urge to use. In the passage above Paul describes struggling to resist sin, “*For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do*”. When a person struggles with addiction they often experience a form of bondage as they feel trapped in a vicious cycle of unhealthy behavior or blind to the harmful consequences of their addiction. However, we know that with proper treatment and support, and because of God’s ability to heal and deliver, recovery is possible. By God’s grace, struggling people are able to resist their temptation to use substances and engage in unhealthy behaviors.

- “*No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.*”
(1 Corinthians 10:13)

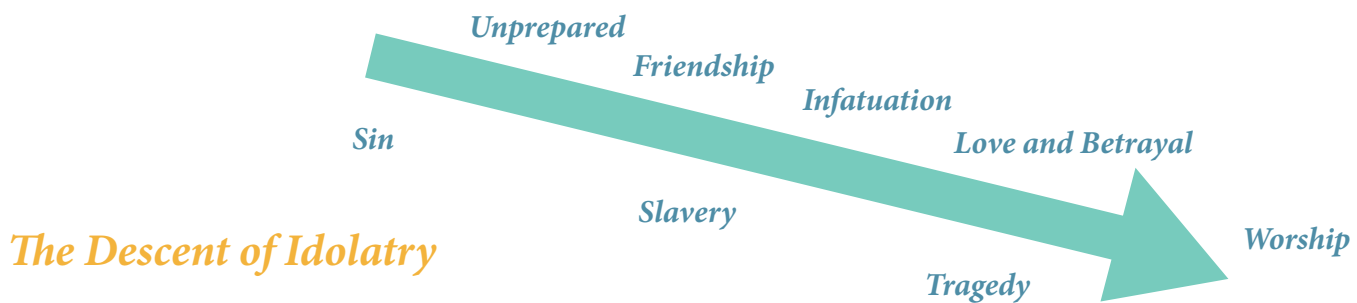
Trusting in God’s Grace. Finally, the concept of grace becomes central as we understand addiction and recovery. Each person’s recovery process is different. For some people, there are many ups and downs as they seek to remain substance free. They may relapse, struggle to restore broken relationships, make poor choices, or struggle with discouragement and despair. Regardless, God’s grace covers us when we struggle and fall short, and His power gives us hope in healing, restoration and the ability to live addiction-free.

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Idolatry as a Metaphor to Describe Addiction

An idol is anything a person loves, wants, desires, treasures or enjoys more than God. It can be approval from others, a spouse or child, money or wealth, sexual stimulation or a substance that offers a high. All people struggle with some form of idolatry and have to continually guard their hearts against placing idols before God.

Idolatry is a concept prominent in Scripture that can be used to help people understand addictive behaviors. Ed Welch uses this concept in his book, *Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave*, to describe the process a person goes through as they develop an addiction. It is the process of giving one's heart to something other than God. According to Welch, all people have fallen into sin and all experience ungodly cravings. For some people, these idols take the form of an addiction and consequently are more noticeable and have more tragic consequences. According to Welch, as a person descends into idolatry, they move through five phases:



Unprepared: Small steps of spiritual casualness or indifference and a lack of sensitivity to right and wrong may lead to idolatry. Similarly, ancient Israel begins its descent in such a way. The Lord said, “Be careful, or you will be enticed to turn away and worship other gods” (Deut. 11:16). Yet, the people received these commands casually and did not fear the Lord.

Example: Jim is a 16 year-old junior. He knows that many of his friends smoke weed and he is curious what it feels like to be high.

Friendship: There is a point where experience and truth part ways. Because things feel good, a person assumes everything is fine and under control. They start doing things because they enjoy the idol and begin thinking about it more of the time.

Example: Jim tries smoking weed for the first time with friends and justifies the behavior by telling himself “everyone’s doing it” and “nothing bad happened.”

Infatuation: The relationship between the person and the idol becomes more intimate and often has a cost. It may start affecting relationships, work or finances. Decisions are not made based on reason and bad

Idolatry as a Metaphor to Describe Addiction

consequences are not enough to change behavior. In fact, consequences are often not acknowledged as resulting from the relationship with the idol. Others are falsely blamed and in many cases the person sees him or herself as a victim.

Example: Jim starts smoking weed regularly and is frustrated because he does not have enough money to smoke as often as he wants to. When his parents ask why his grades are falling, he becomes very angry.

