



# Addictions and Cravings Introduction

By Michael J. Lincoln, Ph.D.

As the title of this book suggests, this is a book about the meanings of having various addictions and cravings. Put succinctly, the body is like the densest component of our consciousness expression. When all else fails to get the point across to us, our bodies falter in the areas vulnerable to the issues at hand.

When this happens, illnesses, afflictions and disorders happen to tell us what we are not getting by less drastic communications. So when our body and/or our subconscious fails us, we need to listen to hear what the message is.

It is for this reason that this and the other books by the same author about bodily communications (*Messages From the Body; Allergies and Aversions*) were written. They are like translation codes to help us hear the message our body is trying to convey.

They reflect the evolution-based universal collective linkages of the physical body and our subconscious manifestation with the emotional, mental, functional, symbolic, mythological and spiritual realms as they have become fused over the millennia.

Addictions are bodily “cravings” that develop when we are not receiving what we need from other sources. In particular, as will be made clear in this introduction, addictions and compulsive desires develop when our natural connection to the “Home Office” (All That Is) is prevented or severed.

This “God-loss” most frequently happens in our early formative experiences, starting at conception. What effectively happens here is that there is an intense emotional and perhaps physical deprivation in childhood, often in combination with anger and ambivalence about dependency generated by the “poison apple” (untrustworthy and potentially lethal) parenting that occurs in a dysfunctional family.

The problem is that at the very beginning, we are so vulnerable, needy and still remembering in a vague sort of way what it was like “out there” before we came in here that when our parents are unable to rise to the huge challenges of child-rearing in a “kids come last” culture, it is experienced as God rejecting or attacking us. We reach for God and we get “Godzilla.”

There is also often an engulfing and entrapping pattern of familial functioning, so that the individual develops a “steel umbilicus” to the “tie that grinds” -- “prana piranha” parenting pattern of the family. The individual becomes desperately dependent on the most rejecting parent’s characteristics in a “nemesis figure” or “fatal attraction” fixation. They are trying “put a smile on that lizard’s face” lest their soul perishes from separation from or hostility from The Source, as they experience it at the very beginning.

In addition, the individual often becomes enslaved to the dark side of the unconscious and the feminine as a result of the mother’s having made it crystal clear that to “grow away” via developing their own personal potency, identity and destiny is tantamount to both suicide and matricide. ying to “put a new ending on the old story” with a father-stand-in.

In the meantime, the father is either absent, ineffectual, unavailable, unconcerned, exploitative, authoritarian, irresponsible abusive and/or “crazy.” He became involved in a “dance macabre” with a “mother-stand-in” just like she became ensnared in trying to “put a new ending on the old story” with a father-stand-in.

The end result of all this is that we form a “dependent child” relationship with the Universe of such a nature as to drive us to seek out destructive resources and experiences like those we grew up with to try to finally come to a positive resolution with our family (“Godzilla”). The idea is being able to “get things straightened out” with the “Home Office” in a “going for the God Housekeeping Seal of Approval” pattern. The attempt is to put a new ending on the old story by “putting a smile on that lizard’s face” as a function of their “reaching for God and getting Godzilla” in our early formative experience. Also involved here is what could be characterized as “survival-terror.” The massive early deprivation activates profound issues of the right to exist, to have sustenance, and to receive love.

We develop an “empty heart,” along with a pronounced propensity to greed and to hoard, as a desperate effort toward utter annihilation. This greed quality is one of the most characteristic of the addictive and craving patterns.

As a result of this process, we develop all kinds of “substitute solaces” for the missing Cosmic connection and familial nurturance, and the result is the various addictions and compulsive desires that we become dominated by.

Incidentally, it should be noted here there is a BIG difference between addictions and compulsive desires on the one hand and passions and strong preferences on the other. The former diminish us, like a tightening string or a whirlpool, while the latter expand us in an upward spiral as they tap into and release our soul.

As Ralph Metzner so aptly pointed out, in general, there are three such “substitute solaces” we seek. These are:

1. “Power/Effectance” experiences,
2. “Escape/Relief” experiences, and
3. “Worth/Acceptance” experiences.

Each of these has a cluster of substances, activities and environments that lead to these desired experiences. We will now examine these three in a little more detail.

**“Power/Effectance.”** The *power/effectance* experience-seeking addictions are in effect powerlessness-compensation attempts. The person feels overwhelmed and out-classed by the world, and they have a desperate need to have some sense of ability to make an impact, to deal with things, to hold off danger/damage, to “prove” him- or herself.

