



# ADDICTIONS

This PASTOR'S GUIDE SHEET was developed by Dr. Joe K. Taylor, Senior Pastor, South Reno Baptist Church, Reno, NV • jtaylor@southreno.com  
Scriptures are printed verbatim with references noted but highlights and underlines are added. Quotes and all primary sources are footnoted.

## DEFINITION AND OBSERVATIONS

**Addiction** is an emotional or physical dependency of one human being upon another person, institution, substance, activity, or even series or patterns of interior mood states or thought patterns that provide a *temporary*—and most of the time a *false*—sense of well-being.

- All addictions are harmful and potentially deadly—especially if they involve substance abuse (with alcohol and drugs being the most common form of chemical addiction agents). The addict or loved-one associated with the addiction must realize that *life* is literally “on the line”.
- All addictions are incredibly complex and will require the greatest tenacity to overcome them.
- Healing from addictions should occur within a network of relationships—God, family, friends, pastors, counselors, doctors, recovery groups, etc.
- No person will unilaterally (i.e., alone, by themselves) overcome the stronghold of addiction without the power of God active in his/her life.

## TYPES OF ADDICTIONS

The “focus” of the addiction—the substance, behavior, or object upon which a person may form an excessive dependency is called the addiction “agent”.

The list of addictive **agents** includes, but are not limited to the following:

Alcohol	Drugs	Food / Compulsive Overeating / Bulimia	Sex
Work	Success	Control	Money / Overspending / Hoarding / Gambling
	Approval / Pleasing People	Rescuing Behavior	Smoking
Dependency on Toxic Relationship		Physical Illness / Hypochondria	Exercise
Diet	Perfectionism	Cleanliness and Avoidance Of Contamination	
Organization Obsession	Materialism	Entertainment / Video Games / Computers	
Internet	Obsession with Physical Beauty / Plastic Surgery	Academics	
Religiosity	Pornography	Stalking	Status / Popularity
			Talking / Being Heard
Business / Activity	Adrenalin / Extreme Actions	Counseling / Being Helped	

# COUNSEL FOR THOSE DEALING WITH ADDICTIONS

## A SIMPLE OUTLINE FOR HEALING

### 1. GET HONEST

Anyone battling an addiction must recognize and admit his or her problems with frank, heartfelt, transparent honesty. This level of brutal honesty may have never been achieved before. Healing begins with this phrase, "I have a big problem and I need help." **No one can help you if your don't want to be helped.**

### 2. GET HELP

Most who will read this PASTOR'S GUIDE SHEET WILL realize that it is entirely beyond the scope of this document to "heal" anyone of addiction. The purpose of this Guide is to point you in the right direction. **If you want help, get it; begin with someone you know loves you and is ready to "roll up their sleeves" to help you.**

Suggested "helpers" you will need: Your closest friend, other close friends, family members, pastors, addiction counselors, addiction facilities—including hospitals, detoxification centers, and clinics; medical doctors, therapists, support groups (AA/NA/GA/etc.), church support groups, books, mentors, even "crisis phone hot-lines", and others. Do not go to people with addictions to "get help", it will only get you into trouble. Start with someone on this list. Be honest with them and ask them to help you get the help you need.

### 3. GET A "HIGHER POWER" NAMED JESUS

No human power can set you free, only the Divine Power that comes by trusting Jesus Christ as your personal Savior. If you are a Christian and you are struggling with an addiction, there is wonderful hope for you. The power of God—the Highest Power of all—resides in you. You will have to plug into that power. His power and love can set you free from the bondage of addiction. If you have never made peace with God, find a friend whom you know to be a believer or a pastor and ask them about Jesus. **Leaving Jesus and His power out of the healing process is a critical and fatal mistake.**

### 4. GET A HEALTHY SUPPORT SYSTEM

To win this battle, you will need a healthy support system around you to encourage you. **Pray and select three to five people who will become prayer and encouragement partners with you in this healing process.** Their purpose is not to "counsel" you but to pray for you and encourage you to stick with your healing plan. Write their names down now, call them now, and implore them to support you as you fight the battle for your life. Combining your wanting to get help with their prayers and encouragement, and you have a support system that will help you beat this once-and-for-all! You MUST do it!

