



Addiction guide v0.3

Addictions are gatekeepers to the Underworld. As long as they remain, we can't truly enter that dark part of our unconscious. As a result, the Path of Initiation remains forever elusive, and so does full-bodied maturity, that unusual human condition that only true initiates are privy to.

Some of us suffer serious trauma in adult life – the loss of a child, debilitating illness or injury – and we are forced into the death and rebirth of ego that is inherent on the Path of Initiation. This likely explains why, in our Western culture, those rare individuals of true maturity often share a history of deeply felt suffering.

The rest of us spend most of our lives running from pain and running towards pleasure, never quite outrunning the pain and never quite reaching the pleasure.

This constant activity – or our refusal of staying with what is and feeling it to its core – shackles us to immaturity. As long as we refuse to pause and get real, we stay in a quagmire of perpetual adolescence, forever lost in a limbo of rebelling, consciously or unconsciously, against the parts of existence which wounded us when we were young.

Addiction turns human beings into machines. The soft-bellied flesh of humanity gets lost in a never-ending story of stress, repetition and predictable choices.

So as you prepare to face your addictions and the traumas and wounds that they cover up, you are stepping onto the path to fully embodied maturity. It's not an easy one, which is why most never take that road less travelled, but I do think it's why you're reading this document in the first place.

One word of encouragement: Addictions are powerful adversaries and they will get the better of you at times. When they do, be gentle on yourself. Self-shaming is part of the addictive spiral and will not serve you. So while working with addictions requires a kind of ferocity, a "you shall not pass!", it also calls on your gentleness and self-acceptance.

Godspeed on your travels. This is real good work you're doing.

Quick disclaimer: What an addiction actually is seems a contentious topic in scientific circles. The definition of addiction we will use here is “Any chronic behavior that desensitizes us to the stark experience of life by giving us temporary feelings of release”.

Categories of addiction (based on above definition)

- Substance addictions (e.g. heroin, caffeine, nicotine, alcohol)
- Process addictions (chronic lateness, Facebook, gambling, TV, porn)
- Judgmental thinking (“I always fuck it up”, “People are crap”)
- Language addictions (words and phrases you use to numb intensity)
- Relational addictions (co-dependency, validation-seeking behavior etc)
- Movement addictions (repetitive movements that camouflage deeper trauma)
- Mood-altering use of foods rich in sugars and fats (sweets, junk food etc)

Mapping out our addictions

Over the next couple of pages, you will be mapping out your addictions in service of greater awareness as well as to stand a fighting chance against them as you go on your Underworld journey. We will do so by order of the above categories.

SUBSTANCE ADDICTIONS

This is a fierce kind of addiction that can turn life-threatening when the substance is powerful.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

PROCESS ADDICTIONS

Any behavioral pattern that keeps you a prisoner of compulsion (e.g. multitasking, gambling, being late).

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

JUDGMENTAL THINKING

All those nasty judgments you carry against self and other. List the most common ones.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

LANGUAGE ADDICTIONS

When you start analyzing your language, you will likely notice you are speaking in ways that are designed to take the edge off of something that's challenging to feel.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

RELATIONAL ADDICTIONS

Those little or big things you do in order to feel loved and validated
(e.g. counting your likes on Facebook)

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

MOVEMENT ADDICTIONS

Habitual ways of moving your body often cover up stories of pain and trauma.

Tapping your foot, touching your face in a certain way etc. These are hard to pick up on, but they can reveal a lot of hidden gold if you do (study Christine Caldwell's work for more on this).

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

MOOD-ALTERING FOOD HABITS

How do you use food to numb out from painful experiences?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

YOUR ADDICTIONS, SORTED BY CAPACITY TO NUMB YOU

This is where you sort your addictions by order of severity. "Severity" in this context means the strength of its capacity to radically numb you out and take you away from life.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.

TIPS AND REFLECTIONS

You may discover, as you fill in the different categories of addictions, that some of your addictions are also, in part, a necessity. You can do well without nicotine in your life, but if you are an event organizer, it's hard to be without Facebook.

Your tools (e.g. such as Facebook or the Internet) for offering your gifts in the world are things you can't just wipe out of your life. You need to find a balanced approach with these.

How do you do that? One way that works for me is by paying attention to one of the hallmarks of addiction: Unconsciousness. When you succumb to an addiction, you often lose consciousness as you do so, and you may find yourself "snapping out of it" only after you have satisfied your addictive need.

In other words, the minute you start going unconscious is the minute you know you have moved from using a tool to becoming a junkie. Then it's time to cease your current activity and go do something else.

For me, addictions tend to sneak into the "empty spaces". Maybe a program is processing something on my laptop, maybe I'm on the phone waiting to be served by a support desk etc. I get antsy, and I move towards an addiction.

What I've found helpful is having little activities, energizing or restful, ready to implement at a moment's notice: Maybe play a musical instrument, sing, dance (Lover activities) or do some light physical exercise or presencing practices (Warrior activities). This is a great way to counter addiction-inducing passivity or boredom and injecting some joyful presence into your day as you do so.

Try it out and good luck!

*In joyful service,
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Note! If you are reading this without being on the Reclaim your Inner Throne course, I encourage you to take full advantage of it on one condition: Go to www.inner-throne.com/share and share it with two friends. By paying it forward, this material will spread faster and impact more people. Thank you for your service and integrity. – Eivind FS