

Behavioral Addictions

Behavioral addictions are behaviors a person engages in compulsively, despite awareness of actual or potential harm. Despite a growing body of research, most are not acknowledged in DSM-5-TR.

Examples of behavioral addictions include:



Addictive Behaviors Survey

The SPQ (The Shorter PROMIS Questionnaire) is a free 160-question online survey that can be used to measure an individual's level of addictive tendency in each of sixteen different areas.

Results are provided at the end of the survey and indicate the level of addiction severity in each area.

Take the survey: www.s-p-q.com

About Urban Alliance

Urban Alliance is a Christian collective impact organization located in East Hartford, CT. Our goal is to create opportunities for people to achieve lasting change in their lives through the collaborative work of churches and organizations in our local community.

Your support helps mental health resources, like this brochure, get into the hands of the people who need them most.



Addiction and Recovery



If you or a family member is struggling with addiction, you are not alone. There is hope.

Addiction is a condition that results when a person ingests a substance (e.g. alcohol, marijuana, or heroin) or engages in a behavior (e.g. gambling, sex or eating) that is often initially enjoyable but becomes compulsive and causes harm over time. Addiction can take many different forms including, but not limited to: drug and alcohol use, exercise, food, shopping, pornography, sex, gambling, working, caregiving, video gaming and social media consumption.

Substance Use Disorder (SUD)

According to the DSM-5-TR, a manual used to diagnose mental health conditions, substance use disorder (SUD) spans a wide variety of problems arising from substance use, and covers 11 different criteria:

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

In 2020, 1 in 7 people aged 12 or older had a SUD in the past year.



Supporting a Loved One

Addiction can take many forms including substances, gambling, sex, eating, or the Internet. It can be challenging to support a loved one struggling with addiction. You will inevitably be concerned about your loved one and it can be difficult to know what to do and not do. Here are a few suggestions as you navigate.

- 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 on-line 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 them to have people in their lives who offer love and support in a way that does not enable unhealthy behaviors.
- 3. Set and maintain 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 many cases, addiction distorts thinking and the compulsion to use becomes the sole focus of the person's life. Therefore, it is often necessary for a family to set and enforce healthy boundaries. This involves not giving into manipulation, not enabling unhealthy behavior, and always keeping everyone's safety as the highest priority.
- 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. It is extremely rare that a person can break free from an addiction without support from professionals, peers, family and friends. Let the loved one know about their treatment options and the support you are willing to offer when they seek treatment.

- 5. Understand that recovery is a process.** The journey through recovery is often difficult. Shame, denial and stigma may keep a loved one from seeking treatment. There is the possibility of relapse. Some feel like they are on a roller coaster as they experience the ups and downs of the journey. It is important to ask God for patience and perseverance.
- 6. Find support and set healthy expectations.** It is important for family members to understand that recovery takes time and is about more than just abstaining from drugs or certain behaviors. Underlying factors, such as past trauma, often contribute to a person's addiction. 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.
- 7. Engage in community.** Once a person has acknowledged their struggle, it is important for them to engage in healthy relationships and community as they seek treatment and support. For some, accountability partners help them stay focused on their recovery and grow in their faith.
- 8. Look to God for strength.** 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, people praying for them, and hope in God's healing power and strength.

Helpful Scripture

"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)

"But he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

"Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom." (2 Corinthians 3:17)

"It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." (Galatians 5:1)

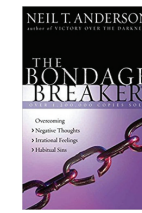
"The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners." (Isaiah 61:1)

Helpful Resources

Below are books written from a Christian perspective about supporting loved ones struggling with addiction.



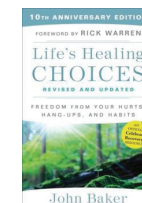
Edward Welch
Addictions: A Banquet in the Grave: Finding Hope in the Power of the Gospel



Neil Anderson
The Bondage Breaker



Stephen Arterburn & David Stoop
The Twelve Gifts of Life Recovery



John Baker
Life's Healing Choices



Heath Lambert
Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace



celebraterecovery.com

Building a Network of Support

It is important for people struggling with addiction, as well as their loved ones, to receive ongoing support. In some cases, treatment starts with detox and/or residential support.

Find a Detox or Residential Program

- **Dial 2-1-1 or visit www.211ct.org** for CT's largest listing of community programs that help people.
- **DMHAS** has established a 24/7 Access Line to facilitate access to substance abuse treatment. Individuals from anywhere in Connecticut may call to help with linkage to residential detox. **Dial 800.563.4086**
- **The Behavioral Health Recovery Program (BHRP)** provides individuals with Husky D clinical and basic recovery support services. **Dial 800-658-4472** (basic needs) or **800.606.3677** (clinical)

Find a Counselor

- **Charisnetworkct.org** offers a listing of CT professional Christian counselors.
- **Psychologytoday.com** offers a general listing of professional counselors.
- **Urbanalliance.com/help** offers a listing of CT behavioral health providers by county.

Find a Support Group

- **Celebrate Recovery** is a Christ-centered, 12-step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, pain or addiction of any kind. Visit celebraterecovery.com to find a group.
- **Alcoholics/Narcotics Anonymous** helps alcoholics to achieve sobriety. Visit aa.org or ctna.org to find a group.
- **Al-Anon** offers support for people who are impacted by someone with a drinking problem. Visit al-anon.org to find a group.

Immediate Support

- **Mobile crisis teams** visit people in their homes or in the community for crisis situations. **Dial 211** and ask for Emergency Mobile Psychiatric Services.
- **National Suicide Hotline: Dial 988** for support
- If you or a loved one are not safe, **call 911 immediately** or visit the nearest emergency room.