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**MYTHS AND CONTROVERSIES IN ADDICTION:
A PERSONAL PERSPECTIVE**

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ADDICTION IS A COMPLEX CONSTRUCT

"Certain individuals use certain substances in certain ways, thought at certain times to be unacceptable by certain other individuals for reasons both certain and uncertain"



(Burglass & Shaffer, 1984)

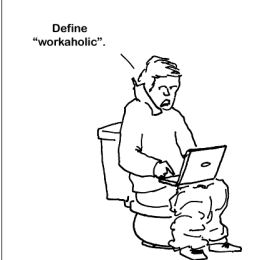
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CONTROVERSY: DEFINING ADDICTION

"Addictive behaviour is a repetitive habit pattern that increases the risk of disease and/or associated personal and social problems....often experienced subjectively as 'loss of control'....these habit patterns are typically characterized by immediate gratification (short term reward), often coupled with delayed, deleterious effects (long term costs)....attempts to change an addictive behaviour (via treatment or by self-initiation) are typically marked by high relapse rates"

Define "workaholic".



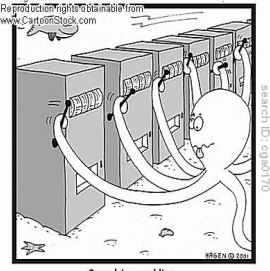
(Marlatt, Baer, Donovan & Kivlahan, 1988)

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CONTROVERSY: GAMBLING ADDICTION HAS CHANGED THE NATURE OF ADDICTION

- Gambling addiction is the 'breakthrough' addiction
- Now accepted in psychiatric and medical texts
- Pathological gambling has been re-classified as an 'impulse control disorder' to a behavioural addiction
- No theoretical reason why other behavioural addictions cannot exist




Compulsive gambling

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CONTROVERSY: ADDICTION COMPONENTS MODEL
(Griffiths, 1995; 1996; 2005; 2009)

- Salience
- Mood modification
- Tolerance
- Withdrawal
- Conflict
- Relapse



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THE CONVERSATION
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There's no such thing as an 'addictive personality' – here's why

March 4, 2016 10:16am GMT



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The Myth of 'Addictive Personality'

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Introduction

In the 30 years that I have been carrying out research into addiction, the question that I have been asked the most – particularly by those who work in the print and broadcast media – is whether there is such a thing as an 'addictive personality'. Psychologists such as Sadava (1) have gone as far as to say that 'addictive personality' is theoretically necessary, logically defensible, and empirically supportable. Sadava argued that if 'addictive personality' did not exist then every individual would be vulnerable to addiction if they lived in comparable environments, and that those who were addicted would differ only from others in the specifics of their addiction (e.g. alcohol, nicotine, cocaine, and heroin). However, Sadava neglected genetic/biological

are critical. Given that I have never seen an explicit definition of 'addictive personality' I provide my own definition and argue that 'addictive personality' (if it exists) is a cognitive and behavioural style which is both specific and personal that renders an individual vulnerable to acquiring and maintaining one or more addictive behaviours at any one time. I also agree with Coninger et al. (5) that the relationship between addictive characteristics and personality variables depend on the theoretical considerations of personality. According to Nathan (6) there must be standards of proof to show valid associations between personality and addictive behaviour. He reported that for the personality trait or factor to genuinely exist it must:

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THE MYTH OF ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY

- Two main reasons why people believe in the concept of addictive personality
- Some addicts are addicted to more than one substance/activity (cross addiction) and engage themselves in more than one impulsive behaviour (Griffiths, 2009; Burleigh et al., 2019)
- On giving up one form of dependent behaviour some addict becomes addicted to another ("reciprocity")



ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY

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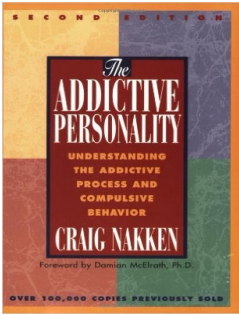
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ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY: A DEFINITION?

- "It needs to be made very clear that the addictive personality I speak of gets created from the illness of addiction and represents a change resulting from the addictive process that takes place within a person. This personality does not exist prior to the illness of addiction, nor does it represent a predisposition to addiction; rather, it emerges from the addictive process. In the same way that cancer or other long-term illnesses can alter one's personality, the illness of addiction also can affect an individual's life and personality. This is what I mean when I use the term 'addictive personality'" (Nakken, 1996).