Love and Betrayal: The addiction is a near daily feature of the person's life. The addiction has become a solution to all negative emotions and experiences. It can calm anger, alleviate depression and fill the emptiness of loneliness, loss or failure. Sometimes a person struggling with addiction may actually create a problem to justify using the substance. The person finds themselves engaging in behaviors they could have never imagined, such as selling drugs, prostitution, stealing, lying and blaming others regularly. Despite the evidence that the chosen idol is actually harming them, negative consequences are quickly forgotten with each use of the substance.

Example: Jim starts selling drugs so he has more money. At a party with his friends, he tries heroin for the first time. His friend's older brother says it gives a better high. The stress in his life is overwhelming. His parents are getting stricter and always wanting to know where he is. He is failing most of his classes and some of his friends don't want to hang out with him anymore.

Worship: Finally, addicts become worshippers of the idol. "You used to offer the parts of your body in slavery to impurity and to ever-increasing wickedness" (Romans 6:19). At this point, the person is a slave to the idol and becomes obsessed with and fixated on it. Nothing comes before the idol and the person will make sure nothing gets in the way. The person is often blind to the harm the idol is causing them and the consequences all around them.

Example: Jim starts stealing from his parents. He sells his mother's jewelry, which was passed to her from her mother. When she confronts him, he blames his older brother and says he saw him sneaking around her room a few nights before. Jim finds himself drawn to heroin, uses regularly and will do anything to make sure nothing gets in the way. Finally, when Jim's parents confront him more directly about his addiction, Jim becomes violent and threatens to hurt his parents unless they give him the keys to the car and let him leave. They give him the keys and when he leaves, they call the police.

This framework helps us to understand addiction and other life controlling struggles as a form of idolatry. That is, when a person loves something more than God and looks to it for comfort and security, they have entered into an idolatrous relationship. Therefore, an important part of recovery is establishing a right relationship with God where He is loved and worshipped before all else.



Addiction often occurs in the context of a family. A person's addiction impacts each family member. In every family unit, each person plays a role (or multiple roles) to help the family function better and to maintain a level of stability and balance. When substance use is added to this dynamic, family roles naturally shift to adjust to the new behaviors associated with drug or alcohol use.

Including the addict, there have been six roles developed to describe how the family functions around the substance user (Weisfelder, 1981):

The Enabler: This role is often assumed by a non-addicted spouse or an older child in single-parent homes. The enabler takes care of all of the things that the addict has left undone, including taking care of finances, ensuring children get to school and making justifications for the addict in different situations. The enabler is frequently in denial about the severity of the addict's problem and will continually make excuses for him or her. Some people also call these behaviors codependent.

The Hero: This role is generally assumed by an older child in the family who overachieves and appears confident and serious. Heroes take on responsibilities in the home that seemingly exceed their developmental stage, often assuming parental roles. The hero is obsessed with perfection, which makes the role increasingly difficult to maintain as addiction progresses and responsibilities continue to mount. This child is sometimes called "parentified" child.

The Scapegoat: This is the child in the family who habitually misbehaves and displays defiant tendencies in the face of authority. These individuals often get into trouble in school and at home. As these children move toward adulthood, many get into trouble with the law as well. These behaviors are reflective of a toxic and chaotic atmosphere in the house.

Addiction and Families

The Mascot: In an uncomfortable home environment, some individuals assume the role of the mascot and use humor as a coping mechanism. The mascot is aware that his or her comedy may be bringing a momentary sense of relief to the family and will continue to maintain this role in order to achieve balance and comfort in the home.

The Lost Child: The person in this role is isolated from other members in the family and has trouble developing relationships as a result. The lost child has difficulty in social situations and often engages in fantasy play to distract themselves both emotionally and physically from the negative home environment.

The Addict: Many chronic substance users feel great shame, guilt and remorse about the pain and distress they've caused their families. However, there are also many addicts who do not want to cease their substance use, causing great anger and resentment throughout the family.

