

Divine Intervention: The Role of Spirituality in Overcoming Addiction

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Abstract

The increasing prevalence of addiction in Ireland is alarming. Statistical evidence suggests that the use of heroin, cocaine, amphetamines and alcohol is expanding globally. Rehabilitation programmes treat addiction as a disease and a main outcome measurement focuses on detoxification. Medical interventions alone are rarely effective because the social conditions that gave rise to the addiction in the first instance remain unaddressed.

There is strong evidence to suggest that a major contributing factor leading to the onset of addictive behaviour is the experience of social dislocation. Dislocation can occur because of, or in reaction to the early onset of trauma. Many drug users report that they self-medicate in order to cope with unaddressed early difficulties in life.

The negative influence of globalisation as a major determinant in the growth of addiction is often ignored. Modern society's focus on individual success and achievement has encouraged the growth of inequity and marginalisation and is a recognised source of great restlessness in society. The inability of modernity to satisfy increased human longing has resulted in a search for answers elsewhere.

Modernity does not allow human beings to live as God had intended. Humans thrive on inter-connectedness with fellow humans and God. From a Christian perspective humans were created to serve God. Every person is uniquely created by God and as such all individuals have an inbuilt need for connection with their creator. It is only when they achieve this connection that their constant compulsive, insatiable yearning for contentment ends and true liberation from the oppression of addiction is achieved.

A Christian Restoration Model can assist all who are heavy laden to rest, build positive and affirming attachments and find a place of belonging. The bond between creator and created is reignited and the potential for restoration realised.