



## *Recognizing Addictions*



The stereotypes of addicts are typically that of homeless people lurking in back alleys and hiding in parking ramps or under bridges. In general, this is mostly a myth as only a small percentage of addicts fit this profile. The reality is that the addict is more likely to be your colleague in the next cubicle or the soccer Mom dropping her kids off at practice. The word addict is Latin and means “to sentence”, “to condemn”, or “to enslave”. That is very true of addicts as their addiction causes deep suffering for them, as well as for their friends and family.

While we usually think about addiction in terms of alcohol or drugs like methamphetamines, narcotics, or painkillers, the reality is that there are numerous forms of addictions. People can be addicted to eating, gambling, hoarding, shopping, sex, stealing, or exercise. The true way to look at addiction is to consider it as this: any unhealthy dependence or compulsion that interferes with ordinary life.

If you are concerned whether you or a loved one might have an unhealthy dependence on a substance or behavior, here are a few questions to ask. Does the substance or behavior ever:

- Interfere with or disrupt your ordinary life including work, family, or relationships?
- Have a negative effect on your physical, mental, or emotional health?
- Pose a safety, health, or financial risk?
- Cause anxiety, discomfort, irritability, or illness when stopped?
- Result in arguments?
- Pose difficulties when you stop or limit the use or activity?
- Continue even in the face of negative consequences?

If you’ve answered yes to any of these questions, you may be struggling with an addiction. While it is difficult living with an addiction, they are treatable and can be dealt with by your doctor or a mental health professional. The first step is to recognize you have an issue and to reach out for help. Dealing with an addiction can make you happier and healthier.

### ***For Further Information:***

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