

# Project Josh

PROJECTJOSH.ORG

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Is addiction really a disease?  
About Joshua J. Werner[-Hudson]  
Formation of the Foundation  
Mission Statement  
Launch of ProjectJosh.org



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## Is Addiction Really a Disease?

by ProjectJosh Staff

Many ask the question, is addiction a disease, or should it be considered one? This long sought after question often lacks a concrete answer, because addiction itself cannot be explained in any single manner. Traditionally, however, addiction has historically been attributed more to behavioral deficit than medical condition. It wasn't until the paradigm shift and the explosion and medicalization of modern medicine has addiction ever been truly considered a possible "medical problem". Thus, the definition of addiction is often defined by the sociological implications. Today, we can see that addiction is being more and more classified by the medical modality. However, many still don't understand how or even why people begin to choose drugs. This brings us back to the question, is addiction really a disease? As humans it can be tempting to over simplify an overly complex problem, but by doing so we are lacking the intelligible ability to accurately account for a condition. From the standpoint that once an addict is hooked, science has proven that there is an underlying biological (if not learning) component that has been hardwired into some users. The example of this was proven with the use of animals in the laboratory. Most of them would give up both food and sleep to the brink of death for the pleasure of some drugs. On the other hand, humans don't run purely of instinct like that of an animal. We are forced to explain our actions because we are engaged in conscious thought, which naturally included decision-making capabilities. Thus, from this approach some consider addiction to be an adapted behavior, much like the Pavlov experiments.

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