

STOP ADDICTIVE HABITS



Table of Contents

Foreword

Chapter 1:

Addiction Basics

Chapter 2:

Acknowledge the Addiction

Chapter 3:

Be Rational and Don't Deny

Chapter 4:

Get Coping Skills

Chapter 5:

What Are Your Triggers

Chapter 6:

Lifestyle Changes

Chapter 7:

Be Accountable

Chapter 8:

Have Support In Place

Chapter 9:

Reward Accomplishments

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Foreword

Imagine that you are taking a puff of a cigarette, a slug of whiskey, a snort of cocaine, a shot of heroin, a toke of marijuana. Put aside first whether the drugs are legal or not. For now, just concentrate on the chemistry. The moment you take that puff, that slug, that snort, that shot, that toke, trillions of potent molecules rush through your bloodstream before finally reaching your brain. Once they settle there, these molecules will set off a cascade of electrical and chemical events, a type of neurological chain reaction that will ricochet around your skull and rearrange your mind's interior reality. And before you know it, you are addicted.

Everyone in this world has his or her own addictions. Too much of something is bad enough and when your addictions go overboard, you should know that it is time for you to stop them before they gain full control of your system, before you reach that point of no return.

In this book, expect to learn the most effective and useful tools that can help you break free from your bad addictive habits so that you will be able to live your life to the fullest.

Chapter 1

Addiction Basics

Synopsis

Addictions are things that you need to deal with right away or else you will end up being eaten by your bad habits, and when you want to get out of their strong hold, you can no longer do anything because it is already too late.

For you to effectively stop your addictions, the most important thing that you have to do before anything else is to learn what addiction really is. By doing this, it will be easier for you to determine if what you are experiencing right now is truly an addiction or just a simple inclination to do things.

A Short Introduction to Addiction

By definition, addiction is a kind of condition that takes place when a person ingests a certain substance (e.g. cocaine, alcohol, nicotine) or engages in a particular activity (e.g. shopping, gambling, sex) that can give pleasure but the continued use or act of which can become compulsive and interfere with one's ordinary responsibilities in life, such as health, work or relationships. Users are usually not aware that their behavior is out of control and is starting to cause problems, not only for themselves but also for the people around them.

There are different types of addictions; one of them is described as physical addiction. It refers to the biological state wherein the body adapts to the presence of a drug to point that the drug no longer gives the same effect, a situation referred to as tolerance. Due to tolerance, biological reaction of withdrawal can take place when the drug has been discontinued.

Another form of physical condition is where the brain overreacts to drugs or cues related to drugs. For example, an alcoholic that walks into a bar will feel a strong pull to get a drink due to such cues.

But in most cases, the addictive behavior does not have any relation to exposure to cues or physical tolerance. There are some people who feel the compulsion to shop, gamble or use drugs as their reaction to their emotional stress, whether they have a physical condition or not. Because these kinds of psychologically based addictions are not based on brain or drug effects, people often switch their addictive actions from a certain drug to an entirely different one, or even to a non-drug behavior. Here, the

addiction's focus does not matter; it is the need to do something under some form of stress. To treat this kind of condition, it is important to understand how it works psychologically.

When referring to any form of addiction, it is essential to understand that its cause might not necessarily be for the sake of searching for pleasure and that being addicted to something has nothing to do with a person's strength of character or morality.

Chapter 2

Acknowledge the Addiction

Synopsis

To finish something, you need to start with it first. The same principle applies to stopping your addictions. You can never expect to go to sleep at night and wake up the next morning with your system completely washed of your addictions when you did not do anything about it.

The first and undoubtedly most important step for curbing your addictions is to acknowledge their existence. When you accept the fact that you have an addiction, it will be much easier for you to continue on with your journey to finally setting yourself free.

Acknowledging Your Addictions – Your Initial Step to Recovery

As the old saying goes, even the longest journey starts with only a single step. The road to stopping your addictions also starts with one important step. But in the case of addiction, this is not just any step because the truth is; it is the hardest step that you might ever have to take in your life. It is a step that everyone with an addiction should take if they are truly determined to overcome their bad habits.

When you acknowledge your addiction, it means that you accept that it has become a part of your life, a part of who you are. When you have acknowledged it and you were able to face up to this difficult fact, then it is the time that you can finally start taking control, not only of your addiction but in your life as a whole. It is pretty much setting the ground rules for the upcoming battles. It is that line in the sand that marks out that start of a brand new life for you and your whole family.

Acknowledging your addiction is all about genuinely admitting to yourself, in the deepest parts of your heart, that you actually have an addiction, not just a simple problem, a serious problem that you can control if you put your mind to it.

You need to face the fact, no matter how difficult or hurtful it might be, that you have a real addiction. Of course, doing this is and will never be easy but the moment you are able to do that and you finally acknowledge it for what it really is, you will be able to own it as a part of yourself and a part of who you are.

