

## Addiction: Between the Devil and the Deep Blue Sea

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### Short Note

"Whether we accept it or not, almost every one of us is an addict. From the mild to the severe, of some persuasion or another, to some degree or another and with some consequence or another. This is not only a fact of life but the inconvenient truth".

After many years of research in the field of addiction, it was not surprising to find that people do not know that alcohol is a drug. Almost everyone says, "Oh my, I didn't know that. Why didn't someone tell me?" In fact, it is the only drug legally available (this statement overlooks the fact that cigarette smoking results in more deaths and health costs) that induces permanent damage to careers, finances, health and the family. Despite notable exceptions, the relapse rate worldwide is unacceptably high. Prescription drugs have had limited effect. This is because most therapies address the conscious and physiological, whereas the roots of addiction lie predominantly in the subconscious emotional brain. Among other things, the effects of childhood trauma and environment need to be addressed. It is apparent that motivation, inspiration and self-realization are under-recognized factors important in the transformational process, and that elicited personal emotional triggers cause relapse far more often than actual external factors such as people, places and events.

But still, many questions remain unanswered.

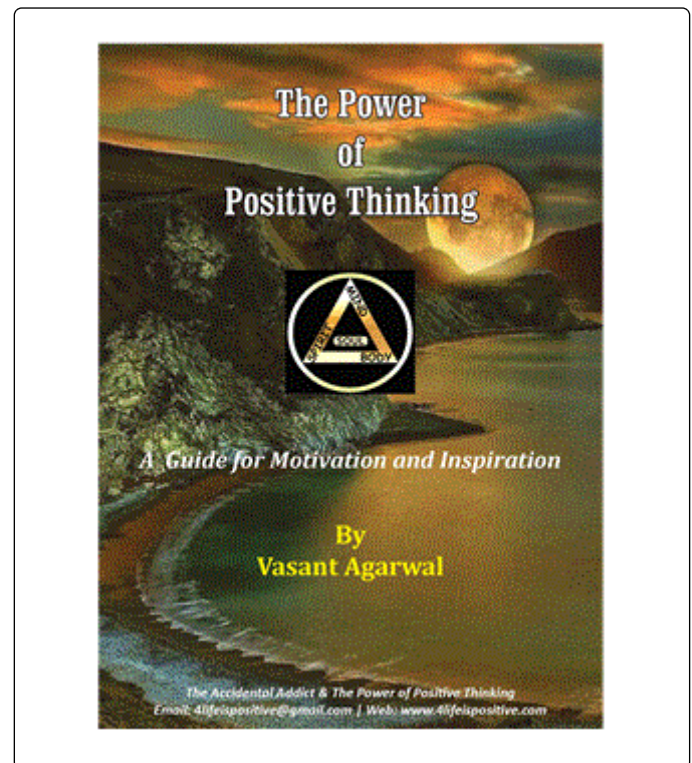
- Why is there so much denial about the problem from just about everyone we meet?
- Why is the relapse rate from conventional - therapy so high?
- Why are we not accepting the fact that addiction is either the precursor or the aftermath of depression?
- Alcoholism is the mother of all diseases (alcoholism is the 4th, not the 1st, leading cause of death) combined, including cancer, HIV/AIDS and many others. Why is it not treated as such and given the priority it deserves?
- Why is an unconscionable stigma attached to an alcoholic? No other addiction(s) is viewed this way-this actually isn't true.
- Why is prescription medication the primary solution instead of motivation, inspiration and self-realization?
- Why is the corporate world in denial with respect to the prevalence of drugs and alcohol use in the workforce? And the lack of steps taken for prevention and intervention. Zero tolerance is not the answer. Counselling leading to remediation, rehabilitation and restitution is.

### In summary, we must accept

- That incarceration and a deprivation of privileges as a mode of punishment or behaviour management do not work.

- The need to enable the addict to first understand the very nature of the problem, its urgency, the collateral damage caused and the consequences.
- Provide clear ways and means for abstinence, sobriety and sustained recovery.
- That we must ensure a sober and sustainable world for ourselves and our families and loved ones.

After decades of working on these issues in the U.S., the author has returned to India and is presently associated with several of the best counselling and rehabilitation centres there. His book "The Accidental Addict and the Power of Positive Thinking", self-published, is currently under editorial review at Penguin Random House as well.



It is written for people in despair and facing a crisis, and who are pleading "I don't where to go or what to do". His goal is that together, if we can save just one soul each, it will all be worth it.