

THE CRY FOR HELP ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR

2Sa. 22⁷ In my distress I called to the Lord; I called out to my God. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came to his ears. NIV

America is exploding and being exploited with addictive behavior.

I. ADDICTION AMERICA'S PROBLEM

A. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL

These imbalances will only be exaggerated when the dependant substances are removed from the body. This is why eighty percent of the time, a person will return to using drugs and alcohol in response to cravings, depression, fatigue and anxiety.

- One of every eight Americans has a significant problem with alcohol or drugs.
- It is generally accepted that chemical dependency, along with associated mental health disorders, has become one of the most severe health and social problems facing the United States.

Source: SAMHSA (U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

B. PORNOGRAPHY

1. Youth and children

* More than 70% of men from 18 to 34 visit a pornographic site in a typical month (comScore Media Metrix).

* More than 20,000 images of child pornography posted online every week (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, 10/8/03).

* 100,000 websites offer illegal child pornography (U.S. Customs Service estimate).

9 out of 10 children aged between the ages of 8 and 16 have viewed pornography on the Internet, in most cases unintentionally (London School of Economics January 2002).

Average age of first Internet exposure to pornography: 11 years old (internet-filter-review.com).

Largest consumer of Internet pornography: 12 - 17 year-old age group (various sources, as of 2007).

2. Christians

I was in a church recently conducting a service and the pastor asked me into his office for counsel. He was going to inform his church that one of the most respected men in the church had been arrested for child porn.

* A 1996 Promise Keepers survey at one of their stadium events revealed that over 50% of the men in attendance were involved with pornography within one week of attending the event.

* 37% of Pastors say it is a current struggle (Christianity Today, Leadership Survey, 12/2001).
Over half of evangelical pastors admit to viewing pornography last year.

* 29% of born again adults in the U.S. feel it is morally acceptable to view movies with explicit sexual behavior (The Barna Group).

* 57% of pastors say that addiction to pornography is the most sexually damaging issue to their congregation (Christians and Sex Leadership Journal Survey, March 2005).

3. Women with Pornography Addiction

* 28% those admitting to sexual addiction are women (internet-filter-review.com).

* 34% of female readers of Today's Christian Woman's online newsletter admitted to intentionally accessing Internet porn in a recent poll and 1 out of every 6 women, including Christians, struggles with an addiction to pornography (Today's Christian Woman, Fall 2003).

4. Pornography's Effect on Families and Marriages

* 47% percent of families said pornography is a problem in their home (Focus on the Family Poll, October 1, 2003).

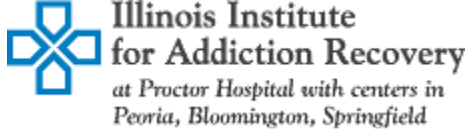
* The Internet was a significant factor in 2 out of 3 divorces (American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers in 2003 - divorcewizards.com).

C. GAMBLING

Recently one of my relatives confided in me that they had a daughter that was about to lose everything she had with a gambling addiction.

Gambling leaves in its wake a trail of depression, suicide, divorce, bankruptcy and poverty.

Youth gambling addiction is growing.



* A survey of adolescents found that more than 80 percent of those between 12 and 17 say they have gambled in the last 12 months. More than 35 percent say they gamble at least once a week. Clearly, gambling addiction is not just an adult problem.

- More than 80 percent of U.S. adults have reportedly gambled at least once in the past year and have done so responsibly. Two million individuals meet the criteria of a pathological gambler.
- A major depressive disorder is likely to occur in 76 percent of pathological gamblers

II. FOUR TYPES OF ADDICTION

A true addiction is an uncontrollable compulsion which relentlessly *increases* over time. Four types of addiction are:

- **substances** which reliably alter brain chemistry, including sugar, fat, and carbohydrates ("comfort foods"). Some substance addictions have genetic predispositions and/or create biological cravings that amplify psychological needs

- **relationships - codependence**
- **excitement** (e.g. rage, risk, sexual arousal and relief), and...
- **activities** like gambling, shopping, overwork, investing, cleaning, exercising, pornography, Web-surfing, etc...

III. THE ROOTS OF ADDICTION

A. Generational sin

B. Genetics

C. Emotional confusion

1. Depression

2. Instant gratification-thrill

3. Anger

4. Confusion about their own identity.

5. A spirit of bondage

Pro. 5 ²² The evil deeds of a wicked man ensnare him; the cords of his sin hold him fast. ²³ He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly. **NIV**

2Pe. 2 ¹⁹ They promise them freedom, while they themselves are slaves of depravity—for a man is a slave to whatever has mastered him.

IV. THE ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOR A CRY FOR HELP

Jim Bakker of PTL fame and later federal prisoner offered this story to a church. He told of a man who has lost his wife and to help his grief in bought some exotic fish and a tank filled with elaborate gadgets to feed, keep the tank clean, and care for the fish while he would be away. While he was out of town several days he returned to discover that he had not set the thermostat on the aquarium. The water had over heated and killed the fish.

In his grief over the fish the man imagined what the fish must have thought and felt as the temperature rose and the water became hotter and hotter.

Did they wonder where I was and why didn't I save them?

Did they scream in silence?

Did they beg for someone to turn down the temperature?

They wanted to be released and no one came!

We are being boiled alive by our own fears, insecurities, hidden sins, and etc. The temperature is rising in our aquarium!

2Sa. 22 ⁷ In my distress I called to the Lord; I called out to my God. From his temple he heard my voice; my cry came to his ears.

¹⁰ He parted the heavens and came down; dark clouds were under his feet. ¹¹ He mounted the cherubim and flew; he soared on the wings of the wind. ¹² He made darkness his canopy around him—the dark rain clouds of the sky.

¹³ Out of the brightness of his presence bolts of lightning blazed forth.

¹⁴ The Lord thundered from heaven;
the voice of the Most High resounded.

¹⁵ He shot arrows and scattered the enemies,
bolts of lightning and routed them.

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