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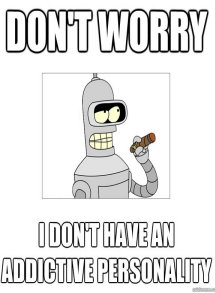



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DEFINING ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY

- Addictive Personality

"A cognitive and behavioural style which is both specific and personal that renders an individual vulnerable to acquiring and maintaining one or more addictive behaviours at any one time" (Parke & Griffiths, 2017)





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- According to Nathan (1988) there must be **standards of proof** to show valid links between personality and addictive behaviour.
- He reported that the personality trait or factor must:
 - either precede the initial signs of the disorder or must be a direct and lasting feature of the disorder
 - be specific to the disorder rather than antecedent, coincident or consequent to other disorders/behaviours that often accompany addictive behaviour
 - be discriminative
 - be related to the addictive behaviour on the basis of independently confirmed empirical, rather than clinical, evidence

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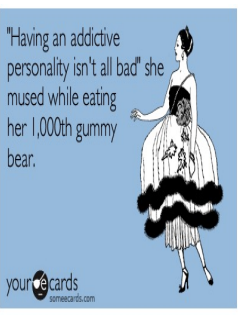


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THE MYTH OF ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY


- There does appear to be **common findings** across a number of differing addictions (MMPI/CPI, Big 5 similarities)
- Most consistent finding is that addictions of all types are associated with high neuroticism and low conscientiousness
- Hard to establish whether these are antecedent to the addiction or caused by it
- Are these common findings really addictive personality?
 - **NO!**

"Having an addictive personality isn't all bad" she mused while eating her 1,000th gummy bear.



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SOME OF MY OTHER 'ADDICTION MYTHS' PAPERS

Journal of Behavioral Addiction, Vol. 1, pp. 143-157 (2012)
DOI: 10.1089/jba.2012.0001
First published online February 5, 2012

Five Myths about Gaming Disorder

Myth 1: Gaming Disorder is a New Disorder

Myth 2: Gaming Disorder is a Substance Use Disorder

Myth 3: Gaming Disorder is a Behavioral Disorder

Myth 4: Gaming Disorder is a Mental Disorder

Myth 5: Gaming Disorder is a Personality Disorder

Common Myths to the Behavioral Addiction Field

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Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012

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MYTH 2: BEHAVIORAL ADDICTIONS CAN OCCUR CONCURRENTLY

ADDITION COMMENTARIES
Commentary on Kraus et al. (2016)

COMPULSIVE SOCIAL BEHAVIOR AS A BEHAVIORAL ADDICTION: THE CASE OF THE PORN ADDICT

Mark D. Griffiths

Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012



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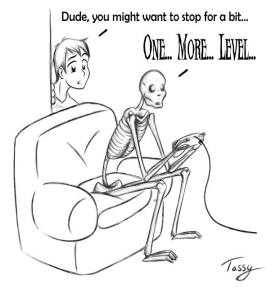
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MYTH 3: ADDICTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH OTHER COMORBIDITIES ARE NOT ADDICTIONS

Internet Gaming Disorder Treatment: A Case Study Evaluation of Four Different Types of Adolescent Problematic Gamers

Alexandre Torres-Rubio*, Mark D. Griffiths*, Xavier Caballero, and José Francisco Rodríguez*

Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012



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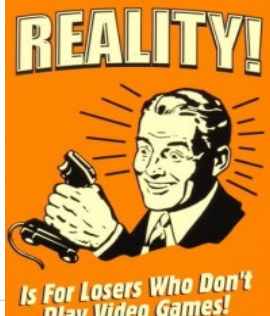
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MYTH 4: VERY EXCESSIVE BEHAVIORS ARE ADDICTIONS

The Role of Context in Online Gaming Excess and Addiction: Some Case Study Evidence

Mark D. Griffiths

Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012



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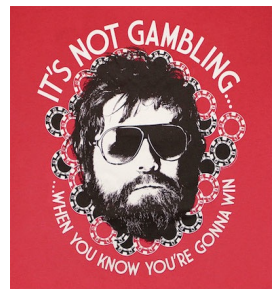
MYTH 5: PROBLEM GAMBLING AND GAMBLING ADDICTION ARE THE SAME

Journal of Addictions and Dependence

Problem Gambling and Gambling Addiction are not the Same

Mark D. Griffiths

Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012



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MYTH 6: VIDEO GAMING HAS MANY BENEFITS SO SHOULD NOT BE CLASSED AS A DISORDER AS IT WILL CREATE A 'MORAL PANIC'

The Therapeutic and Health Benefits of Playing Video Games

Mark D. Griffiths

Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012

Chapter III
Massively Multiplayer Online Role-Play Games for Learning

Mark D. Griffiths
Nottingham Trent University, UK

Submitted: March 11, 2011 Revised: April 1, 2012 Accepted: June 10, 2012

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MYTH 7: INTERNET USE DISORDER AND INTERNET GAMING ARE THE SAME

Addiction Research & Therapy

Internet Addiction Disorder and Internet Gaming Disorder are Not the Same

Problematic Internet Use and Problematic Online Gaming Are Not the Same: Findings from a Large National Representative Adolescent Sample

