



Break Free

Natural Tools for Overcoming Addictions

When most people think of addiction, they immediately think of serious addictions to substances like drugs and alcohol. In fact, historically addiction has been defined as physical dependence on psychoactive substances such as alcohol, tobacco, opiates and other drugs. However, the definition of addiction has been expanded to include psychological dependency on things such as pornography, sex, food, gambling, computers, the internet, gaming, watching TV, work, exercise, shopping and self-injury. Simply put, when we can't stop a behavior that is damaging to ourselves and to others, it is addictive.

The American Society of Addiction Medicine has described addiction as "a primary, chronic disease of brain reward, motivation, memory and related circuitry." Or simply, addiction occurs when there is a compulsive or habitual need to repeat an experience in order to try and feel good. The addiction may be mild or severe, socially acceptable or unacceptable.

Are You Addicted?

Addiction isn't something that's limited to the use of illegal drugs. In fact, many forms of addiction are socially acceptable. The most common addiction is the addiction to caffeine. More than 90% of Americans consume caffeinated beverages daily, and go through severe withdrawal symptoms if they don't get their daily dose of caffeine. If you have a hard time waking up and getting through the day without a cup of coffee, caffeinated soda or an energy drink, you're probably addicted to caffeine.

Two other commonly used substances in North America that are highly addictive are tobacco and alcohol. But, even if you don't use caffeine, tobacco or alcohol, what about food? Roughly 70% of the American people today are overweight, and many of us are driven by a need to eat for comfort and pleasure—two classic motivations in addictive behavior. In fact, the addiction to sugar is probably greater than the addiction to caffeine. And, if you don't think sugar is addictive, just try giving it up cold turkey and see what withdrawal symptoms you experience.

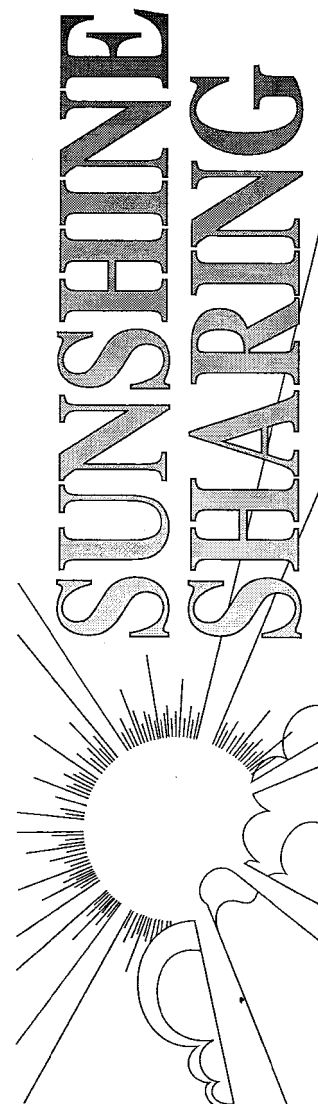
Finally, people may seek prescription drugs trying to feel better. If they become addicted to these medications, people have been known to resort to "borrowing" other people's prescriptions, getting multiple prescriptions from different doctors, falsifying prescriptions, or even stealing prescription drugs.

A Growing Problem

With all the stresses in our modern world, such as economic struggles, threats to security and uncertainty about the future, many people seek to quell the stress they feel through addictive behaviors. Thus, addiction is very widespread in our culture.

With serious addictions, one needs professional help. This may come in the form of voluntary 12-Step programs, group therapy, one-on-one therapy, or drug rehabilitation programs. However, in addition to these professional programs, there are many natural tools that can help overcome addiction. Improved diet and nutrition, herbs and other supplements, detoxification, flower essences and other natural healing modalities can be helpful in turning the tide of addiction.

Turn the page to discover natural remedies that can help with addiction...



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Your guide to better health the natural way.

Important Notice

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Holistic Help for Overcoming Addictions

The first step in overcoming addiction is to admit that you're addicted. Denial may seem like a protection, but it merely enables your addictive behavior to continue. The sooner you face the truth, the sooner you can break your addiction and regain a sense of control.

The flower essence blend **Be Response-Able** is helpful in this process. This blend helps a person become more honest with themselves. It helps a person see the part of themselves that they don't want to acknowledge and encourages more responsible and self-actualized behavior.

The second step in overcoming addiction is to seek outside help. One of the reasons Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and other addiction recovery groups have proven helpful is that they provide a support system and a structure in which participants can be accountable to a power outside of themselves. Participation in a group guided by honesty, accountability, and reliance on a higher power can help you break your addiction and achieve a new level of personal freedom.

It also helps to seek support from other people who have overcome the same addiction you want to overcome. Allow yourself to be accountable to them and to a spiritual advisor so you are not relying on your own willpower or suppressing inner struggles.

Third, addiction is motivated by the human desire to feel good and there are healthy ways of feeling good. When we improve overall health by eating a better diet and getting the nutrition the body

needs, we feel good naturally and the need to use substances or self-defeating behaviors to try and find joy and pleasure diminishes.

