



# Hints That You Might Be Addicted

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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No one likes to hear that they have an addiction. Sometimes their use of a substance or process addiction develops so subtly that one doesn't even recognize what is occurring until consequences set in.

There is a powerful line in the song "Slow Fade" by Casting Crowns that claims, "People Never Crumble in a Day". You see choices over time lead to problems.

Following are some of the things that can help you to assess your situation:

1. Secrets - When you are trying to hide the things that you are doing from other people, then you are probably up to no good. It doesn't matter if it is using pornography, drinking alcohol, shoplifting, having an affair or stealing - these things all take a toll at some point.
2. Lying - Telling one lie means that you have to tell another to cover it up and then another to cover that one up. Eventually you forget what the first lie was and then you are busted.
3. Contacts - We become like our surroundings. When the people in our lives have substance or process addictions, we are setting ourselves up for addictions. If you think that your group of friends don't drink too much, try being the sober one in the room and see if your initial assessment changes.
4. Opinions - When other people are confronting you about things you are doing, don't ignore them. Having someone share their concerns is likely more about caring than about nagging.
5. Focus - Where do you invest your time, energy, and thoughts? If you are feeling obsessed about something, perhaps you are in or on the edge of trouble.
6. Responsibilities - Are you neglecting things that you value? Perhaps you are not paying your bills on time, doing a good job at work or being there for your family. Letting things slip allows others to lose their trust in your word.
7. Health - Hang overs, feeling poorly or noticing physical problems that you didn't previously experience are warning signs designed to get your attention. Taking more sick time from work is a good indication of problems. I am amazed at how many people eat nutritiously, exercise and then ingest alcohol which is a poison or illicit drugs that are not regulated.
8. Finances - Get honest with yourself about how much you are spending on your "habit". For one month, write down every cent that is going towards substances or activities that can be or are addictive for you. You might be very surprised about how much addictions are stealing from bank account.
9. Fear - If you are worried that you might get caught by police for your actions, you have crossed a serious line. Those in safety sensitive positions who have a positive drug or alcohol test can lose their jobs, reputation, self-respect as well as thousands of dollars in lost wages. Think of it this way. Are you afraid of what your child or grandchild would think of your choices?
10. Shame - Guilt means that you think you have made a mistake. Shame means that you think you are a mistake. Addictions are deceitful because they offer short-term gain in exchange for pain, embarrassment, and self-flagellation. You don't have to be ashamed of yourself anymore.

If you find that there are things on this list that ring true for you, don't despair. There are professionals and resources available to help you. You can invest in yourself today by simply booking an appointment with someone who will help you develop strategies for a better future.