



Appalachian Regional Healthcare

## CHAPLAINCY SERVICES

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***ARH Chaplaincy Services-  
Connecting Patients and Staff  
with the God of Grace, Mercy  
and Peace!***

# How to Minister to Addicts

- We can curse the darkness or try to light a candle.
- Addictions often lead to other despicable things such as lying, stealing, violence, even murder.
- Sometimes it is easier to walk away from the situation than to try to minister to them.

# How to Minister to Addicts

- May times it seems like a waste of time.
- Too much drama involved or a roller coaster ride that we don't want to take.
- By the time we recognize the problem, it often seems too late to be able to help.
- Every Church has members or extended family members which are abusing drugs or alcohol or have one addiction or another.

# How to Minister to Addicts

- Whatever values addicts may have cherished, like honesty and kindness, become secondary to the value of obtaining and using the drug or vice to which they have become addicted.
- If you have to lie, you lie; if you have to steal, you steal. Family, home, friends, work, school, health, church everything is secondary to the drug or vice.

# How to Minister to Addicts

How do we minister to Addicts?

1. Realize that addicts are idolaters.

The Bible tells us that whatever people flee to for solace, comfort, and hope, that thing is functionally playing the role of God in their lives. Alcohol, drugs, gambling or porn.

2. Realize that addicts are slaves to the addiction, they are basically unable to stop that type of behavior without some help.

# How to Minister to Addicts

Many consider addictions to be a disease so they think they are not responsible for their own behavior.

Yes and no it is a disease a disease like sin. The Christian understanding of sin requires us to insist that God holds addicts responsible for their behaviors and choices.

# How to Minister to Addicts

Addicts are idolaters--By nature and without Christ, every man, woman, and child is guilty of false worship ([Romans 1:21–23](#)).

We all exalt ourselves and look to the creation rather than the Creator for meaning and help; Look to Materialism instead of God.

In addition, apart from Christ, we are all slaves to sin. ([John 8:34](#)).



# How to Minister to Addicts

We cannot help but sin, and on our own we can do nothing to change the situation.

([Romans 1:28–31](#); [Ephesians. 2:1–3](#))

If we look at things in that light, we see that we have something in common with someone who is struggling with an addiction.

Their destructive behaviors may make them seem very different from us, but in reality we have the most important things in common.

# How to Minister to Addicts

Wouldn't people realize that the alcohol or drugs are hurting them, and stop?

Wouldn't that be the sensible thing to do?

Of course it would be.

However, there is a dynamic operating in all of us, which was operating in Adam and Eve in the garden.

# How to Minister to Addicts

However we approach the story, we find that like Adam and Eve, given the chance to be all-wise, and thus all-powerful, most of us would jump at the opportunity.

We like to think we can control or handle anything we set our mind to. So it is with addicts they think they can handle it and it won't take over their life.

# How to Minister to Addicts

Once we see that the problem of addiction is really the problem of sin, we see that the solution to addiction is the same as the solution to sin found in God's Holy Word.

**Addicts need the grace of God.**

They both need to take responsibility for their sin in repentance and also to relocate their hope in Christ. That repentance is ultimately the only hope for addicts to break the chains of addiction.

# How to Minister to Addicts

As churches seek to minister to addicts, we do not need anything more than we already have in the gospel and in the church that the gospel creates.

However we must admit that ministering to addicts presents some special challenges that we have to face head-on.

# How to Minister to Addicts

There are basically 4 things that we can do:

1. Don't neglect the family of addicts
2. Beware of false solutions
3. Count the cost
4. Have reasonable expectations

# How to Minister to Addicts

## How to minister to addicts in a hospital setting?

Three main ingredients:

1. Respect- if they are wanting to change.
2. Acceptance- understand how easy it is for people to fall into this type of lifestyle.
3. Presence- just being there to encourage, guide and help them to fill their time with jobs, projects or volunteer opportunity.

# How to Minister to Addicts

## How to minister to addicts as Chaplains:

1. Tell them that you are praying that God will help them with their addiction
2. Instruct them to become involved in a church and in a support group
3. Fill your mind with the Word of God
4. Become accountable to a Spiritual leader



# How to Minister to Addicts

## What the family can't do:

1. Can't make them quit.
2. Can't do the recovery work for them.
3. Can't accept behavior that violates their boundaries.

# How to Minister to Addicts

## What the family can do:

1. Get educated-You can't help fight an enemy you don't understand. Learn about addiction, the signs, the treatments and the relapse triggers.
2. Take care of themselves by putting one foot in front of the other and keep looking forward, not back.
3. Talk about the issues.

# Questions???