The whole dynamic arises from being effectively disempowered by the family’s programming and processes when they were a child. When someone is operating from this dynamic, they will become involved in substances like amphetamines, caffeine, coffee, nicotine, PCP, and red meat. And they will engage in activities like molestation, nazism, rage, rape, revenge, violence and the like.

**“Escape/Relief.”** When someone is involved in *escape/relief* experience-seeking addictions, they are in effect screaming, “KEEP THAT AWAY FROM ME!” They have no tolerance for what are for them severely negative experiences, and they will do almost anything to

avoid, escape, deny or minimize the occurrence, experience and/or intensity of such phenomena in their life. Whether it is pain, grief, feelings, responsibilities, awareness, depression, effort or whatever, they will have none of it, if they can help it.

It is a pattern that started in their highly denial-dominated, escape-oriented dysfunctional family. The substances that have the effect of distracting, diverting or desensitizing them are things like alcohol, anti-depressants, barbiturates, grass, hallucinogens, opiates, sedatives and tranquilizers.

Also involved here are patterns like compulsive activity-seeking, intellectualism, meditation, reading, socializing and spiritual experience-seeking that work to “keep the wolves away from their door” with “non-threatening” experiences. In the meantime, things like exhibitionism, fetishes and voyeurism allow them to escape their backlogged sexual drives in a passive and “safe” manner.

**“Worth/Acceptance.”** Finally, the *worth/acceptance* experience-seeking addictions reflect an underlying “What’s the matter with me?” feeling. The experience is that there is something “bad, wrong and evil,” insufficient, disgusting or lacking in them that has consistently led to deprivation, exclusion, ejection, rejection, degradation and the like.

As a result, they are almost crazed about the issues of worth and acceptability, and they are desperate for indications of both at all times. This results in no end of “looking for love in all the wrong faces and in all the wrong places” patterns.

It started in a highly conditionally accepting, neglectful, exploitative and/or rejecting family environment. The substances sought here are things like cocaine, chocolate, dairy products, empathsogens like “ecstasy,” herb teas, soy, sugar and wheat.

Also reflective of the worth/acceptance experience-seeking addictions are patterns such as codependency, gambling addiction, love-aholism, sex addiction, “romancing the stone,” shop-aholism and the like.

All of these processes have the effect of seeking either “other realm” experiences, things that produce consciousness-narrowing, and/or that generates a “channel-switching” outcome. In other words, they take the individual out of our reality, they confine their experiences to a very restricted range of awareness’s, and/or they “grab their attention with another program on another channel” that is away from the realities of their life and experiences.

The result is, of course, a considerably diminished effectiveness of functioning and learning, if not an out-and-out damaging impact on themselves, on others and on the ecology in the addictive downward spiral process.

What follows is a compendium of previous works and the author’s findings regarding the nature of addictions and compulsive cravings and their effects, after which the functional meanings of individual addictions and cravings are presented. This material is designed to provide insight into and compassion for people struggling with addictions.

To start with, a presentation of the commonest motivational patterns involved in the addictive process will be given. These patterns predominate the manifestation of the way addictions disrupt and distort the life of the afflicted individual. It is, of course, quite possible to be operating out of more than one or even with several of these motivations in the addictive/craving process.

*The most frequently occurring motivational patterns of addictive people are as follows:*

1. **“Desperately seeking Susan.”** They are feeling terribly separated from the “Source,” their Higher Self, other people and the world. They are therefore “looking for God in all the wrong places.”

They are starved for union and merging experiences, with a “magnificent obsession” for getting “high” (closer to God). They are willing to “sell their all” to get it.

They have no ability to fill their need from within themselves. There is a deep feeling of emptiness, hopelessness and meaninglessness of life, like a profound hole inside.

It is an issue about their relationship to themselves, along with resentment and anger at the world and the cosmos for not fulfilling their desires. It comes from having had a severe maternal deprivation and/or rejection experience, resulting in an intense sense of isolation and alienation, along with profound questions about their acceptability to God.

2. **“Self-reassurance.”** They feel out-classed and overwhelmed by the world in a powerlessness sort of way, and they are seeking experiences that give them some sense of power over their life. It got started in their dominating and competence undermining family.
3. **“Love-substitute.”** They are in effect a “love-aholic” who is “looking for love in all the wrong places” as a function of feeling undeserving of love, with the resulting abandonment-anxiety.

It arises from early emotional ambiguity and ambivalence, neglect and/or ejection coming from their mother.
4. **“My lifeline.”** They feel rather intensely at risk and threatened by all that is happening within, to, and around them, and they need a “reassuring presence” and “self-stroking device” at all times. It is the resultant of having been left more or less to their own devices a lot in their severely dysfunctional/addictive family.
5. **“Cosmic abandonment.”** They are feeling like they have been “expelled from the Garden of Eden” for being what they are. It has even resulted in their losing or having damaged their connection to their “ultimate back-up resource” (their mother and God), their inner self and their Higher Self. They are experiencing deep self-rejection depression, and it needs corrective work right away.
6. **“Self-avoidance.”** They are running from themselves, due to a fear of what might be inside. They have a real inability to cope with life situations, along with a firm belief that they are being dominated and exploited.

