



iQuestions Faculty, Dr. David Eckman

Question:

Are there hard and soft addictions?

Answer:

Addiction specialists make a distinction between hard and soft addictions, and it's an important distinction that we should remember.

Hard addictions are alcohol addiction, cigarette smoking, heroin use, anything that involves an injected or ingested chemical. Soft addictions have to do with workaholism, codependency—things that aren't directly involving chemicals.

The challenge with chemicals is that they alter the very structure of the mind. So, as you think about addictions, if you're heading in the direction of heroin use, methamphetamine use, be super careful because they alter the very chemistry of the body.

Addictions are dangerous, relationally dangerous, physically dangerous, no matter what direction you go into—but hard addictions are to be really avoided. If you're finding yourself trapped in them, then immediately do an about-face, find a recovery group, find an accountability group, and really aggressively address those hard addictions.

Soft addictions demand aggression, but when it comes to hard addictions, those things need to be taken with really great seriousness.