



SESSION 8: EQUATION AND FACTORS OF ADDICTION



Every negative condition in life boils down to sin and brokenness. That does not mean that the addict becomes an addict because he sinned and God cursed him with addiction. Instead, we read in the Romans 3:23 *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."*

Sin is what separated us from God and allowed disease, disorder, and brokenness to enter the world. This is the general character of ALL mankind. All of us are polluted by sin and condemned for it, all are sinners in themselves and by their own transgressions. This is the case for the whole world, not just only for addicts, prostitutes or lawbreakers etc.

In Isaiah 59:2 it reads: *"But your iniquities have separated you from your God; your sins have hidden his face from you, so that he will not hear. We therefore continue to suffer the consequences."*

Sin separates us from the following:

Fellowship with God, because at the point of our sin, we no longer think alike with God.

The blessing of God because at the point of our sin, we are not trusting God and relying on Him.

The benefits of God's love, not the love of God. God loves all sinners, but not the sin and that is what separates us. The Prodigal Son for instance ([Luke 15:11-32](#)) was still loved by the father but did not enjoy the benefits of his love when he was in sin.

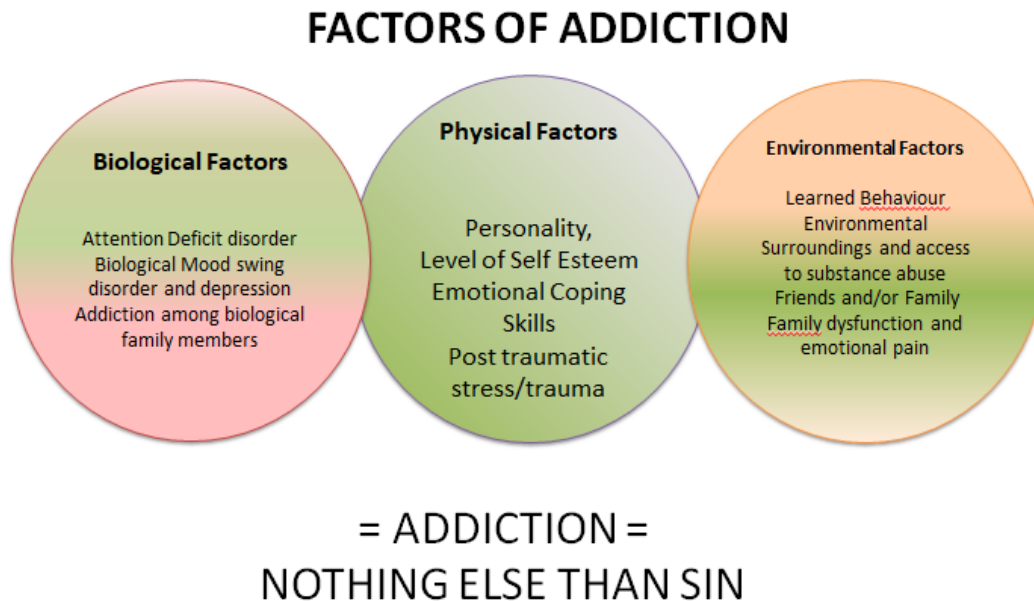


- In what way does addiction separate you from God?
- Do you think that you are not receiving God's blessing while in active addiction?

Let us look further in the factors involved when it comes to addiction.

The three factors of addiction include:

1. **Biological factors**
2. **Physical factors**
3. **Environmental factors**



Biological factors

In the previous sessions, we had already discovered that addiction affects us on several levels and that various factors contribute to addiction. Genetic factors, such as addiction in the family, biological mood swings disorders, depression, ADHD, etc., contribute to addiction. Addiction can also hinder, delay, or stunt brain development.

Physical factors

The presence of emotional baggage, combined with a low level of coping skills, leads to dysfunctional behaviour and makes us more likely to indulge in habits and addictions. This emotional baggage needs to be removed and can only be done through the process of forgiveness. Matt 6:14 "If you forgive those who sin against you, your Heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Heavenly Father will not forgive your sins.

Low self-esteem leads to blame and shame. Most substance abusers seeking help are stuck in the blame and shame mud puddle. Participating in addictive behaviour not only causes pain for the addict but also for the people around him or her.

Environmental factors

Family dysfunction is a family in which conflict, misbehaviour, and often child neglect or abuse can occur continuously and regularly on the part of the parents. This leads other members to accommodate such actions. Family dysfunction causes emotional pain (baggage) which can also be defined as painful memories, mistrust, and hurt that we carry around from past abuse, control or emotional rejection.

