

When Is It Addiction?

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Let's Discuss...

- What is addiction?
 - What can people be addicted to?
- When does something, even a good thing, become “too much?”
 - Have we become too free with the word addicted?

Clinically Speaking

- Pathological pattern of behaviors related to use
 - Impaired Control
 - Increased time/amount, inability to lower/stop use despite desire, increased time obtaining/using/recovering, craving
 - Social Impairment
 - Failure to fulfill major obligations, interpersonal problems, withdrawal
 - Risky Use
 - Physically hazardous, continued use despite physical or psychological problems
 - Pharmacological
 - Tolerance, withdrawal

In Other Words...

- The Three C's of Addiction
 - *Compulsion*
 - Loss of *Control*
 - Continued Use Despite Negative *Consequences*

Compulsion

- Overwhelming preoccupation with something
- Once the thought of the desired substance/object/activity enters someone's mind, they cannot easily get it out of their heads
- The way to relieve the thought is to act on it
- Example:
 - A person who has compulsions with exercise may decline social invitations regularly because they *must* workout for 2 hours everyday

Loss of Control

- Occurs when acting upon the compulsion becomes extreme
- Example:
 - Someone addicted to food may follow a strict diet for a few days and then go on a food binge (typically hidden from other people)

Continued Use Despite Negative Consequences

- Compulsion and loss of control cause problems for the individual, work, family, friends, etc.
- Example:
 - A person with alcoholism may continue to drive intoxicated despite numerous DUIs



What Can I do?

- Remembering the 3 C's of Addiction is one way to help answer the question "Am I or is someone I love addicted?"
- REACH OUT
 - Therapists can assess whether or not an addiction exists and help develop strategies for change
 - If you think you could benefit from talking to a therapist, contact our office to schedule an appointment
 - GA/NA/AA/Al-Anon/Alateen and other resources

When You Love Someone with Addiction

- The “Other” Three C’s (Al-Anon)
 - I Didn’t Cause It
 - I Can’t Control It
 - I Can’t Cure It

Questions?
Comments?