It's important to remember that a person's addiction impacts each person in their family. Healing is necessary for each family member. The time period after the addict has stopped using and is receiving support can be particularly challenging. The family may have been in survival mode for a long time, trying to support the addict, deal with crisis situations and set healthy boundaries. Once the acute stress has subsided, they may begin feeling and expressing emotions they were not previously able to. They may feel conflicting emotions as they want to support the struggling family member, but may also feel anger towards that person for the pain they caused. It is important that each person in the family receive the support and care they need during the recovery process.

Supporting a Family Member or Friend Who is Struggling With Addiction

Supporting a person who is struggling with addiction involves a balance of unconditional love and establishing healthy boundaries. Initially, the goal is to help the person acknowledge their struggle and seek appropriate support. This is especially challenging, as people who are struggling with addiction often do not think they have a problem and are prone to lie or hide any indication that they may need help. Below are some guidelines for supporting a person who is struggling with addiction:

- 1. Learn as much as you can about addiction.** It is important to be knowledgeable about addiction and available treatment options. There are many excellent printed and online resources to educate families.
- 2. Offer love and support.** Often, a person who is struggling with addiction has strong feelings of shame, guilt, depression, worthlessness and hopelessness. Their behaviors

may have driven loved ones away and created a sense of isolation. Therefore, it is important for addicts to have people in their lives who offer love and support in a way that does not enable unhealthy behaviors. This involves carefully discerning how to offer unconditional love, while establishing healthy boundaries around unhealthy and destructive behaviors.

3. **Set healthy boundaries.** An addict's behavior patterns may interfere with important relationships in their life. They may lie, steal, blame, manipulate or act in an unkind or cruel way to those who care about them the most. In most cases, addiction distorts thinking and the compulsion to use becomes the sole focus of the person's life. Therefore, it is often necessary for family members to set and enforce healthy boundaries. For example, a heroin addict may not be allowed to live in the family home unless they are substance-free. Or, if a teen has been stealing, their parents may choose to regularly lock their bedroom door and keep all valuables there.
4. **Encourage the person to get help.** The initial goal in supporting a person struggling with addiction is helping them to realize they have a problem and help them connect to appropriate treatment and support. All too often, people believe they can change their addictive behaviors on their own. They may believe they can stop using drugs or engaging in addictive behaviors through willpower or a strong personal conviction. However, it is extremely rare that a person can break free from a true addiction without support from professionals, peers, family and friends. Further, many people addicted to drugs or alcohol may need to detox as they begin to abstain from drugs or alcohol.
5. **Healthy expectations and support.** It is important for family members to understand that recovery takes time and is about more than just abstaining from drugs or certain behaviors. It is important to understand the factors that contributed to a person's addiction, such as past trauma or abuse, depression or anxiety, or peer influence. When these root causes are addressed, the person is more likely to remain substance-free. It is also important for the family to have a support system in place as they too recover and heal.
6. **Engage in Community.** It has been said that the opposite of addiction is connection. Once a person has acknowledged their struggle, it is important for them to engage in healthy relationship and community as they seek treatment and support. For some, accountability partners help them stay focused on their recovery and grow in their faith.
7. **Find hope and strength in God.** Overcoming addiction is often a long and difficult process. It is important for both the addict and their family to have a healthy way of thinking about the process, a strong support network, and hope in God's healing power and strength.

Treatment and Support for People Who Struggle With Addiction

There are a variety of treatment options for people struggling with addiction. Because many people who are struggling with substance use disorders will experience withdrawal when they stop using the substance, medical treatment is often needed initially. After, a combination of professional counseling and community programs can help support a person's recovery.

Treatment Options

Detoxification: The first step in becoming substance-free is the medical treatment of an alcoholic or drug addict who needs to abstain from alcohol or drugs until their bloodstream is free of toxins. Detox programs can prevent unpleasant or fatal consequences resulting from sudden cessation of use and can aid the person in abstaining from substances.

Residential programs: Residential programs provide 24-hour care in a setting where the focus is helping individuals achieve and maintain recovery from addiction. These programs offer various types of support, including individual and family counseling, case management, life skills classes and clinical groups.

Partial hospitalization and day treatment programs: A partial hospitalization or day treatment program is a type of outpatient treatment program that caters to people who require a higher level of care than standard outpatient care is able to provide. People in a PHP receive comprehensive treatment services and medical monitoring during the day, but they don't stay overnight at the facility. These programs offer many of the same services residential rehab programs offer.