However, it does not mean that you have to blame or hate yourself for it. It only means that you have finally decided to stop denying the reality and the excuses or justifications that are normally associated with addiction.

Chapter 3

Be Rational and Don't Deny

Synopsis

One of the most complex aspects of human nature is denying difficult truths but it is nothing to be ashamed of. This is basically a normal defense mechanism that people use when the truth becomes too difficult for them to accept.

But in the case of addicts, this denial does not protect them at all and instead, this “allows” them to continue with their addiction. That is why the second step for overcoming your addiction is to avoid denials and learning to be rational instead.

Denial: A Delusion to Overcome

When you enter the world of addiction, you will also reach a point of denial. In fact, addicts in most cases, refuse to accept any suggestion that they might have a problem. A certain study has reported that many classified alcohol or drug dependent people deny that they require treatment, while another study showed that just 1.2% out of the about 7.4 million adults in America with untreated alcohol abuse disorder thought that treatment can help them.

But why do people with addictions fail to see what other people around them see – It seems as if they have become slaves to their bad habits and that these will kill them sooner or later, know the feeling.

Denial is one way of saying that you are terrified of contemplating the real meaning of the fleeting insight that you have as far as your problem is concerned. Since you are unnerved, your brain will refuse you to let you continue to stay in denial. Denial gets rid of the need to quit and there is not anything scarier than that in the whole universe. To quit is equivalent to the world coming to an end, the end of your very self. You cannot bring yourself to imagine it, as it is like trying to project how the world would be if the laws of physics did not apply.

Even if addicts will never admit it, their rational mind does not roll over, chiseling out tiny chinks in the wall of denial. And even if their rational brain tries to battle back, denial falls back into its original position. Because addiction is a disease that continues to worsen, eventually, denial will lead to death.

Of course, this is not something that you want to happen and the best resolution is to start being rational. To stop addiction, listen to that rational voice inside your head, no matter how tiny, it is what will lead you to your recovery.

Chapter 4

Get Coping Skills

Synopsis

Coping with your addiction is the next important step that you have to take in your journey to eliminating your bad habits from your life. Humans have the innate tendency to face the things or obstacles that come their way and the same idea applies when you have been addicted to a substance or an activity. You need to cope with it so that you can emerge as an entirely different person, a person completely devoid of any bad habits.

Through these coping skills, your journey will become much easier on your part and before you know it, you will be on your way to total recovery.

Cope With Your Addiction With These Useful Skills

If you want to recover from your addiction, the first and most important rule that you have to remember is that you can never recover from it by simply stopping the habit. Recovery will only happen if you have successfully created a life where it will be easier for you not to use. If you refuse to create a new life, then, all the factors that brought about your addiction will definitely catch up with you all over again.

However, it does not mean that you will have to change all aspects of your life and everything in it. However, there are several behaviors and things that are getting you into trouble and these will continue to cause you trouble unless you let go of them. Holding on to your old life during your recovery will make you do less.

So, what are these common coping skills that you need to develop in order to attain complete recovery from your addiction?

Stay Away from High Risk Situations

The most common high risk situations can be described by HALT, an acronym that stands for Hungry, Angry, Lonely, and Tired. While these situations cannot be completely avoided, being aware of them will help so that they will not catch you off guard, allowing you to prevent those tiny cravings from developing into major urges. Here, the best thing that you can do is take extra care of yourself. Do it by eating healthier meals, try to relax to let go of your resentments and anger, mingle with other people so

you don't feel alone and improve your sleeping habits so that you will not feel tired the next day.

Practice Relaxation

There are several common reasons why some people end up using alcohol and drugs. They use these things to reward themselves, relax or escape. To put it simply, alcohol and drugs become people's way of relieving tension. As mentioned earlier, changing your life is the first rule of recovery and relaxation is not just an optional aspect but an essential part of a successful recovery. There are plenty of methods to relax. These can range from something as simple as going for a walk to those more structured methods such as meditation.

Be Honest

Addiction, most of the time, requires lying. You need to lie about the fact that you are using drugs or alcohol. Once you have developed an addiction, it will just become easy for you to lie. And when you are already good at lying, there will come a time that you will lie even to yourself. This is the reason why addicts sometimes no longer know who they are or what they believe in.

Honesty is and will always be the best policy if you want to stop your addictions. Being true to those around you and to yourself can make you go a long way towards recovery.

Chapter 5

What Are Your Triggers

Synopsis

You will not get addicted to something if nothing triggers you in the first place. An addiction is something that spurs from a certain source, for a certain reason, and one crucial step for you to stop your bad habits is knowing your triggers.

Most of the time, addicts are not aware of these triggers, that is why they find it harder to deal with their condition. They just continue to cope with their addiction without really knowing what makes them do things in the first place.

When you know your triggers, it will be much easier for you to deal and combat your addiction.

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