

“Replacement addictions” (3)

Before we begin with this lesson I would like to spend a few minutes to share with you what we looked at in our last two lessons. To begin with we looked at some of the most common addictions we’re faced with today and noticed that some are more obvious than others.

1. Alcohol Addiction
2. Smoking
3. Drug Addiction
4. Gambling
5. Food Addiction
6. Video Games
7. Internet Addiction
8. Sex Addiction
9. Shopping
10. Work Addiction

And we also looked at some statistics which were very concerning and we saw that this can be very challenging if we want to reach out to the addict. We saw very clearly that no-one starts out to be an addict but because of circumstances they end up becoming an addict. We also saw that in most cases with any addiction, they become addicts because it helps them change the way they feel about themselves and the world around them.

We also looked at what the Bible has to say about addiction and discovered the Bible says a lot about addiction. And at first glance it didn’t look like it said a lot until we looked at the Greek word for **addicted**. And finally we spent most of our time looking at the true nature of man. **1 Thessalonians 5:23** “**May the God of peace himself sanctify you completely. May your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**” We broke this down and looked at what it means to be human and how man possesses a spirit, soul and body.

In the last lesson we saw the importance of looking at addicts in the same way which Jesus looks at them. Not as they are now but what they can become. We went through a scenario if an addict was to come into our congregations asking for help. We saw the importance of just listening. **James 1:19** “**Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters! Let every person be quick to listen, slow to speak, slow to anger**”.

We spoke about asking the addict the question which Jesus asked the lame man in **John 5:1-6** “**Do you want to be made well?**” We understand that until they are willing to help themselves we can’t help them. We looked at how we can prepare ourselves to help them by praying and doing some research about the addiction, finding some support groups outside of church and going along with them to support them.

And finally we spoke about how important it is to use and recognise the help we have within our own congregations because most people are actually formally addicts. **1 Corinthians 6:9-11** “**Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived! The sexually immoral, idolaters, adulterers, passive homosexual partners, practicing homosexuals, thieves, the greedy, drunkards, the verbally abusive, and swindlers will not inherit the kingdom of God. Some of you once lived this way. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God**”.

Today we’re going to see that some addictions that are actually very good for us and can actually help addicts get through those negative addictions. **A little boy goes into an army surplus shop and asks for plastic explosives. He goes to school with them strapped all over his body and his friend asks him, ‘why have you got explosives strapped to your body?’ and he said, ‘well there is this one boy who keeps pushing me around at school and if he pushes me today he will blow his hand off’.**

Now that little boy isn’t thinking straight and we need to remember that many addicts may know they are hurting those around them but they don’t see that they are actually hurting themselves in the process. You see loved ones, when a person has an addiction and they are trying to get help with it, one of the biggest problems they face is trying to stop thinking about the addiction. And it’s in this area where the Bible can really help; it’s almost like replacement therapy.

Now what do I mean by that? Well I mean we need to try and replace those negative thoughts and desires with some positive thoughts and desires. And please understand that this takes time, this can take months or even years. I know that even today I still think about my past addictions. Even today, 13 years later I still I wonder **what it would be like just to have one joint?**

Now I do thank God that when those desires come I can resist them a lot easier today than I did 13 years ago. But the key is all about taking it one day at a time. Or as a good friend once said to me, **'keep it in the day'**. In other words don't go worrying about getting through your addiction tomorrow, just concentrate on getting through your addiction today. And we help the addict get through today by slowly replacing those negative addictions thoughts with positive addiction thoughts.

Let me ask you, **what kind of addictions would be classed as positive addictions?** Whatever the replacement is, it's needs to be as follows.

1. It is something noncompetitive that you choose to do and you can devote an hour (**approximately**) a day to it.
2. It is possible for you to do it easily and it doesn't take a great deal of mental effort to do it well.
3. You can do it alone or rarely with others but it does not depend upon others to do it.
4. You believe that it has some value (**physical, mental, or spiritual**) for you.
5. You believe that if you persist at it you will improve, but this is completely subjective—you need to be the only one who measures that improvement.
6. The activity **must** have the quality that you can do it **without criticizing yourself. If you can't accept yourself during this time the activity will not be addicting.** This is why it is so important that the activity can be done alone.
<http://www.justinowings.com/positive-addiction-by-william-glasser/>

It's all about changing our daily routines and the way we think on a daily basis. Or in the words of the apostle Paul in **Philippians 4:8 "Brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things are honourable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report; if there is any virtue, and if there is any praise, think about these things."** You see at the root of all addictions is the sin of self-will. Whenever we choose to run our lives without accepting and submitting to God's will for us, we are headed for trouble.