#### The 12 Steps of AA

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of Character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these stages, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles.

The "Twelve Steps" are reprinted here with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that AA has reviewed or approved the contents of this publication, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein (this Pastor's Guide Sheet). AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism. Use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.

# THE WARNING SIGNS OF ADDICTION

Be aware of the signs and symptoms of addiction(s). One must make a serious evaluation of the life one suspects of an addiction—symptoms do tell a story. The lives of your loved-ones are potentially at stake—their happiness certainly is. Go with your gut feeling.

- A dramatic change in a person's personality and habits
- Deterioration in significant relationships, including family and long-time friends
- Deterioration in school and work performance
- Listlessness, depression, nervousness, lying, stealing, talkativeness followed by quietness
- Major lifestyle changes including hair length, dress, music preferences, and vocabulary
- Materials, posters, websites, and paraphernalia associated with the drug culture
- Changes in sleep patterns, insomnia, sleeping in or at odd times
- Moral problems at school, work, with family members, etc.
- Legal problems including theft, shoplifting, and vandalism

# THE TYPICAL TREATMENT PHASES OF ADDICTION FOR EVERYBODY INVOLVED IN THE RESCUE PROCESS

1. **Identification** - Any addiction must be identified and any abuser must be aware that the addiction is a reality and a treatment is urgently needed. A simple plan for treatment must be agreed upon. If the person with the addiction is not open to help, an intervention may be necessary. This "intervention" may involve family, friends, clergy, professional counselors, even *interventionists* trained in intervention. The purpose of an intervention is to take a stand in the addict's life and help them recognize the pain and destruction taking place and agree to a rescue plan.
2. **Detoxification ("Detox")** - With substance abuse, this is a medically supervised withdrawal from the drugs or alcohol. With non-substance abuse, this is a time of forced refraining from the activity in question. Professional help should be thoroughly involved in this process.
3. **Rehabilitation ("Rehab")** - Counseling, processing, well developed "plans-of-attack", therapies, and restructuring in the life of the patient will take place on an inpatient and outpatient basis. The question, "How are we going to get through this?" will be answered in this phase. Again, professional help should be thoroughly involved in this process. It generally takes a team of professionals, support groups, healing assignments, friends, and family to help a person through an addiction.
4. **Follow-up** - 12 Step Programs, support groups, accountability/encouragement groups, appointments, etc., are recommended for the first few months following a successful recovery program. Again, professional help should be thoroughly involved in this process. Also, it generally takes a team of professionals, support groups, healing assignments, friends, and family to help a person through this maintenance and follow up phase.

The process of treating an addiction is complex. It may be that relationships will need to be repaired, experiences of the past need to be understood, fears of the present need to be identified, uncertainties of the future need to be remedied and boundaries need to be set. Physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual aspects of a person will need to be understood. Above all, a plan for healing and safeguarding must be implemented. This process will take time, tremendous effort, money, concentrated prayer and many sleepless nights. *It will be worth it when healing is reached.*

# INSIGHT FROM THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN DOWN THIS PATH BEFORE

## COMPILED AND SUMMARIZED

1. When a family begins their journey into “addiction”, they find that many pastors and church staffs are not as helpful as they had hoped. Pastors are not typically trained in substance abuse and unless they have had a family member or close friend go through it, they may lack experience and be uneducated in addictions. Do seek their prayer support but be ready to seek recourse and answers to important questions elsewhere.
2. Know that *the church* is more than *the church staff*. Many people around you have been touched by the issue of addiction. Do not let your pride keep you from seeking out help from those who have experienced the same problems you now face. It will require “vulnerability”. One of the greatest lessons you may learn is that being vulnerable with your friends and loved-ones will lead to a deeper relationship with them and God. You might (and might not) find some that may shy away from you but most will offer amazing support and insight into your journey.

