



# Myth-Busting Addiction

Addiction is shrouded in misconceptions that can prevent individuals from seeking help and often hinder recovery. To promote better understanding and more compassionate attitudes toward addiction, we've debunked some of the most common myths surrounding the condition.

**❗ Myth:** Addiction only refers to substance use.

**🔍 Fact:** While substance use disorders (SUDs) are a common type of addiction, the term can also refer to behavioral addictions, which may involve compulsive and repetitive behaviors that harm an individual's well-being and relationships. For example, a person may be addicted to gambling, food, shopping or work. Like substance use disorders, these behavioral addictions are marked by compulsive engagement in the behavior despite negative consequences, loss of control and withdrawal symptoms when trying to stop.

**❗ Myth:** People with addiction issues have a lack of willpower.

**🔍 Fact:** Addiction is not a failure of willpower or a character defect. Research has shown that addiction is a chronic brain disorder that causes compulsive behavior and loss of control. It is a complex condition, like other illnesses, that involves brain chemistry, function and structure, as well as environmental and genetic factors.

**❗ Myth:** Addiction only affects certain kinds of people.

**🔍 Fact:** Addiction can affect people of all backgrounds, personalities and circumstances. It's considered an "equal opportunity disorder" because it can strike anyone, regardless of their background. It's essential to avoid stigmatizing or stereotyping individuals with addiction and instead offer support and understanding.

**❗ Myth:** Those with addiction issues must hit "rock bottom" before they can begin to recover.

**🔍 Fact:** Recovery from addiction can start at any point. It's a personal decision that can be influenced by various factors, such as early interventions by family or friends, personal motivation or gradual awareness of the need for change. It's important to remember that recovery is a personal journey, and individuals can begin their path to recovery at any stage.

## #SupportSobriety

If you or someone you know is struggling with substance use or addiction, call the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357.