A young lady named Donna says this, "I worked in a chemical dependency program for four years and watched addict after addict try to pull their lives back together only to find that it's much harder than they could have imagined. No one wants to be a drug addict or alcoholic, but when we dabble in what God warns against, the inevitable will happen. Our hearts will be taken away (changed) and by the time we come to the realization of this, we are addicted and much damage has been done."

You see loved ones; anything that opens up a mind and heart to the need for God and creates a willingness to seek God is a great thing. The challenge for all who are caught in the compulsive and obsessive behaviour of addictions is the need to replace the pleasurable experiences that come from drinking, drugs, food etc with something more meaningful and lasting. In other words we need to begin the positive addictions process from within and only God can do that.

And perhaps the greatest awakening for an addict willing to go to any length to get well, is the awareness of how God works through our weakness. When we finally surrender and admit that we are powerless, we prepare the way for God to take over. And when God takes over, the former addict can say, what many Christians are now saying.

I've spent enough money and years reaching for the tobacco, I'm reaching for the future. I've reached for food enough, now I'm reaching for Jesus. I've lifted the glass enough. Now I lift my hands and bless the Lord. I've stuck my finger down my throat for the last time. Now I'm going to stick my finger in the devil's eye. From now on, the only shooting up I'm going to do is when the trumpet of God sounds and I go shooting up into heaven.

So let's go ahead and look at some positive additions from a Christian perspective. Now usually when we hear the word **addiction**, we think of negative addictions such as smoking, swearing, drinking, gambling etc. And when something is bad for us it may end up becoming second nature, it becomes a habit, something we do without much effort or thought. And after time we become dependent on it, either emotionally or physically. And when we finally try to do without it, we experience various degrees of discomfort and various withdrawal symptoms.

A positive addiction is when you become dependent upon a good thing, a good habit. So someone who has a food addiction starts to do some regular exercise, the regular exercise itself becomes a good addiction.

And so a positive addiction is a habit which is good for you, either physically, mentally, or spiritually. And now the new habit becomes your new source of pleasure and satisfaction. And so positive addiction **1. Start each day in personal prayer and meditation.**

This is your quiet time where you can start to develop time for yourself and to assess how things are going in your life. In this life we all are faced with various kinds of difficulties, afflictions and sorrows. We go to a doctor to get relief for our bodily ailments. We approach numerous authorities for obtaining solution for our worldly problems.

But for spiritual problems we need to go to God in prayer. Pray **Psalm 139:23+24** “Search me, God, and know my heart. Try me, and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way”.

You see most addicts are so wrapped up in getting their next fix and so busy running around trying to get it; they don't have time to stop and reflect. And what praying does apart from teaching them to pray to God, it helps them to stop and slow down and reflect upon their lives. It helps them to keep asking themselves, **do I want to be well?** It helps them realize that there is a God who is more than willing to help them get well.

It was C.S. Lewis who said, ‘The moment you wake up each morning, all your wishes and hopes for the day rush at you like wild animals. And the first job each morning consists in shoving it all back; in listening to that other voice, taking that other point of view, letting that other, larger, stronger, quieter life come flowing in’.

Morning prayers are like **Mars Bars**, they help us work, rest and pray. You see first thing in the morning is the time when your body is as rested as it will be all day. First thing in the morning is the time when your mind is the sharpest it will be all day. **Psalm 5:3** “LORD, in the morning you will hear me; in the morning I will present my case to you⁴ and then wait expectantly for an answer.” It's first thing in the morning when we can express gratitude to God for the opportunities of a new start. We can reflect on the mistakes of yesterday and understand that they have past.

It's in our morning prayers that we can say what Jeremiah says in **Lamentations 3:21-24** “This is what comes to mind, and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's gracious love we are not consumed, since his compassions never end. They are new every morning—great is your faithfulness! “The Lord is all I have,” says my soul, “Therefore I will trust in him.”

