

Substance Addictions and Process Addictions: is There a Difference?

S. Kreitler¹, M. Kreitler¹

¹Pediatric Hemato-Oncology, Sheba Medical Center, Tel-Aviv, Israel

Introduction: Addiction is one of the most rapidly expanding psychopathological phenomena. This has brought about also an increasing differentiation between kinds of addictions. The question of this study is whether there are indeed different kinds of addiction. A previous study showed that a cognitive orientation questionnaire of addiction (see Methods) identified basic similarities and specific differences between addiction to alcohol and to drugs.

Objectives: This study was designed to explore the differences between two types of addiction that have been defined: substance addictions, e.g., to alcoholism, tobacco or drugs, and process addictions, e.g., shopping, internet usage, games), or gambling.

Aims: The aim was to apply the Cognitive Orientation Questionnaire of Addiction that has been applied in a previous study to the issue of exploring the differences between substance and process addictions. It was hypothesized that they would differ not in the basic structure of the underlying motivation but in certain specific themes constituting the motivation.

Methods: Three groups of subjects (22-45 yrs) participated: 25 with substance addictions, 25 with process addictions and 25 controls. They were administered the Cognitive Orientation Questionnaire of Addiction that is based on assessing motivation in terms of four types of beliefs referring to specific themes.

Results: A regression analysis showed that the four types of beliefs differentiated significantly between the addicted subjects and controls. Specific themes differentiated between the two groups of addicted subjects.

Conclusions: There seems to be a general psychological tendency for addiction, with particular features characteristic of specific types of addiction.