***“Pride is one of the biggest delaying tactics of the enemy. ‘I am a Christian leader’, ‘I teach Sunday School’, ‘What will people think?’ ... one of the greatest lessons I’m learning so far in all our struggle is that being vulnerable before our brethren is one of the best avenues to intimacy, with them and God.”***

- Jeff Taylor, (Joe’s brother) who’s son has battled addiction

3. Follow your instincts! If you suspect something, there may be good reason. Don’t let yourself be in denial for no valid reason. Pursue *due diligence* in what your heart suspects. The life of a loved-one may depend upon it. Be advised, many say “it” was always worse than they expected.
4. Be prepared for a barrage of feelings: guilt, discouragement, embarrassment, hopelessness, anger, frustrations, feelings of “I’ve failed”, and many, many others. The feelings you will experience are intense. Find non-judgmental and safe avenues to “vent” the feelings you have.
5. Become aware of the “language” of the addiction world: Drug names like black tar (heroin), crack (crystallized cocaine), acid (LSD), balloons (heroin or cocaine packaged for sale in balloons), angel dust (Phencyclidine), coke (cocaine) , crank (amphetamines), 8 ball (3 grams of cocaine), grass (marijuana), fruit salad (a mixture of different pills), toke (marijuana cigarette), speed (methamphetamines), Pot (marijuana), etc.) and slang terms like OD (overdose), bong (pipe), burn (cheating of on drug deal), buzz (felling high), candy man (one who sells drugs), cop (the act of purchasing drugs), fix (injection of heroin), roach clip (holds a marijuana cigarette), stoned (being high on a drug), trip (the effects of drug ingestion), etc.
6. Family members of addicts will need to develop a good prayer and encouragement team. Though addiction is a multifaceted storm, it certainly will have a spiritual aspect to the battle. Surround yourself with spiritual people who understand the importance of confidentiality. If possible, find those who have or are in this same storm—it’s best if they are even ahead of you in this journey. They will be a great source of comfort, direction, encouragement, and the hope you desperately seek.
7. Know that addiction affects all kinds of people—rich and poor, short and tall, white and black, yellow and brown, those that do *good* and those who do *bad*, the churched and the unchurched, good families and bad families—all cultures and all people are affected. No one is exempt from the storm of addiction.
8. To those who have loved-ones touched by addiction, you may be their only lifeline. The process of rescuing an addict is a slow, often painful process. Purpose not to give up and do not walk away from God. There are no promises of success in the fight against addiction. Your task is valiant and if and when success comes, it will all have been worth it. Giving it your best effort will also help you. You’ll know that you did everything you could possibly do.
9. Read Addiction & Grace by Gerald May. It is a good primer because it includes a lot of psychological terms, scripture & neurological issues.

# DEVELOPING A PLAN OF ATTACK

## FOR THOSE HELPING AN ADDICT

1. The “To-do List” and the “Calendar” will be important tools for you. The “To-do List” will help you know *what* to do and the “Calendar” will help you know *when* to do what you need to do. Decide now how you will create a “to-do list” and then what form of calendar you will use—make it happen!
2. Develop a list of people you know that are going through the same rough waters you are. Ask leaders of your church, co-workers, friends, and family members. This list will help you develop the much needed prayer and encouragement support team. Put this on the “to-do list” and time activate it on your calendar—make it happen!
3. Go to the bookstore and buy Addiction & Grace by Gerald May. It is a good primer because it includes a lot of psychological terms, scripture & neurological issues. Put this on the “to-do list” and time activate it on your calendar—make it happen!
4. Start taking good notes on everything you see in the life of the suspected addict. Write down everything! It will help you “now” in developing a plan of attack and it will also help you “later” in helping others through this same storm.
5. Develop a plan of identification and even intervention if needed: What is the addiction? What are you going to do about it? What are the available resources to you? Take your thoughts to your prayer and encouragement team and ask for their honest evaluation. List example: (A) Identify the addiction, (B) Is an intervention needed? (C) What are the answers to the “important matters” below? (D) What resources are available to you like counselors, facilities, information, support groups, etc. (E) Is there a need for “detox” and/or “Rehab”?