There is a deep-seated feeling of failure in some specific life areas, and they are full of fear-based weakness effects. They are not knowing how to handle life and/or how to love themselves. They were largely ignored until they joined their dysfunctional family’s demoralizing and debilitating lifestyle.
7. **“Self-medication.”** They are seeking to dull the pain of how life is for them and/or to “get through the night” somehow. They have been exposed to a continuous barrage of “relief-seeking” activities by their family and in the culture, and they are a vigorous participant in the process.

It is a systematic avoidance of facing and healing the underlying destructive dysfunctionality that runs their life. It got started in an equally dysfunctional family, and they are just the next generation.
8. **“Survival strategy.”** They found early on that in order to fit in and/or to protect themselves on the survival level in a household that would turn highly hostile or

catastrophically abandoning if they didn't, they had to join the system or the system would devastate them or destroy them.

9. **“Self-numbing.”** They systematically seek to be out of the world around them because it was so invasive, aversive and abhorrent. They turned to the addictive activity because there was simply no way to correct the situation in the family upon which they were totally dependent, and which they felt they couldn't escape.
10. **“Time-structuring.”** They systematically suppress all significance of experience and meaningful manifestation in a ferocious manner. They have a desperate need not to respond to many aspects of reality, and they had to find some way to structure their time, with the result that they became immersed in the addictive process. They were forced by their denial-dominated severely dysfunctional family to frantically avoid reality at all costs.
11. **“Rebellious child.”** They became involved in the addictive process as their way of expressing their rebellion against the whole family system. To escape what they felt was an overwhelmingly controlling and/or authoritarian system, they defiantly got involved in the addictive process. This then resulted in the addiction taking on a life of its own, and in its becoming totally intertwined with the rebellion process.
12. **“Care-coercing.”** They have tied the addictive processes into a responsibility avoidant and environment-milking lifestyle. It is the resultant of a family in which there was a great deal of competence- and confidence-undermining in an unconscious attempt to “keep them around the old homestead” via preventing them from developing their coping capabilities.
13. **“Habituation.”** Sometimes they get sucked into an addictive substance by bodily tolerance reactions which increases to the point where it becomes a full-fledged addiction. They started out recreationally, situationally, or self-dictation, and then circumstances led to their requiring more and more of the experience until it crossed over the “Great Divide.”
14. **“Slow self-destruct.”** They were so thoroughly ignored and devalued that they got the message loud and clear, “Why don't you just do the world a favor and go play on the freeway?” So they found the perfect way to carry out the “Divine imperative,” and they are totally devoted to carrying it out to its bitter ending.

It should be borne in mind that the presumed psychological histories presented here are prototypic, and not necessarily literal for any given person. What they represent is a succinct attempt to convey the inner dynamics and the nature of the message underlying the addiction or craving, through the medium of presenting a typical way in which the dynamic could be established, and with it, the nature of the message being conveyed by the body with the addiction or craving.

One final introductory comment. There will be found five terms used throughout the book which convey much, and which therefore represent very succinct communications. These are “Home Office,” “poison apple parenting,” “urban hermit,” “tripod-rage” and “cave-rage.” For purposes of understanding the items in which they appear, they will be defined here.

**“HOME OFFICE”** stands for All that Is -- the sum and substance of the Cosmos and the Source.

**“POISON APPLE PARENTING”** refers to the process whereby love, nurturance and other forms of parental support and training are saturated with hidden destructive and even at times deadly subtle sabotage and/or destiny-derailment contaminates or even poisons.

**“URBAN HERMIT”** denotes an individual who was so shame-induced or poison apple parented that they have a deep distrust of themselves and of the world, and as a result, there is an “among us but not of us” pattern, much like a visiting anthropologist to another culture.

**“TRIPOD-RAGE”** means the irresistible urge to kick anything with three legs, and it refers to the fury that people, women in particular, have towards the various seriously pathological manifestations of the paranoid patriarchy and their seeming hell-bent-for-leather intent to destroy us all.

**“CAVE-RAGE”** is the irresistible urge to kick any opening, and it describes the virulent hostility that people, men in particular, have towards the various ways in which women in the paranoid patriarchy derail the destinies of their offspring, sons in particular, and in other ways aid and abet the destruction of the human race and of the Earth.