

CAUSES FOR BEING CHEMICALLY DEPENDENT

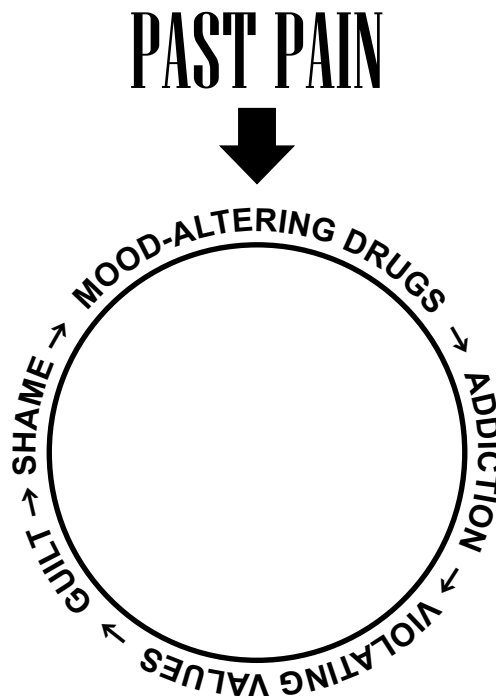
Proverbs 23:31-32

A. HOW DOES A CHEMICAL DEPENDENCY DEVELOP?

People do not start their lives being dependent on substances, but they **become** dependent through repetition, by repeatedly using something to satisfy some need or longing. Once drug use is established, a cycle develops that is common among those who abuse drugs. It is a vicious cycle that entraps and enslaves . . . but it is a cycle that can be broken!

Pain from the past . . . _____ *Proverbs 14:13*

- Mood-altering drugs *Proverbs 14:12*
- Addiction *Romans 6:20-21*
- Violating values *Proverbs 12:19*
- Guilt *Psalms 38:4*
- Shame *Psalms 44:15*



Question: “Is there any objective data apart from the Bible or cultural morality that supports a case against drinking alcohol?”

Answer: Yes, while numbers can change from year to year, the following statistics from 1993 taken within the United States prove to be quite sobering.

- _____ of American families have problems because of alcohol.
- _____ of marriage failures are alcohol related.
- _____ of people receiving hospital treatment do so as a result of alcohol.
- _____ of all auto fatalities are alcohol related (US Department of Transportation USDOT).
- _____ of all murders and major assaults involve alcohol.

If you are trying to quit drinking, consider reading the following passage every day to strengthen your stand and to reinforce your resolve.

Proverbs 20:1

Question: “What could possibly discourage someone from smoking cigarettes or using other tobacco products?”

Answer: Tobacco smoke contains more than _____ known poisons. Those who smoke two packs a day shorten their life expectancy by _____ years.

Tobacco . . .

- is the most common cause of _____ cancer
- causes emphysema, making breathing very taxing, which in turn causes death
- is a major cause of hardening of the arteries, which in turn causes _____ and most heart attacks
- is a major contributor in _____ and _____ cancers, which can disfigure a person for life
- produces chemicals that erode the lining of the _____, which in turn causes gastric ulcers
- increases the risk of _____ cancer
- produces carbon monoxide and _____ the growth of a fetus in a mother who smokes, which also increases the risk of premature birth and infant death
- is the leading cause of _____ in men

1 Corinthians 10:23

B. WHAT ARE THE MOST INFLUENTIAL FACTORS?

No two people have exactly the same story about what contributed to their developing a drug dependency. But no matter how many factors are involved in becoming chemically dependent, they all fit into one of two categories: external or internal influences.

External Influences . . . Family and Social

- **Family Environment**

Were you raised in a family that _____ social drinking?

- **Dysfunctional family**

Have you used drugs to _____ emotional pain?

- **Physical problems**

Are you dependent on medication for backaches, headaches, sleeplessness, dieting?

- **Social acceptance**

Have you been served alcohol at most social functions?

- **Peer pressure**

Are you seeking _____ acceptance by those who use drugs?

- **Cultural endorsement**

Have you been continuously _____ to alcohol through TV, movies, advertisements and magazines?

Romans 12:2

QUESTION: *“Without offending them, how can I say no to my friends who drink heavily and offer me drinks?”*

ANSWER: A simple “No thank you,” or “Thank you, I’m not interested,” should suffice. Most people do not like drinking or doing drugs alone, but most will also respect—if not envy—someone who is strong enough to not follow the crowd. If they are offended, that is a reflection on their own insecurity, not on your convictions.

Habakkuk 2:15

Internal Influences . . . Genetic and Psychological

- **Inherited inclination from family**

Were you born to an alcoholic parent, or do you have close relatives who are alcoholics? (The risk for alcohol dependence is three to four times higher for those who have close relatives with a dependence on alcohol.)

- **Inherited vulnerability from an ethnic group**

- **Psychological makeup**

Are you prone to seek drugs as a relief from anxiety or stress?

- **Habits and Compulsions**

Do you have habits that are resistant to change? (Repetitive actions alter the brain itself where connections between neurons are slowly modified, thus making it more difficult to make different choices.)

2 Peter 2:19

QUESTION: *“Is alcoholism an inherited disease over which I have no control?”*

1 Peter 1:13

C. WHAT EXCUSES DO PEOPLE GIVE?

No one has to be taught the art of _____ behavior, but all of us manage to somehow learn it. People who are chemically dependent become proficient at rattling off reason after reason for using their drug of choice, but ultimately, there is no valid justification, only _____. In the final analysis, they are persuaded that they genuinely need it, or they feel entitled just because they want it.

“I need it . . .

- . . . to pick me up.”
- . . . to _____ me down.”
- . . . to relieve my pain.”
- . . . to be more sociable.”
- . . . to _____ my failures.”
- . . . to satisfy my cravings.”

“I want it . . .

- . . . to relax.”
- . . . to feel good.”
- . . . to have more fun.”
- . . . to relieve my stress.”
- . . . to be more accepted.”
- . . . to _____ my situation.”

Proverbs 16:2

Romans 6:12

D. WHAT IS THE ROOT CAUSE?

Initially people take drugs for two reasons: either to _____ a legitimate medical problem or to _____ a pleasurable sensation. God designed you with legitimate needs—physical, emotional and spiritual—and a part of His design is for you to come to _____ and to be dependent on Him to be your true Need-Meeter.

Philippians 4:19

Isaiah 58:11

Romans 14:21

NEXT WEEK: Causes for Being Chemically Dependent - Continued