Daria K. King, MA¹, Mark D. Griffiths, PhD², Robert Utter, PhD³, Justin Finkels, MA¹, Gregory Oldham, PhD⁴, Susanna Stoeberl, PhD⁵, Tamara T. Van Der Linden, PhD⁶, and David L. King, PhD⁷

Abstract

There is an ongoing debate in the literature whether problematic Internet use (PIU) and problematic online gaming (POG) are one disease conceptual and etiological entities or whether they are the same. The current study contributes to this question by examining the interrelationship and the overlap between PUG and POG in terms of risk, clinical significance, and etiological factors. Data from a large national representative adolescent sample of 10,273 U.S. adolescents (ages 12-17) were analyzed using structural equation modeling. Results showed that PUG and POG are distinct constructs with unique etiological factors. PUG was associated with higher levels of anxiety, depression, and social networking, while POG was only associated with online gaming. Based on our findings, POG appears to be a conceptually distinct behavior from PUG, and therefore the two should not be treated as the same. Internet Addiction Disorder and Internet Gaming Disorder are separate neurological entities.

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MYTH 8: WORK ADDICTION AND SEX ADDICTION ARE "NEW" BEHAVIORAL ADDICTIONS

Behavioral addiction: an issue for everybody?

Mark Griffiths

Abstract

Behavioral addiction is a term used to describe a range of behaviors that are characterized by compulsive and repetitive engagement in the behavior, despite negative consequences. This paper discusses the concept of behavioral addiction and its relationship to substance use disorders. It argues that behavioral addiction is a distinct phenomenon and should be treated as such. The paper also discusses the implications of behavioral addiction for treatment and recovery.



"SIR, AREN'T YOU MISSING ANOTHER WORKAHOLIC'S ANONYMOUS MEETING TONIGHT?"

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MYTH 9: WORK ADDICTION IS SIMILAR TO OTHER BEHAVIORAL ADDICTIONS

Conceptualising over-engagement in work: Towards a more global understanding of workaholism as an addiction

Mark D. Griffiths, PhD¹, Robert Utter, PhD², and Justin Finkels, MA¹

Abstract

Workaholism is a term used to describe a compulsive and repetitive engagement in work, despite negative consequences. This paper discusses the concept of workaholism and its relationship to other behavioral addictions. It argues that workaholism is a distinct phenomenon and should be treated as such. The paper also discusses the implications of workaholism for treatment and recovery.



"Hello, yes, sorry... er, my name's Derek and I'm a workaholic."

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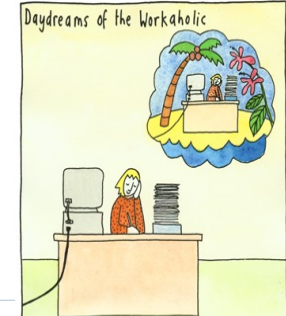
MYTH 10 - WORK ADDICTION AND WORKAHOLISM ARE THE SAME THING

Workaholism is still a useful construct

Mark D. Griffiths, PhD¹, Robert Utter, PhD², and Justin Finkels, MA¹

Abstract

Workaholism is a term used to describe a compulsive and repetitive engagement in work, despite negative consequences. This paper discusses the concept of workaholism and its relationship to other behavioral addictions. It argues that workaholism is a distinct phenomenon and should be treated as such. The paper also discusses the implications of workaholism for treatment and recovery.



"Daydreams of the Workaholic"

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MYTH 11: SOME ADDICTIONS ARE AN EXAMPLE OF OVERPATHOLOGIZING EVERYDAY BEHAVIOUR AND WILL NEVER BE CLASSED AS MENTAL DISORDERS

An Empirical Investigation of Dance Addiction

Mark D. Griffiths, PhD¹, Robert Utter, PhD², and Justin Finkels, MA¹

Abstract


Dance addiction is a term used to describe a compulsive and repetitive engagement in dance, despite negative consequences. This paper discusses the concept of dance addiction and its relationship to other behavioral addictions. It argues that dance addiction is a distinct phenomenon and should be treated as such. The paper also discusses the implications of dance addiction for treatment and recovery.

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CONTROVERSY: BEHAVIORAL ADDICTION HAS IMPLICATIONS FOR TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

Behavioral addiction has wide reaching implications for treatment and recovery, most notably in terms of the debate concerning abstinence versus recovery

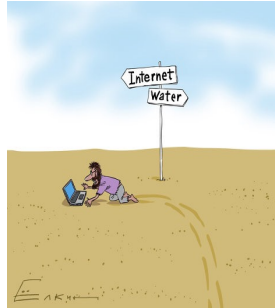
"I'm going to Internets Anonymous... we meet in a Yahoo chatroom!"



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CONCLUSIONS

- Controversies and myths concerning addiction will always depend upon its definition
- Addictive personality does not exist
- Behavioural addictions exist and more will be formally recognized over time
- Some behavioural addictions are more controversial than others



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