

There is a New Addiction in Town

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Oniomania is on the rise in American Society. What is otherwise known as Shopoholism, is finding its way into our culture as the newest up and coming addiction. American Society gives fertile ground to this destructive condition as it often promotes materialism, perfectionism, and a sense of entitlement to live the American dream and buy what we want. Constraint, which was so prevalent in the generations before, has taken a hiatus in our culture in the last few decades as the numbers of individuals who are afflicted with Oniomania strikingly rises.

Current estimates are between 5%-8% of the population having Oniomania, with a spectrum of individuals not severe enough to diagnosis and others in financial and personal ruin.

So how does this addiction function? Much like other addictions, in fact there is a strong connection between alcoholism, hoarding, eating disorders and Oniomania. Typically the buyer feels a strong impulse to buy something, possibly even stronger if it is a "good deal". The item is not needed and there is euphoria upon purchase, serving as a reinforcement to buy again. Following the purchase, there is a powerful sense of remorse, guilt, and self-loathing, which in turn leads to the desire to regain the euphoric feeling of a purchase, hence the cycle.

When should you be concerned that you or a loved one has a shopping problem?

- Spending exceeds the budget repeatedly
- The excessive shopping is chronic
- The individual does not feel he can control the shopping
- The individual has tried to stop and despite consequences that are quite negative continues to shop
- Relationships are destroyed as a result of the behavior
- The individual lies and hides the purchases from their significant other

If you have identified yourself or a loved one that is suffering from this condition, treatment does require some significant changes:

- Admission that addiction is present
- Support to stop the behavior from family members
- Cooperation to allow another family member handles cash, credit cards and the checkbook
- Stop shopping alone

If a sensible approach with family support does not lead to behavioral changes, then professional support should be sought.

<http://www.shopaholicnomore.com/>
<http://www.debtorsanonymous.org/>
<http://addictions.about.com/b/2010/04/06/taking-shopping-addiction-seriously.htm>