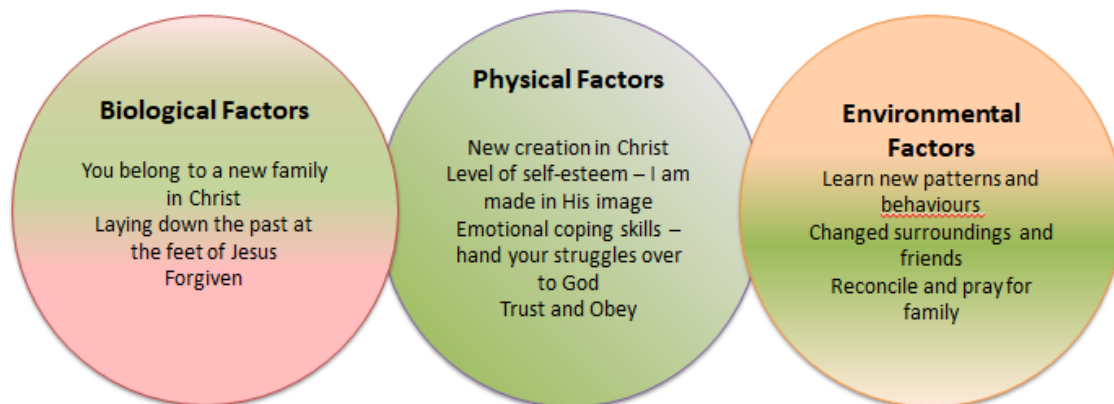
Our actions while in addiction could chain us to our past and force us to live in fear of the future. It is no big secret that we inflict pain on our loved ones. Sometimes we even get to a point where we blame ourselves for our family's dysfunctions. E.g. "My parents getting divorced when I was a child was my fault." "My father abused me physically, but I deserved it." My mother told me I was worthless, and she was right." Rehab sold the lie that I cannot make my own decisions, that I cannot take any responsibility, that I will never be able to hold down a job and that it is likely that I will relapse again". "Surely, it must be true, because they are professionals and I am just a nobody." But, all of this provided us with excuses to continue our destructive behaviour.

Even more tragically, we have been blaming ourselves so much that we feel we deserve punishment, or, on the other hand, we sabotage ourselves. When things look up and when we feel overwhelmed, we run to what we know.



Facilitator or anyone in the group to share one of your own personal stories as to how you ran from hurt and pain through using and what happened when you decided to stop running.

ANTIDOTE FOR ADDICTION



= SALVATION

=WHOLE IN CHRIST – A CONTINUES PROCESS OF GROWTH

As an addict then, is there something we can do to stop using? We are certainly left with a lot of choices. We can choose to be helped or to seek help. We are free to go to rehab or continue to live on the street. We are free to come out of denial or to continue thinking we don't have a problem. We are free to go through withdrawals, go cold turkey or continue stealing, robbing or manipulating others to get our next fix and satisfy our flesh. It is true that God gave us the power of choice!

Duet 30:19

"Today, I have given you the choice between life and death, between blessings and curses. I call on heaven and earth to witness the choices you make. Oh, that you would choose life, that you and your descendants might live."



A picture says a thousand words. Nobody wakes up one morning, saying "hey, today I am going to become a drug addict or an alcoholic". No, that first drug or drink is almost innocent. The reality of it is that it makes us feel good. That is why people struggle to get and stay sober. The truth is that addiction it is nothing but a slow suicide. It kills our relationships, it kills your inhibitions, and it kills your dreams. We must learn different behaviors in order to manage life's daily stressors and develop strategies to deal with the challenges that will arise in our recovery process. In recovery we will find a variety of barriers that will challenge our ability to move forward productively.

However, the more we work on sobriety, the

more we will move over to the other side where we can enjoy the ride of fulfilling our life's purpose, being happy and content. Choosing to be sober or to abuse drugs is truly this extreme. Addiction ultimately will ruin our lives.

Homework for group members:



Think about whether there is something in your own life you can relate to when it comes to Biological factors, Physical factors and Psychological Factors



Now write down the things you relate to and write what you think God's design was for you. (Clue – you can look up scriptures to support your answers. E.g. "The factor I relate to under Physical factor is low self-esteem. "Gods design for me is to be confident, have dignity and self-respect and self-assurance. Psalm 139: 13 – 14 "For you created my inmost being; you knit me

together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made. I know that full well"

Your Environmental factor may be the Family dysfunction of an absent parent. Deut 6:7 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. **Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.**"