

Addictions

What are Addictions?

Addictions are bad habits that we find hard to give up. Addictions can be for food, alcohol, coffee, soft drinks, cigarettes or other drugs, gambling – in fact, for almost anything. Addictions are used to make us feel 'better' in the short term. But invariably, in the longer term, they cause us harm. The harm usually extends beyond the sufferer to family members and even to strangers.

Some addictions are harmful because we have too much, such as food, coffee or alcohol. In small or average amounts, they are not normally damaging. But taken to excess, they are. Other substances, such as cigarettes and non-prescribed drugs are harmful in themselves, and should never be taken.

Why are Addictions Harmful?

Addictions are harmful because of the physical, emotional, and mental dependence and damage they cause. They cause financial loss, further depriving the sufferer. Relationships and families suffer. The addicted person may experience guilt and shame. They may lose self-confidence, making it difficult for them to believe they can give up the addiction. This compounds things and makes them worse.

If the addiction involves drugs or alcohol, brain changes can cause muddled thinking and poor emotional control. Anger and violence towards others often results. Mind altering drugs can cause anxiety and depression in the sufferer, negatively affecting other people as well as themselves.

Addictions, especially smoking, contribute to physical illness, such as cancer and emphysema. Families are deprived of the company and support that they would have had if the person had not been sick. Treating these illnesses may cost money, so there is less money for other things.

Smoking doesn't just harm the smoker. Second-hand smoke harms. Others in the family or anyone who breathes the air near the smoker can develop health problems including cancer or emphysema.

Quitting Addictions

Persons with addictions can easily lose hope. But it is never too late (or too early) to end an addiction. A qualified therapist can help. It is important to *want* the help and to *want* to quit.

An understanding ear and good support can turn your life around. Therapy to overcome an addiction is a joint enterprise between you and your therapist. Together, you work on the problems that caused the addiction and those that the addiction causes. It is possible to be free, so don't be disheartened, no matter how many times you may have tried in the past.

Places where you can get help with addiction include the following web sites:

<https://www.anglicare-tas.org.au/page/ice-help>

<https://www.thehobartclinic.com.au/>

www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/mentalhealth/alcohol_and_drug

www.salvationarmy.org.au

<https://www.adin.com.au/search-results?searchword=Rehab>

<http://www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/key-resources/organisations?oid=401>

We can also help. Contact us on any of the methods below to find out how.

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