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 LIVE at The SEED Event October 13



Holistic Addiction Recovery

When we hear the word “addict” we may visualize a drug user panhandling on the street to get enough money for their next fix. Or an out-of-control alcoholic—falling off the bar stool or embarrassing himself at a family function or business meeting. Eating disorders including bulimia (binge eating and purging), anorexia nervosa (unhealthy restriction of eating) or obesity caused by overeating may all fall into the category of life-threatening addictions, too. Then there are smokers, who may be just as addicted to nicotine as drug users and alcohol abusers are to their substances; and their addiction may be just as life-impoverishing and life-threatening.

But there are many more addictions that fly under the radar until the damage they have caused becomes obvious. The list of addictions is as long as there are things to crave, including compulsive gambling, sex, work, running, shopping, toxic relationships and the internet to name a few. Often polite circles of friends smile and add “aholic” to describe their neighbor. She is a workaholic. I’m a shopaholic. He is an exercise-aholic.

These are all harmless-sounding portrayals until it is pointed out that the person purchased 10 pairs of shoes in one day! Or their family life is ruined from their compulsion to stay at the office. When the bank forecloses on their mortgage it becomes inherently obvious that their little trips to the casino are out of control.

An addict is someone who has become dependent on a habit-forming substance, or someone who is occupied or involved in something habitually or compulsively. Addictive behavior is defined as any activity, substance, object, or behaviour that becomes the major focus of a person’s life, during which they withdraw from other activities. For example, a person may become obsessed and constantly think of an object, activity or substance, or seek out and engage in a harm-causing behaviour. Often addicts will compulsively engage in the activity and do it over and over even though they want to stop.

It is thought by researchers delving into the many forms of addictions that these behavioural activities may produce beta-endorphins in the brain, which make the person feel “high.” Some experts suggest that if a person continues to engage in the activity to achieve this feeling of well-being and euphoria, he may get into an addictive cycle. In so doing, she becomes physically addicted to her own brain chemicals, thus leading to continuation of the behaviour even though it may have negative health or social consequences. Individuals with addictive behaviours often come from psychologically or physically abusive families and

may have experienced relief in the behaviours that are now causing so much pain. Understandably, people struggling with addictive behaviours may experience low self-esteem and feel anxious if they do not feel in control over their environment.

Paradise Valley Wellness Centre offers the first truly holistic addiction recovery program in North America. In partnership with the world-renowned Chopra Center for Wellbeing, the healing team at Paradise Valley combines the latest breakthroughs in modern Western medicine with the healing arts of the East. Chopra Center co-founders, Deepak Chopra, M.D. and David Simon, M.D., developed a recovery method, *Freedom from Addiction*, unlike any other.

The four and six week residential programs offer individuals intensive, personalized treatment addressing the deeper issues at the root of addiction, helping individuals identify and release stored emotional pain, destructive thought-patterns and life-damaging beliefs. These are replaced with more nurturing, self-empowering behaviours and experiences.

In addition, the Centre also offers a one-week Balance, Restoration and Wholeness Program and weekend workshops for those who need to rejuvenate.

The goal of the holistic health care experts at Paradise Valley is to restore balance and wholeness in the lives of the people who come for help. The teachings and philosophy include the latest neuroscience research that supports neuroplasticity, which is the brain’s ability to reorganize itself so human beings can create new neural pathways through new experiences. Emotional pain can be identified and experienced with safety and support not previously possible. This “re-wiring” can produce new empowering, liberating experiences. New choices that nourish the mind, body and spirit, can be revealed, thus bringing about healing and transformation.

For more info on how to move beyond self-destructive habits and transform your life, visit www.paradisivalleywellnesscentre.com or visit us in person at The Seed Event.

NIRMALA RANIGA is the Founder/Director of Paradise Valley Wellness Center, an addictions treatment center affiliated with The Chopra Center based on the most advanced and sustainable methods of healing. Nominated for a Women of Distinction Award, Nirmala has been compassionately committed to helping drug addicts get clean for over two decades. Hear Nirmala LIVE at The SEED Event on Oct 13 as she speaks on The Nature of Addictions, how we all have them, and what to do about it. See event schedule on page 16 for more info.