

Review of: "Addiction as a Loss of Inner Freedom"

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The text delves deeply into the philosophical interpretation of addiction, primarily referencing the ideas of Immanuel Kant regarding human nature, freedom, and the struggle between internal desires and external constraints.

Overall, the text provides a comprehensive philosophical analysis of addiction as a loss of inner freedom, examining the intricate relationship between internal desires, external constraints, moral principles, and the struggle addicts face in reconciling these conflicting aspects of the human experience.

Said this, I have found the text to be quite hard to read and follow. Authors, for example, spend a lot of time deliberating Kant's ideas, but instead of making these ideas "clear", they often use very expressive language that includes excessive use of synonyms and not well explained explications of used concepts, which in turn bifurcates the message that authors wanted to convey. Consequently, the reader often does not know what authors want to say or explain and where is the science that would support authors thoughts. For example, it is not clear what authors wanted to say when they wrote "The brain of an addict segregates itself from the reality of a personality, splitting it in his real-time (that is unreal in reality), from meaningful activity towards the present and the future." How can the the brain segregate itself? What is the reality of personality? Who decides what is unreal in reality? What is a meaningful activity towards the present and future?

In other words, instead of long, expressive and ornamented sentences that are full of abstract and unexplained concepts, I would urge authors to be more modest in expression and much more ambitious in finding more recent scientific sources that would support authors claims and ideas that are now very "free-flowing" and hard to understand (what authors say and what they mean).

Lastly, I think that the text misses important questions. First, why addicts find "objective" reality dull, problematic, boring, why the escape? Second, is there truly anyone who is not addicted to something? Third, the idea of loosing one's freedom presupposes that one has a freedom to loose in the first place. Which (again) brings around the first question - is there a free subject that is not addicted to something? Fourth, I would challenge authors to think about the question of social labels, i.e., why are some addictions culturally acceptable while others are not (they are not even labeled as such)?. For example, the passage:

"The constant disappointing search, which does not remove but only reinforces what is the cause of its endless repeating, obeys the dynamics that do not move and do not calm down until all of life is given up for destruction in a never-ending change of occurrences and disappearances. In that process, most certainly, there is no real advancement. Because every achievement misses out on what it wants to achieve, while every further step just emphasizes a structure of constant

missing out, so that a path – to stay with Schelling’s metaphor of the phenomenological finding of an addiction – leads only deeper into itself, and by no means derives from it. That structure of continuous missing out is very similar to the finding of an addiction because, among everything else, it only feigns an enhanced life. It is also in its essence to develop an attraction, which under a surface of dynamics that is being emphasized – is unstoppably swooping from one self-destruction into another – drives to the self-destruction of the whole of life, so that it is decaying into captivity, being left for destruction.” (Our translation to English, pgs. 107-108)”

could easily be seen as a depiction of a modern man being addicted to the idea of modern progress, consumerism and hedonism, leading to the destruction of nature, life, and himself. In this sense, I read the text as something that (artificially) separates addicts from others (i.e., “normals”), although I have personal reservations whether such distinction is warranted. I.e., just because there are some who are addicted to “stronger things” that might destroy them (and others around them) quicker does not mean that there is an objective reality where aligned non-addicts (that do not destroy others and themselves) live.