And if we had a difficult time yesterday we can say along with the Psalmist in **Psalm 30:5** “For his wrath is only momentary; yet his favour is for a lifetime. Weeping may lodge for the night, but shouts of joy will come in the morning.”

By praying in the morning we can follow the example of **Job** where the writer says in **Job 1:5** “When their time of feasting had concluded, Job would rise early in the morning to send for them and consecrate them to God.”

And so instead of getting up in the morning and thinking I need my coffee fix, we can sing along with Psalmist who says in **Psalm 118:24** “This is the day that the Lord has made; let's rejoice and be glad in it”.

Loved ones its early morning which is the ideal time to organise our day. Replacing those negative addictions starts by beginning the day with positive ones. So we start off each day with a prayer and meditation and then we have positive addiction **2. Spend time learning.**

This is another great way to fill our minds with good positive thoughts. This could be encouraging the addict to enroll in a few classes at a community college, it be going to the library and get involved in book study groups. Or they can just simply read books on self-help or mental health material, if that's appropriate.

The whole idea is to grow your mind and learn. And again we can encourage people to reads their Bibles on a daily basis. Most people who have tried to read the Bible daily did not keep it up and that's including Christians. **Why?** Because reading the Bible ends up becoming a chore for them rather than a pleasurable experience. And so you end up missing one day, then two days and then you can't be bothered to pick the Bible up and start reading it again.

So how do we about making reading the Bible daily a good positive addiction rather than a chore? Well if you think about a marathon runner, they didn't start out by running 25 miles on the first day of training. No. They slowly but surely built up the distance over a period of time, they trained themselves.

Hebrews 5:14 “But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.” Now notice that solid food is for the mature, but they have trained themselves. And this is where many people go wrong when they want to start reading the Bible daily for the first time. They try to do too much, too soon, they try to digest more than their stomachs can handle.

And so they start off with great goals and plan to read the entire Bible in one year so they begin in **Genesis** and get lost by the time they reach **Leviticus**. If we’re going to encourage the addict to read the Bible for themselves every day, let’s be realistic. Let’s start them off in the New Testament.

I know that if my son Joshua doesn’t have an appetite, Josh is sick and I get concerned, because I know that I do not have to cokes Josh to eat if he is healthy. In fact, one thing we all know who’s had kids in our house, when they are ready to eat, you can’t distract them. Now, you can distract me, but if you get a young kid, when it’s time to eat, he’s not distracted, he’s going to focus on eating and he’s going to let you know about it, until you satisfy that need.

Now, an addict is only going to become a healthy growing Christian on a strong diet of the word of God. You see, what we’re trying to encourage here is for them to feed that new nature, so that they lose the taste for the old garbage they used to take in.

Now everyone has to learn how to feed themselves at some stage in their lives. We all have seen little children when we feed them for the 1st year or 2, but there comes a point when we try to teach them to feed themselves. **Do you remember how messy that was? Do you remember how they would get food on the floor, food on the table and food in the hair, food on the clothes and food all over the face?**

But, they always managed to get a little something in. The addict may not know much about feeding themselves, but if they get stuck right in to their Bible something good is going to get in. And the more they do it, the more they learn how to do it. **Psalm 110:15+16** “I will meditate on your precepts, and I will respect your ways. I am delighted with your statutes; I will not forget your word”.

So we can encourage the addict to grow in their learning. Ask them to read one book of the New Testament at a time, when you see them ask them what they have read and if they understand what they have read. Encourage them to write down any questions they may have, encourage them to ask about any passages they don’t fully grasp. Get excited with them when they discover something new and then encourage them even more not just to read the Bible but do what it says.

Read with them **James 1:22-24** “Keep on being obedient to the word, and not merely being hearers who deceive themselves. For if anyone hears the word but is not obedient to it, he is like a man who looks at himself in a mirror and studies himself carefully, and then goes off and immediately forgets what he looks like.”

And so loved ones if we encourage them to read their Bible regularly and encourage them to do what the Bible says, this will turn out to be a very good habit to get into. So we start our day in prayer and meditation, we spend time learning and positive addiction **3. Spend time in groups.**

This could be attending a worship services, acting in a play or any group with positive interaction and direction. And what this does is enhances their ability to develop relationships with other people. Now remember the addict is used to hanging out with other addicts but if they want to be well, they need to change their relationships and make new friends. And as we saw in our last lesson, we need to encourage the addict to get as much support as possible and keep going along to support meetings with them.