## IMPORTANT MATTERS TO CONSIDER

1. What is the time frame? Is this an emergency or do you have some time to develop the rescue?
2. Does the medical profession or mental health profession need to be involved?
3. Will an organized *intervention* be needed?
4. Will the rescue be inpatient, outpatient or residential?
5. Is violence a possibility?
6. Could the addict become suicidal?
7. Is the addict being rescued an adult or a minor?
8. What laws could come into play in your city/county and should law enforcement be utilized ?
9. Who else needs to be rescued/ministered to besides the addict (i.e., family, friends, etc.)?
10. Are there issues related to codependences and/or enabling?
11. What are the qualifications and effectiveness histories of the counselors/facilities being considered?
12. What will be the new sense of “normal” during this addiction storm?
13. What boundaries need to be implemented?
14. How will decisions be made in the rescuing process?
15. Who will have what responsibilities in this rescuing process?
16. What will be negotiable and what will not? What are the “focused priorities?”
17. This will cost money: How will the rescue/therapy be paid for?
18. Do any legal documents (wills, living trusts, medical directives) need to be augmented?
19. How will everyone involved in this process maintain realistic expectations?
20. A question for every person you talk to: “*What questions am I not asking that I should be asking?*”

# SCRIPTURES TO ENCOURAGE YOU

**1 Corinthians 3:16, NIV** - <sup>16</sup> Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20, NIV** - <sup>19</sup> Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; <sup>20</sup> you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body.

**Luke 21:34, MSG** - <sup>34</sup> "But be on your guard. Don't let the sharp edge of your expectation get dulled by parties and drinking and shopping. Otherwise, that Day is going to take you by complete surprise, spring on you suddenly like a trap,

**Proverbs 23:17, NLT** - <sup>17</sup> Don't envy sinners, but always continue to fear the Lord.

**Ephesians 5:15-18, NLT** - <sup>15</sup> So be careful how you live. Don't live like fools, but like those who are wise. <sup>16</sup> Make the most of every opportunity in these evil days. <sup>17</sup> Don't act thoughtlessly, but understand what the Lord wants you to do. <sup>18</sup> Don't be drunk with wine, because that will ruin your life. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit ...

**1 Corinthians 6:11, NIV** - <sup>11</sup> And that is what some of you were [addicts]. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

**Proverbs 23:19-20, NIV** - <sup>19</sup> Listen, my son, and be wise, and keep your heart on the right path. <sup>20</sup> Do not join those who drink too much wine or gorge themselves on meat,

**2 Corinthians 5:17, NIV** - <sup>17</sup> Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

**2 Peter 1:3, NIV** - <sup>3</sup> His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.

**2 Corinthians 3:18, NIV** - <sup>18</sup> And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.

**Ephesians 4:22-24, NLT** - <sup>22</sup> throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. <sup>23</sup> Instead, let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes. <sup>24</sup> Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy.

**Galatians 2:20, NASB95** - <sup>20</sup> "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

**Psalms 28:7-8, NASB95** - <sup>7</sup> The Lord is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and I am helped; Therefore my heart exults, and with my song I shall thank Him. <sup>8</sup> The Lord is their strength, and He is a saving defense to His anointed.

**Isaiah 26:3-4, NASB95** - <sup>3</sup> "The steadfast of mind you will keep in perfect peace, because he trusts in you. <sup>4</sup> "Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord, we have an everlasting Rock.

**Romans 6:11-13, NIV** - <sup>11</sup> In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. <sup>12</sup> Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. <sup>13</sup> Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness.

**John 8:36, KJV** - <sup>36</sup> *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

**A**ddiction harms our bodies, disappoints our families and friends, makes us a slave, is poor stewardship of time, money and health ... it may cause another person to fall ... it dishonors the Holy Spirit in us ... it supports industries whose products bring poverty and death ... I have never had anyone come into my office and say, "Drugs and alcohol saved my life." I have seen many people play games with something that played for keeps. My advice: Stay away from it! If it has a hold on you, get honest, get help, get a higher power named Jesus and develop a healthy support system to help you beat it—once and for all

- Pastor Joe

# SUGGESTED "TO-DO LIST" FOR ADDICTION RESCUE

#	Action Needed	Calendar "Due Date"	Information/History/Follow-up
1.	Prayer/Encouragement Team: Who has been here before?		
2.	Get book: "Addiction and Grace" by Gerald May and begin reading it.		
3.	Decide who/how decisions will be made?		
4.	Work through "Important matters" (on p. 5)		
5.	Make a list of resources that are available to me?		
6.	Make a list of resources I need that I don't have?		
7.	Decide: Is an intervention needed?		
8.	Decide: Residential, Outpatient, or Inpatient?		
9.	What resources (counselors and/or facilities) will be used?		
10.	Develop a note taking system for this matter?		
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