

## OBSESSION

An obsession is described as a disturbing preoccupation with an ideal or feeling. Someone may say jokingly that they are obsessed with the thoughts of food – which means that they think about food all the time...even when their eating or the appetite is satisfied. But an obsession can be no laughing matter; indeed, an obsession can so preoccupy someone that they are consumed by it or they become a slave to it.

Alcoholism or drug addition has long been an illness of our society – and perhaps much of the world. In AA {Alcoholics Anonymous), the alcoholic and family are instructed on the matter that

controlled and pleasurable drinking is an obsession; that is, the alcoholic will one day be able to control his drinking and thereby enjoy rather than be enslaved by alcohol.

In this circumstance, the alcoholic lives an illusive dream that independently, or without help and intervention, he will be able to break the addiction and put the drink or drug at his mercy; yet, it is he who remains at mercy to feed and maintain his habit.

The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his drinking is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker

- Chapter 3, The Big Book of Alcoholics  
Anonymous

Obsessions can be protracted to the category of a personality or mental disorder – for which your grandfather would no much being an RN in psychiatric medicine. But in laymen's terms, here are a few of my limited findings from Encarta:

- Obsessive-Compulsive Personality Disorder is characterized by a preoccupation with details, orderliness, perfection, and control. People with this disorder often devote excessive amounts of time to work and productivity and fail to take time for leisure activities and friendships.
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder is mental illness in which a person experiences recurrent, intrusive thoughts (obsessions) and feels compelled to perform certain behaviors (compulsions) again and again.

Aside from clinical and formal disorders, an obsession can occur in periods of one's life. For the young lady, concerned about her weight, an obsession can occur regarding food, diet, and exercise. She may find herself bingeing and purging her stomach in a vicious cycle of gorging and self-induced vomiting – a condition that may lead to eventual death. For a young man, the recurring and sometimes frequent thoughts of sensual matters and the opposite gender may seem like an obsession. An obsession is obviously different from a commitment or obligation; it is more than being focused to the task or matter. An obsession is a god that replaces the Lord with a counterfeit, an aberration, a vexing if not debilitating master.

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