

## Mental Health Awareness Series

Brought to you by **SUTD Wellbeing Services**  
Building 1, Level 5 (1.517) @Lobby C  
<http://www.sutd.edu.sg/Campus-Life/Well-being-Services>



Chemical dependence, Internet dependence, co-dependence – are just some addictive behaviours that have plagued many. Whether it is a substance (e.g. alcohol, nicotine), an activity (e.g. gambling, sex) or even a relationship, people's lives have been wrecked when they become hooked on it. In many cases, having foreknowledge of the consequences does not deter people from engaging in maladaptive behaviour.

Often, environment interacts with biology to make a person susceptible to developing or engaging an addictive behaviour towards something or someone. Stress may render a person to be more reactive to cues (triggers that are associated with the substance/ activity). Consequently, it will be beneficial if we acquire the necessary skills and knowledge to better deal with stressors and impulses before we find ourselves struggling with the compulsion to engage in addictive behaviour that could cause significant impairment to the quality of our life and relationships.

**SUTD Wellbeing Services offers professional counselling services for students in a private and confidential setting. If you would like to see a Counsellor to discuss any issue or challenge, please email us at [wellbeing@sutd.edu.sg](mailto:wellbeing@sutd.edu.sg).**

**Indulged habits of dependence create habits of indolence, and indolence opens the portal to petty errors, to many degrading habits. *Dorothea Dix***

### Tips on managing addictive behaviours more effectively:

- ❖ It is important for us to identify and recognise what “turns us on” as what brings us pleasure may become problematic if we frequently depend on it as a coping mechanism whenever we are under duress. The issue is not with pleasure, but with excessiveness. Thus, moderation is key to ensuring that we do not become overly dependent on a substance/ activity/ person.
- ❖ Ceasing an addictive behaviour is not merely a matter of willpower. Many people who have developed chronic dependence/ addiction issues have reported prior futile though well-intended attempts to quit the maladaptive behaviour. As treatment of addictive behaviour is complex due to co-occurring underlying issues and conditions, it could be a long-drawn journey. Since a large part of behavioural health management involves prevention of relapse, early and continued professional treatment tend to yield better outcome for the individual.