But we should also try and encourage them to come along to our worship meetings to get some spiritual support. **Hebrews 10:24+25** “And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the day approaching.”

Now remember if the addict’s normal Sunday routine is like most of their other days, they will still be sleeping by the time we finish our meetings. **Or as someone once said, ‘Bad habits are like comfortable beds, easy to get into but hard to get out of.’** But if we’re going to help them to help themselves, we really need to be setting the example.

Talk to them about worship; tell them about the amazing singing they will hear.

Tell them they will find even more help when the speaker starts, tell them you need to come and meet the many people that are praying for them. Because let me tell you loved ones, if you're not convinced meeting together can help, you can be sure that the addict will never be convinced. Invite them along to your mid-week meetings and help get them out of the habit of just lazing around or doing whatever, encourage them to get out and break that routine.

I remember a few months ago we had a drug addict who came to one of our mid-week studies after an invitation. And so we altered our study slightly to help and reach out to them, we ended up talking about how God forgave King David of his many sins. And he asked an amazing question. Can God forgive me for twenty four years of sin?

Yes they were an addict, yes they had mental health issues but they certainly understood that they were a sinner who needed to be forgiven. And the point I'm trying to make loved ones is that God can do things which we can't do. And when the addict realises this, this will actually help them to think about something more important than their addiction, which is their soul. So we encourage them to break their usual routine and replace it with a more positive one.

Years ago when the western U.S. was being settled, roads were often just wagon tracks. These rough trails posed serious problems for those who journeyed on them. On one of these winding paths was posted a sign which read: "Avoid this rut or you'll be in it for the next 25 miles!"

Now as funny as that is, there are many people today who are stuck in a rut due to their addictions and they have been for many years. And so what we're trying to do is break the normal routine with a new one, whilst at the same time replacing those thoughts of the negative addiction with positive ones. So we start our day in prayer and meditation, we spend time learning; we spend in groups and positive addiction **4. Take time for yourself.**

Now we can help the addict by helping them organize their weekly routines. But this is something which needs to be done together if the addict is happy to do it. And so you may say, Sunday and Wednesdays are going to be their worship and study times, Tuesday evenings may be their addiction group time etc. But remember they still need some time for themselves.

As someone once said, 'there is no use in being so heavenly minded that your no earthly good.' In Mark 7 we see Jesus dealing with the Pharisees and Scribes and large crowds are following Him everywhere. But in Mark 7:24 "Jesus left that place and went to the territory of Tyre and Sidon. He went into a house, not wanting anyone to know he was there." Jesus got really wearied from constant people-contact just as we do. So He hid away at a friend's house in the hope of finding seclusion.

And there are times loved ones we too need to take a people break. We too need to give our bodies time to refuel, so that when our lives integrate once more with others, we will be sincere and productive. And so we encourage the addict to plan a quiet day just for them, away from their family and work.

Somewhere where they can indulge themselves in quietness. Maybe it's a game of golf, or going for a walk with the dog. But we all need time to ourselves and this too is a great way to reflect upon on life and look at where they have come from and where they are at now and where they hope to be in the months and years ahead. Loved ones we live in a busy world. And with all the time saving devices in our homes and work places we would think that we would have so much more time for ourselves and that's true but we don't do it.

We look at our watches and say, "Goodness, just look at the time". Or "My how time flies". Or "We are already in the second half of the year. Next thing you know we'll be getting ready for Christmas". Time is something we wrestle with every day. Our lives are packed so full that the day is finished before we have accomplished half of what we wanted to do. In fact, experts tell us that we are trying to do in one day that not so long ago took three days.

But if there was ever a busy man it was Jesus. There was a constant flow of people wanting to see him, to hear him, to have him heal their sick and to test out His theology. For the disciples it wasn't any different. They were in the middle of it all and we are told in Mark 6:31 "That there were so many people coming and going that Jesus and the disciples didn't even have time to eat". So Jesus said to his disciples: "Let us go by ourselves to some place where we will be alone, and you can rest awhile. So they found a boat and started out for a lonely place".

We need to take timeout to reassess where we are going, what have we done wrong, and how we can do things a different way.