Outpatient counseling: Professional counselors meet with an person at an outpatient facility to offer individual, family or group counseling services. Usually a session lasts 45-60 minutes. The frequency of sessions is determined based on need.

Medication management: A psychiatrist who prescribes psychotropic medication meets with a person to assist in their recovery. If the person has a dual diagnosis, medication may be prescribed to address both the addiction and their mental health condition.

Community-Based Groups

Celebrate Recovery: Celebrate Recovery is a Christ-centered program with foundations firmly established in Biblical truth that helps people overcome hurts, hang-ups and habits. The twelve steps with accompanying Scriptures and the eight principles based on the Beatitudes offer participants a clear path of salvation and discipleship, bringing hope, freedom, sobriety, healing and the opportunity to give back "one day at a time" through the one and only true Higher Power, Jesus Christ. Meetings usually occur weekly at churches and organizations in the community. **Website:** www.celebraterecovery.com

Treatment and Support for People Who Struggle With Addiction

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA): AA utilizes the support group model and is centered on twelve steps, which are often simply referred to as “The Twelve Step Program”. These steps guide the alcoholic into growing spiritually, becoming aware of the hurt and pain they have caused to themselves as well as to others, and making amends for that pain. AA meetings occur at community locations.

Website: www.aa.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA): NA was formed for those who used recreational or prescription drugs. NA also utilizes the support group model of therapy because it has shown to be very effective in treating addictions of all kinds. They make use of “The Twelve Step Program”, just as AA does. The focus is also on coming to terms with the pain addicts have caused themselves as well as others, healing broken relationships and working to help others overcome their addictions. NA meetings occur at community locations. **Website:** www.na.org

Engaging in Community and Growing Spiritually

A critical part of a person’s recovery is engaging in healthy relationship and finding community. This is an important component of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. The church is uniquely positioned to offer this type of relationship and community to people who are recovering from addiction. Unlike AA and NA, the church recognizes and relies on God’s power as the source of healing. It is in the context of loving relationship and a supportive community that a person can most effectively heal, grow and address struggles with unhealthy behaviors.

The process of doing battle with sin and internal temptation is called progressive sanctification. Progressive sanctification is a lifelong process through which the Holy Spirit transforms a person and makes them more like Christ. This is the process a person goes through as they become aware of an area of sin or an idol in their life and wage a battle against it. This battle is similar to the way the Israelites were delivered from Egypt and taken to the Promised Land. God promised to rescue them and bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey (Exodus 3:8). The land was theirs, but they had to fight for it.

Ed Welch shares about the process of progressive sanctification in his article, “Addictions: New Ways of Seeing, New Ways of Walking Free.” He outlines the steps of the process, which are illustrated in Figure 3.

Engaging in Community and Growing Spiritually

This model of progressive sanctification can be directly applied to addiction or any other sin struggle. It outlines helpful steps in the process of sanctification and strategies believers can use as they battle sin and temptation. This is also a place where the Church can be tremendously helpful in supporting a person who is struggling. Many of these steps would not be possible outside of a community of believers committed to supporting a person's recovery.

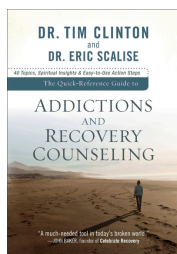
Figure 3.
**The Process
of Change**

Progressive Sanctification

- Delight in the fear of the Lord.
- Engage in the battle at the level of the imagination.
- Commit yourself to thinking God's thoughts about addictions and wise living.
- Speak honestly. Uncover the more subtle lies.
- Surround yourself with wise counselors. Be part of a church.
- Turn to Christ and commit yourself to keep turning to Christ.
- Engage the battle. Separate from the object of your affections.

Helpful Resources

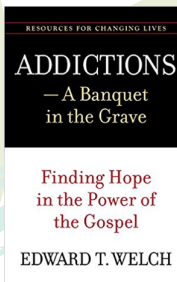
The following resources are helpful for counselors, pastors and other leaders as they support people who are struggling with addiction.



