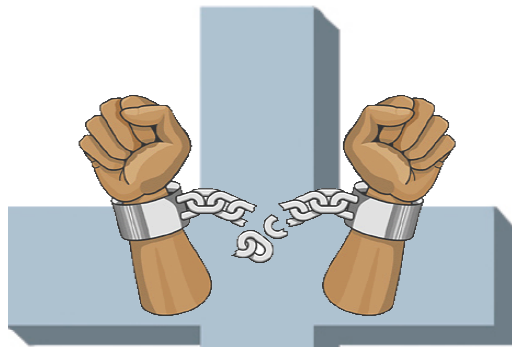


“INSANITY IS DOING THE SAME THING OVER AND OVER AND EXPECTING A DIFFERENT RESULT”

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



BREAKING THE CYCLE OF ADDICTION

DAN LEAF
FINDING HOPE

HEAVENLY OPTIONS FOR PAIN AND EMPTINESS

Who do I want to be my Lord?

When I give myself to my sin or addiction, it becomes the lord of my life; it sits on the throne and has total control. Luke 4:18 *“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, for He has appointed me to preach Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the downtrodden will be freed from their oppressors, and that the time of the Lord’s favor has come.”*

Jesus came to be my Lord and set me free! John 8:31-32, 36 *“You are truly my disciples if you keep obeying my teachings. 32 And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” 36 “So if the Son sets You free, you will indeed be free.”*

I must allow Jesus Christ to sit on the throne of my life, to be Lord and have total control. In order to have life, I must understand the cycle of addiction and the cycle **must be broken**.

“For I can do everything with the help of Christ who gives me the strength I need.”
Philippians 4:13

Addictions

Sin is doing things that are wrong, against God’s standard, or missing the mark. When sin becomes a habit, it can progress to an addiction and cause our lives to spin out of control. Addiction is an effort to satisfy pain and emptiness in our lives by artificial means. The two components of addiction are: 1) Obsession, which is the mental captivation, and 2) Compulsion, which is the acting out of the obsession.

There are four main characteristics of an addiction. The first is the quality of being

driven. One can no longer control their desires; the desires control the person. The pain will not go away until one yields to the addiction. Second, the behavior is continued despite strong consequences. The consequences become unimportant. At times, one hopes to get caught just so the cycle can be broken. The third is that one actually becomes dependent on this behavior. The addictive lifestyle becomes the person. They buy into the lie from which there is no escape. They cannot live in the real world without their crutch. The final characteristic is that one wants more and more and more. It becomes like an itch that can never be scratched enough. The more you act out on your addiction, the stronger it becomes.

The Cycle of Sin

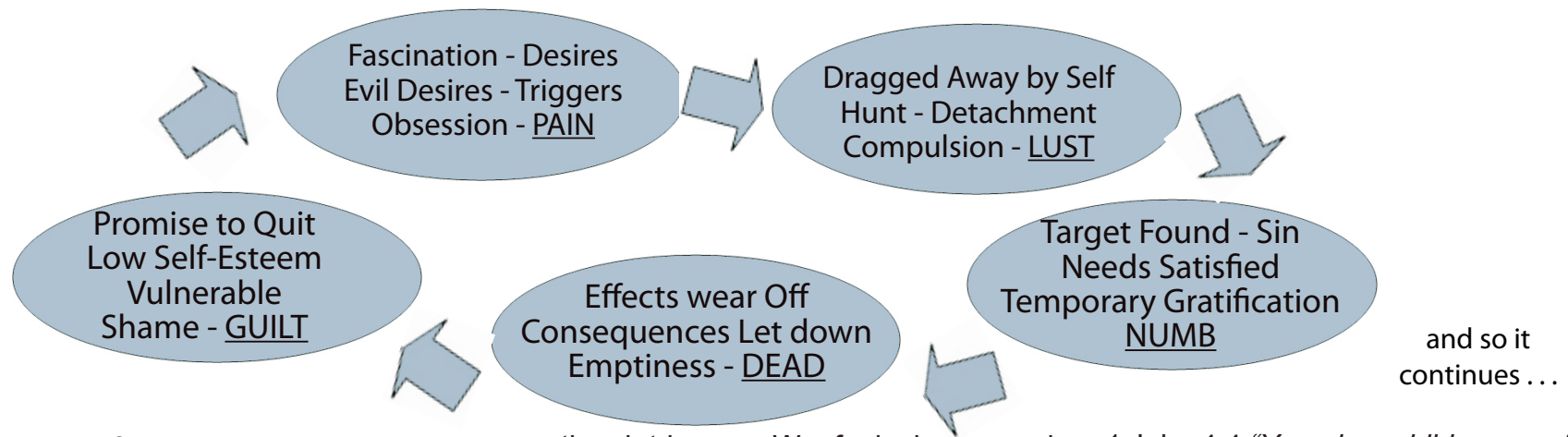
The cycle of sin and addiction is started when the lust of the eyes, lust of the flesh, or the pride of life (1 John. 2:16) pulls us into temptation. Temptations are recurring thoughts and triggers or preoccupations which are caused or brought on by lustful desires, unprocessed pain, or emptiness in our lives.

There is an allurement of the addiction which leads us to believe that it will remove the pain. This mental process becomes an obsession or a triggering mechanism which leads us to sin. We become consumed with the idea that the addictive agent will numb the pain and make the emptiness go away, at least for the moment. We seek our target, the person or the object, to be used to satisfy the need.

When we compulsively act out on that obsession, we sin. That sin satisfies the need. We feel temporary gratification. We have compromised all and do not care



THE CYCLE OF ADDICTION



about the cost, but for a moment we are relieved of the pain. We have the delusion that whatever the cost was physically, emotionally, or spiritually, it was worth it. The problem is that it is only a temporary solution. We justify our actions through denial, self-justification, and lies to ourselves and to others.

The biggest thing to face after the initial high or gratification is dealing with the devastating destruction of our actions.

Consequences are manifested in three areas: 1) Mental consequences, which always involve struggles with guilt, shame, and esteem. 2) Physical repercussions, such as stress, which will wear you down and can even bring death. Sometimes sin brings direct physical consequences. 3) Social consequences, which involves loss of reputation, loss of integrity brought on by denial, lying, and blame shifting. It can cause the loss of jobs, finances, and even relationships. Spiritual growth and fellowship are severed. We feel more pain, more emptiness than we felt before. We feel dead.

We start by making excuses and blaming others or blaming the circumstances and

emotional triggers. We feel shame and guilt. Our self-esteem and self-worth are at an all time low. We feel vulnerable and trapped in our addiction, which brings the pain and emptiness back. This time it is even greater because we have more guilt and shame, more consequences, and we feel utterly hopeless. Then it starts all over again...

The Good News is that God loves us and will forgive us. We do not have to stay in that cycle. Jesus came to the hurting, to those whose lives are devastated by sin. He came for the prodigal son and daughter who have allowed sin to creep into their lives and destroy them on the inside. He can restore our self-control and peace. Through the 12-Steps, we find Christian principles that will restore our lives and bring serenity and HOPE.

Jesus came to free us from the cycle of sin. He came to do something for us which we cannot do for ourselves. John tells us that true disciples, living by the word of God, will know the truth and the truth will set them free (John 8:31-32). At the point of our new birth, we receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38), which gives us the power to break the bonds of our sin addiction.

1 John 4:4 "You, dear children, are from God and have overcome them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world."

Finding HOPE

A 12-Step Based Christian Support Group

Located in Room 107
Sunday morning 11:00 am. - 12:00 pm.
Wednesday night 7:00 pm. - 8:00 pm.

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