We know all this but more often than not we struggle and tell ourselves we don't have time to stop for a while. In fact, we often feel guilty when we do stop for a while and have a bit of 'me' time. Jesus didn't feel guilty about taking time out. He didn't make his disciples feel guilty either. They were human, so was He. They had a hectic life and there was a sense of urgency to get as much done as possible in the short time that Jesus had in the world.

Jesus has no qualms about having a little bit of time away from the pressures that had been placed on Him by others. He had a concern also for His disciples after all they have just come back from a strenuous mission. And so he says, **'Let's get away for a while to quiet spot and rest.'**

All of us have days where we need that kind of invitation. Just as Jesus needed to get away for a while, so do we. We cannot keep up the pace under constant pressure from all directions. Jesus knew that they had to be alone. They needed to retreat, so that they might be refreshed and renewed to continue to do what had to be done.

And loved ones the addict is no different, they too just like us can learn from Jesus. He was never too busy or too overwhelmed by everything that was happening in His life to take time out. And like I said earlier, this can be a great way to collect our thoughts when we are alone, away from the noise and the hustle of the crowd. So we start our day in prayer and meditation, we spend time learning; we spend in groups, we take time for ourselves and positive addiction **5. Be of service.**

Encourage the addict do some volunteer work or engage in random acts of kindness. This helps them feel good about themselves and helps them build self-esteem especially because they are not getting paid for it. When the apostle Paul met up with the Ephesian elders in **Acts 20**, he reminds them of Jesus' words in **Acts 20:35** **"It is more blessed to give than to receive."**

Now when we think about giving we usually think only about giving money. But loved ones, we can give in so many other different ways, **can't we? What other ways can we give?** Time, food, lift (transport), clothes, comfort etc. **The story goes that the benevolent Dr. Wilson once discovered a clergyman at Bath who was sick, poor, and had a large family. In the evening he gave a friend fifty pounds, requesting him to deliver it in the most delicate manner, and as from an unknown person. The friend said, "I will deliver it to him early in the morning." Dr. Wilson then said, "You will oblige me, sir, by calling directly. Think of what importance a good night's rest may be to that poor man."**

You see giving money isn't going help the man who has just lost his wife in a train crash. Giving him time and a shoulder to cry on will. Giving money isn't going to help the woman whose husband has just walked out on her for someone else. Giving time and understanding will. Giving money isn't going help the child who's just failed one of their exams at school. Giving them encouragement to keep going will.

Proverbs 21:25+26 **"The sluggard's craving will be the death of him, because his hands refuse to work. All day long he craves for more, but the righteous give without sparing."** It really does feel good when we give and this will help build up self-esteem for the addict when they help someone with no thought of reward. And this again will help the addict to start to replace the addiction of self with the addition of helping others.

Think about your home congregation and ask yourself, if an addict came in and they accepted your help and they were making great process in trying to help themselves. **What areas could they get involved in within your congregation?**

Maybe they could help serve tea and coffee, maybe they could help put out all the hymn books, maybe they could go with you when you're visiting the saints and the elderly. But whatever they are involved in, it's all about teaching them to give of themselves. And whatever our form of giving is, we need to teach them that it needs to be done in way which pleases God.

1. Give Secretly. Teach them that there are times they can give without telling the world that they're giving. **Matthew 6:1** **"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of people in order to be noticed by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven."**

2. Give Generously. Teach them the principles of reaping and sowing. **2 Corinthians 9:6** **"The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously"**.

3. Give Purposely. Teach them that giving is all about the heart and not the amount.

2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each of you must give what you have decided in your heart, not with regret or under compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.”

4. Give Cheerfully. Teach them the reason we give is because we want to please God. 2 Corinthians 9:7 “Each of you must give what you have decided in your heart, not with regret or under compulsion, since God loves a cheerful giver.”

5. Give Sacrificially. Teach them that investing in God is trusting that God will meet their own needs. Mark 12:41-44 “Then he sat down opposite the offering box, and watched the crowd putting coins into it. Many rich people were throwing in large amounts. And a poor widow came and put in two small copper coins, worth less than a penny. He called his disciples and said to them, “I tell you the truth, this poor widow has put more into the offering box than all the others. For they all gave out of their wealth. But she, out of her poverty, put in what she had to live on, everything she had.”

6. Give Proportionately. Teach them to balance their giving and keep some aside specially for the Lord. 2 Corinthians 16:2 “On the first day of the week, each of you should set aside some income and save it to the extent that God has blessed you.”

