

## curing workaholism

Workaholism does not have to be a lifelong condition. There are steps to be taken which help make work become one facet of a full, enjoyable life. Several areas of your life need attention. Rest is one of them. Think about how tired you really feel - not how you would like to be feeling. How often have you taken note of the fact that you are tired, and then actually taken the time to meet the need for rest? Workaholics require mandatory rest periods until they can learn to respond willingly to their needs.

Your personal interests is another area that needs your attention. Think about activities you have enjoyed in the past and which you might enjoy pursuing again. Aim at diversifying your interests. Workaholics need to increase their awareness of the diversity of the world around them as a step towards developing their interests and involvement.

Workaholics need to reorganize their priorities regarding family and work. Ask yourself, "Is work truly more important than my family and loved ones?" Undoubtedly, it is not. By limiting your time at work and devoting that time and energy to your family, you will not only reassure them of your love, but also give them a chance to love and help you. This does not mean that you cannot work hard, but balance is the key. A happy, healthy person has a life of many facets, and many types of success.

## Help is available

Aspirus Employee Assistance Services has counselors available to help you and your family. You can call the confidential helpline 24 hours a day at:

800.236.4457  
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Remember,  
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## Workaholism



recognizing and resolving



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## workaholism

Is your family, social, and leisure time becoming indistinguishable from your work time? Do you find inactivity intolerable? These are characteristics of a workaholic lifestyle. Recognizing these behavior patterns can help free you from the narrow focus on work to a broader, deeper focus on all aspects of a balanced, healthy life.

## workaholic defined

Workaholics are people who find themselves irresistibly attracted to work. They are addicted to the activity, not necessarily the products, of work. Inactivity, even the idea of not working, is discomforting - in some cases, agonizing - to them.

Workaholics work continuous, excessive hours as a way of escaping from a problem or as a means of enhancing their sense of control over their lives. Many become reliant upon work as a source of personal identity and worth.

Workaholism is the addiction most rewarded in our culture. It is socially acceptable, yet can be as destructive to your health and your family as any other addiction.



Fortunately, once recognized and owned up to, it can be overcome. But you must want to regain a healthy, balanced life, free of the compulsive addiction to work.

## types of workaholics

While workaholics share similar traits, the reasons for their addiction to work vary. Three common types of workaholics are:

- **Hostile.** This type uses work as a socially acceptable way of discharging aggressive energy.
- **Competitive.** Competitive types see work as a means of proving themselves.
- **Defensive.** This type uses work as an escape to avoid guilt, grief, frustration or other disturbing feelings.

## recognizing workaholism

If you have been receiving friendly hints from your coworkers that maybe you should lighten up or slow down a bit, or if your family has been expressing concern about your apparent devotion to your job, then it may be time you paid some attention to the possibility that you are developing an addiction to work. Consider the following:

- Do you feel guilty when not working?
- Are you uneasy when on vacation?
- Do you read only work-related literature?
- Do you communicate better with coworkers than with family and friends?
- Do you constantly work under a great deal of tension?
- Do you equate success with hard work?
- Do you have difficulty getting involved in activities other than work?
- Do you work when you could be relaxing?
- Do you prefer being at work to being anywhere else?

Answering “yes” to several of these questions does not make you a workaholic, but may indicate a tendency or movement in that direction.