

WHAT IS ADDICTION?

Addiction can be identified in three characteristics:

1. It is something done regularly, repeatedly, and after a time becomes a habit.
2. There is a compulsive quality to it, meaning at least in part it seems beyond our ability to control.
3. The desire for the addiction persists despite the potential or actual negative consequences it brings to our lives.

As addiction evolves, especially because of patterns of denial, we often need help from others to see if the above three aspects are operating in our lives. The questions below can be a helpful starting point with identifying addiction - Rate the following on a scale of weekly use.

(0 - none), (1 - less than a day or two), (2 - Several Days), (3 - More than half the days), (4 - Nearly every day):

- Drinking at least 4 drinks per day of any kind of alcohol in a single day?
- Smoking any cigarettes, a cigar, pipe, using snuff or chewing tobacco?
- Using any of the following medicines ON YOUR OWN, that is, without a doctor's prescription, in greater amounts or longer than prescribed [e.g., painkillers (like Vicodin), stimulants (like Ritalin or Adderall), sedatives or tranquilizers (like sleeping pills or Valium), or drugs like marijuana, cocaine or crack, club drugs (like ecstasy), hallucinogens (like LSD), heroin, inhalants or solvents (like glue), or methamphetamine (like speed)]?