Many addictions are linked to blood sugar problems, so stop eating refined carbohydrates (white sugar, white flour, white rice, corn syrup) and use complex carbohydrates like fresh vegetables, whole fruits and a moderate amount of whole grains instead. Make sure you get adequate intake of protein, especially for breakfast.

It also helps to do an "oil change." Stop using margarine, shortening and refined vegetable oils in favor of organic (preferably grass-fed) butter, olive oil, coconut oil, nuts, seeds and avocados. It also helps to take fatty acid supplements like **DHA** (the most important fatty acid for the brain), **Krill Oil with K2** and **Super Omega-3 EPA**. Also consider supplementing with **vitamin D3**, especially during the wintertime.

Finally, cleansing the body is a great way to begin breaking free of addiction—especially if you are going through withdrawal. Start by getting well hydrated. Drinking a half ounce of water per pound of body weight daily not only flushes toxins from the system, it also tends to create a natural release of neurotransmitters that help us feel good. (See Sidebar: The Anatomy of Addiction).

A good general cleanse with a general blood and liver-cleansing formula will also help the body flush the toxins created by the addictive substance out of the system. The **Tiao He Cleanse** is a very good choice.

Besides these general suggestions, here are some specific aids for overcoming addictions.

The Anatomy of Addiction

Addiction is rooted in the need everyone has to feel good. People become addicted to substances or behaviors because they stimulate the release of neurotransmitters in the brain and nervous system that make us feel good, such as endorphins, dopamine or epinephrine. Addictive substances usually mimic or trigger the release of these chemicals—all of which elevate mood and help us feel good. As the body becomes accustomed to these external stimuli, it starts losing the ability to generate these feel good neurotransmitters without them and a person becomes addicted. Once an addiction is established, it is hard to break.

In the ancient Greek culture, moderation was encouraged and excess was discouraged. Moderation is the key, today more than ever, but it is easier said than done. Addiction is a dilemma deeply rooted in human nature: our need for ritual, our love of pleasure and our insatiable cravings.

One of the most fascinating insights in modern psychology is that our insatiable cravings (addictions) are often driven by lingering, emotional pain from past wounds. If we can heal those wounds and find peace in our lives, we tend to be much happier and better able to practice "moderation in all things."

It is also important to understand that willpower alone may not be sufficient to overcome an addiction. The drive for pleasure and self-satisfaction is too strong for most people to resist, and it often subverts our best intentions. That's why help and support from others is often needed to overcome addictions.

Caffeine

Caffeine is a highly addictive drug, yet most adults use it nearly every day and freely offer it in various forms to their children. Caffeine stimulates epinephrine in the nervous system, which temporarily boosts a state of energy and alertness. However, contrary to popular belief, it does not increase energy production in the body. Instead, it tricks the body into using up its energy reserves.

The more a person uses coffee, tea, cola drinks and "energy" drinks the more depleted their body's energy reserves become. The adrenal glands weaken and fatigue, anxiety, nervousness, insomnia and other nervous symptoms follow. Caffeine constricts arteries, raising blood pressure, and being a diuretic it also tends to be dehydrating. In short, caffeine is not the innocent substance many people seem to think it is.

To overcome caffeine addiction one needs to actually increase energy production. Supplements that strengthen the adrenals such as **Adrenal Support** and **Nervous Fatigue Formula** are very helpful. These same products can also help with sugar addiction, which is often related to caffeine addiction. If you need a pick-me-up, try using **Energy-V**, **Cellular Energy** or **Target Endurance**. These supplements actually increase energy production, thus building better stamina and endurance.



Herbal Beverage can be used as a coffee substitute. Many people start by blending coffee and Herbal Beverage, then gradually increase the Herbal Beverage while reducing the amount of coffee.



Alcohol

While a moderate amount of alcohol (such as a glass of wine with a meal) doesn't seem to cause serious health problems, excessive alcohol consumption does. Over-consumption of alcohol damages the liver and brain, destroys relationships and causes traffic accidents.

If you are trying to break an addiction to alcohol, you should know that alcohol is converted into sugar in the bloodstream. Thus, it acts very much like a refined carbohydrate. Alcohol is also dehydrating. In fact, most of the effects of a "hangover" are due to low blood sugar and dehydration. So, the first steps to naturally losing the cravings for alcohol are to get properly hydrated and to regulate blood sugar levels. Try drinking two glasses of water every time you want to drink alcohol and taking supplements that regulate blood sugar levels such as **Super Algae** and **licorice root**.

An excellent formula to aid the recovering alcoholic is **Kudzu/St. John's wort**. Kudzu is a vine common to the southern states with a remarkable ability to reduce high blood pressure, relieve pain, and relieve cramps. Studies have shown that it also helps control cravings for alcohol.

Beer is the most commonly consumed alcoholic beverage. **Hops**, which is used to make beer, can be taken to reduce cravings for beer, and it provides a similar relaxing effect without the negative problems associated with alcohol.