Now like I said I know a few of these scriptures is talking about money but the principles can be applied to any kind of giving. People gave of their time, talents, material goods, finances etc, not out of a sense of duty or in anticipation of a promised blessing, but out of a grateful life given by a generous God.

You see loved ones we’re trying to help the addict replace negative addictions with some positives ones. So we start our day in prayer and meditation, we spend time learning; we spend in groups, we take time for ourselves and be of service to others. Loved ones I hope and pray these lessons on addiction have been useful and I pray the Lord will help us help the addicts in our lives.

Let me leave you with an interview I did with a very good Christian friend of mine who has struggled with addictions for many years. And when I read this out you will recognise all the principles I have taught during these last three lessons. In other words here’s a person who has put into practice what I’ve said and thankfully the congregation she went too done what they could to help too.

I asked my friend, [what was your life like before you realised you had a problem?](#) She answered, ‘Being brought up by alcoholic parents it was always dysfunctional. When life got tough, I never thought I wanted to drink but I found that alcohol made me feel better, for a while. I was always discontent in everything but didn’t understanding why.

I first started drinking when I was going through a divorce, my friend came to stay with me and she first introduced me to alcohol. And it was great because it gave me confidence but I didn’t realise that it was false confidence. And it made me feel like everybody else feels, they could be happy, they could be confident, they could be pretty, they could be funny, they could be all those things that I felt I wasn’t.’

I then asked them, [at what point did you realise that you had a problem?](#) She answered, ‘When I had a drink I became a completely different person. I was brought up with God in my life, my mum was a believer, and I was brought up with morals and standards. And very quickly when I became an alcoholic, all that went out the window.

When I first picked up drink and thought, ‘[wow, I wouldn’t normally behave like that,](#)’ I just thought, I’m just drunk, it’s all right. I was in complete denial but I thought it was alright because everyone else done the same’.

And then I asked her, [at what point did you realise you needed to do something about it?](#) She answered, ‘I drank for six years and there were times when I thought maybe I do have a problem, maybe I’m like my mum, maybe I’m an alcoholic.

And then I would just say to myself, ‘[don’t be daft, I don’t drink enough](#)’. And so because I didn’t drink a lot, I thought I can’t be an alcoholic. I used just put it to the back of my mind. The first time I really knew I had a problem, I did something about it.

In **December 2000** I spoke to a family member whom I knew wouldn’t just let me go on that way and then I called a support group for alcohol and went to my first meeting.

Now I already had become a Christian a couple of years before that and turned my life around in so many ways but very slowly I started to pick up the drink again. I couldn't understand why I was still drinking even though I was a Christian so I justified it by saying; 'well I'm only having a couple of glasses of wine'.

I used to search through the Bible for anything that told me I could not drink but I could never find anything, so I used this to justify my drinking. And because I didn't drink nothing like I did before I became a Christian, I used to justify that by telling myself, 'that's alright'. God was in my life and God was in my heart and I used to think I was pathetic and worthless because I couldn't understand why I couldn't stop drinking'.

I asked her, [how long have you been going along to these support groups?](#) She replied, '11 years but because I take it a day at a time, I need that support a day at a time to help me not to pick up a drink. I go to these meetings to help other alcoholics too. And when someone comes in for the first time they remind me of what I used to be like. I had no intention of becoming a Christian but people in the church just kept loving me, they were just so nice to me for no reason, they didn't want anything from me. Christianity and the support group almost worked hand in hand'.

Finally I asked her, [what advice would you give someone with an addiction of any kind?](#) She said, 'They need to ask themselves if they really want help, because if they don't, any sort of help won't work. They need to recognise that they are powerless on their own. I would then point them in the direction of the appropriate support group.'

As a councillor I would say that people with addictions are just lost, their lives are in a mess. People see other people with addictions as bad, dangerous, horrible, thieves or whatever because they've done some terrible things. They are just human beings who somewhere along the line have become lost. Yes they've done bad things but that doesn't make them bad people.

They need guidance, unconditional love and help because without that help many will end up dead. And just like Christians are afraid of junkies or alcoholics, junkies and alcoholics are also afraid of Christians. The Christians are usually frightened because they don't understand the addict, but the addict is also frightened because they think the Christian is so saintly'.