Dr. Tim Clinton & Dr. Reic Scalise

The Quick-Reference Guide to Addictions and Recovery Counseling : 40 Topics, Spiritual Insights, and Easy-to-Use Action Steps

The newest addition to the popular Quick-Reference Guide collection, *The Quick-Reference Guide to Addictions and Recovery Counseling* focuses on the widespread problem of addictions of all kinds. It is an A-Z guide for assisting pastors, professional counselors, and everyday believers to easily access a full array of information to aid them in formal and informal counseling situations. Each of the forty topics covered follows a helpful eight-part outline and identifies (1) typical symptoms and patterns, (2) definitions and key thoughts, (3) questions to ask, (4) directions for the conversation, (5) action steps, (6) biblical insights, (7) prayer starters, and (8) recommended resources.

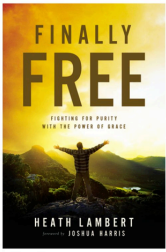


Edward Welch

Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave: Finding Hope in the Power of the Gospel

A worship disorder: this is how Edward T. Welch views addictions. "Will we worship our own desires or will we worship the true God?" With this lens the author discovers far more in Scripture on addictions than passages on drunkenness. There we learn the addict's true condition: like guests at a banquet thrown by "the woman Folly," he is already in the grave (Proverbs 9:13-18). Can we not escape our addictions? If we're willing to follow Jesus, the author says that we have "immense hope: hope in God's forgiving grace, hope in God's love that is faithful even when we are not, and hope that God can give power so that we are no longer mastered by the addiction." Each chapter concludes with "Practical Theology," "As Your Face Your Own Addictions," and "As You Help Someone Else."

Helpful Resources

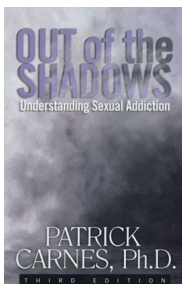


Heath Lambert

Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace

If you have struggled personally against the powerful draw of pornography, or if you have ever tried to help someone fighting this battle, you know how hard it is to break free. But real freedom isn't found by trying harder to change. Nor is it found in a particular method or program. Only Jesus Christ has the power to free people from the enslaving power of pornography.

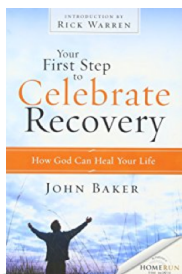
In *Finally Free*, Dr. Heath Lambert, a leader in the biblical counseling movement, lays out eight gospel-centered strategies for overcoming the deceitful lure of pornography. Each chapter clearly demonstrates how the gospel applies to this particular battle and how Jesus can move readers from a life of struggle to a life of purity.



Patrick Carnes Ph.D.

Out of the Shadows: Understanding Sexual Addiction

Sex is at the core of our identities. And when it becomes a compulsion, it can unravel our lives. *Out of the Shadows* is the premier work on this disorder, written by a pioneer in its treatment. Revised and updated to include the latest research--and to address the exploding phenomenon of cybersex addiction--this third edition identifies the danger signs, explains the dynamics, and describes the consequences of sexual addiction and dependency. With practical wisdom and spiritual clarity, it points the way out of the shadows of sexual compulsion and back into the light and fullness of life.



John Baker

Your First Step to Celebrate Recovery: How God Can Heal Your Life

You've undoubtedly heard the expression "time heals all wounds." Unfortunately, it isn't true. As many pastors and counselors know, people still carry hurts from thirty or forty years ago. The truth is, time often makes things worse. Wounds that are left untended fester and spread infection throughout your entire body. Time only extends the pain if the problem isn't dealt with.

Your First Step to Celebrate Recovery introduces you to a biblical and balanced program that has helped nearly a million people overcome their hurts, hang-ups, and habits. Based on the actual words of Jesus found in the Sermon on the Mount rather than psychological theory, the Celebrate Recovery program has helped people for over 20 years to grow toward full Christ-like maturity.

Citations:

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Wegscheider, S. (1981). *Another Chance: Hope and Health for the Alcoholic Family*. Palo Alto, CA: Science and Behavior Books. pp. 85-88.

Welch, Edward. (2001). *Addiction at the Grave: Finding Hope in the Power of the Gospel*. P & R Publishing Company, Phillipsburg, New Jersey.

Welch, E. (2001). Addictions: New ways of seeing, new ways of walking free. *The Journal of Biblical Counseling*, 19(3), 19-30.

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