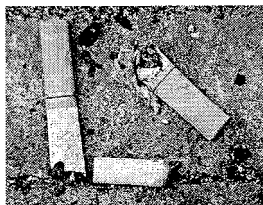
Since the liver works overtime to neutralize alcohol in the blood, excessive consumption of alcohol damages the liver. **Milk thistle** can be especially helpful in protecting the liver from alcohol's toxicity and in helping the liver to heal. When alcohol has severely damaged the liver, **Milk Thistle Combination** and **SAM-e**, will promote healing—as will the topical application of **helichrysum essential oil** over the liver area.

Tobacco

Nicotine, the addictive substance in tobacco, is one of the most highly addictive substances known. It is an alkaloid that attaches to receptor sites in the sympathetic nervous system, mimicking epinephrine, thus having a similar effect on the body to caffeine and other stimulants. This is why smoking tends to increase the risk of high blood pressure and heart disease.

Lobelia contains lobeline, an alkaloid with a similar structure that attaches to these sites and blocks them. The difference is that lobeline relaxes the nerves, while nicotine stimulates them. Using lobelia can help reduce the craving for nicotine while lessening withdrawal symptoms.

Smokers generally need to build up their depleted nerves and adrenal glands. Smoking also depletes vitamin C levels. **Nutri-Calm** contains B-complex vitamins and vitamin C along with nerve



and adaptogenic herbs and can be a very helpful supplement to take when people are trying to quit smoking. **St. John's wort** and **chamomile** have also proven helpful for some people.

Where smoking has damaged the lungs, **Lung Support** can help promote healing. This formula is good for dry and weak lungs. Cigarettes contain heavy metals, so consider doing a colon cleanse with the addition of **Heavy Metal Detox**.



Drugs

In discussing drug addiction we're talking about both illegal (meth, rave, crystal, cocaine, etc.) and prescription drugs (such as pain killers or barbiturates), which can also be addictive. Of course, professional assistance should be sought with drug addiction, but there are natural remedies that can help, too. Specifically, withdrawal from drug addiction requires detoxification and nutritional support for the nervous and glandular system.

Drugs of all kinds place a heavy burden on the detoxification systems of the liver. So a person trying to get off of drugs should support the liver with formulas like **Milk Thistle Combination**, **All Cell Detox** and **Enviro-Detox**. It is also important to drink plenty of pure water to help flush the toxic drugs from the system.

Support for the nervous system depends on the type of drugs one is addicted to. If stimulants are the problem, then naturally increasing energy with **Target Endurance** or **Cellular Energy** and supporting the adrenals with **Adrenal Support** or **Nervous Fatigue Formula** will be very helpful.

Overcoming an addiction to tranquilizers can be aided by herbs that also provide a relaxing effect, such as **Herbal Sleep**, **valerian** and **kava kava**. For addiction to pain killers, try a milder analgesic, such as **IF Relief** or **Triple Relief**. The rule of thumb here is that if you can find a milder herb with a more natural effect, you can use it as a substitute for the drug and ease withdrawal.

Behavioral Addiction

Increasingly, the term addiction is being applied to compulsive behaviors that are not substance related. These include overeating, texting, shopping, gambling, viewing pornography, hyper-sexuality, video and computer gaming. When a behavior manifests itself as a recurring compulsion to engage in a certain activity despite

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Additional Help and Information

For more information about natural remedies that can help with addiction, contact the person who gave this newsletter to you. Their contact information should be found at the top of page four. They have additional handouts and resource materials to help you. You can also consult some of the following sources:

The Comprehensive Guide to Nature's Sunshine Products by Tree of Light Publishing

Natural Detoxification by Jacqueline Krohn

The Heart's Key to Health, Happiness and Success by Steven Horne



Break Free From Addiction

In a stress-filled world, it's easy to become addicted to substances and behaviors that make you feel good temporarily. Good nutrition and a healthier lifestyle can help you overcome these addictions and help you start feeling good naturally.

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harmful consequences to one's health, mental state or social life, it is addictive.

In this kind of addiction, it is the behavior that triggers the release of pleasure chemicals in the brain rather than a substance. Here again, the motivating force is the desire to feel good. One of the problems associated with behavioral addiction is that as the pleasure center of the brain becomes the dominant "hub" of brain activity, other areas of the brain begin to atrophy. This leads to intellectual and emotional imbalance, relationship problems, irrational or even criminal behavior.

Behavioral addictions are best broken through a combination of professional counseling, group participation and support, spiritual fulfillment, and creating a more generally healthy lifestyle.

We naturally feel good when we are living a balanced life that includes good nutrition, adequate rest and exercise and satisfying work. The **Be Response-Able** flower essence blend can help with these behavioral addictions. It helps a person get in touch with the hidden emotional wounds that may be driving their addiction. It also promotes greater self-awareness and self-control.

Conclusion

Addiction is a very human tendency that no one should feel ashamed of. At the same time, we should not let addictions destroy our quality of life and the relationships we hold dear. The sooner we get help, the sooner we can enjoy personal freedom, mutually rewarding relationships, and a deeply fulfilling, yet balanced life. For additional help and suggestions, talk to the person who gave this newsletter to you.