

Media Article



Vocational Guidance Services

UNDERSTANDING WORKAHOLICS

There is a popular misconception that the richer a person is, the less stressed they are. The truth is, both work and money can be highly addictive things, and such addictions lead to workaholic tendencies.

Workaholic is a generic term that we tend to throw around a lot, using it as a snide insult most of the time. True workaholics compromise not just their personal lives and happiness, but also their health. Let us not confuse having natural drive, ambition and commitment to our work to being a workaholic.

There are different types of workaholics: those who are perfectionists and addicted to high performance; those addicted to promotion and those addicted to the material riches money from work can buy.

The first type of workaholic are those that will work all night on a report to ensure a 100% grade rather than settle for a mere 85%. Naturally, they tend to work extremely hard and soon hold good jobs and earn large salaries- yet they are constantly worried that they could be doing more. They tend to be dissatisfied and impossible to please (making them difficult bosses). What is amazing is that somehow they have private lives, and so their workaholic natures mean they may never get to know their children. However, before totally condemning this tendency, we need to consider that maybe such people need to strive constantly harder at work because of burdens outside work -such as family financial need.

Workaholics that are addicted to promotion are a different breed. They often don't need or even want that new car, better home or salary. To them, it is all about craving the constant cycle of work, promotion, work. They live for new challenges and to push their physical and mental barriers through their work. This mentality is closely tied to the need or burning desire to lead and control others (again, they make difficult bosses!) They are obsessive about work- their way of relaxing is to read the latest business books- but they are often frustrated because they are yet to learn that they cannot really control anyone else's lives- not even their subordinates!

The last type of workaholic is addicted to the golden riches work and its rewards can buy. They are never satisfied with their latest car, house, holiday destination or salary grade, convinced they need more; more. They live in fear that everyone else is earning more or enjoying life more than they are, and feel the grass is always greener on the other side. Sadly, no matter how rich or successful they become, there will always be someone even richer or more successful to frustrate them into driving even harder and faster. No amount of prestige, status or possessions will ever be enough.

Ironically, even though many such cases are highly successful and rich (according to us) they personally feel they are 'being beaten' or that everyone else is 'better' than them. These feeling often stem from being emotionally insecure or having suffered financial insecurity in the past.

So, sit back and ask yourself if your level of drive is appropriate, or are you obsessed by work? Are you striving for more because you genuinely need it or are you just addicted to the chase? Are your goals realistic and balanced, comprising both work and personal goals, and have you set those goals for the right reasons?

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