

Examples of Cross Addiction Relapse

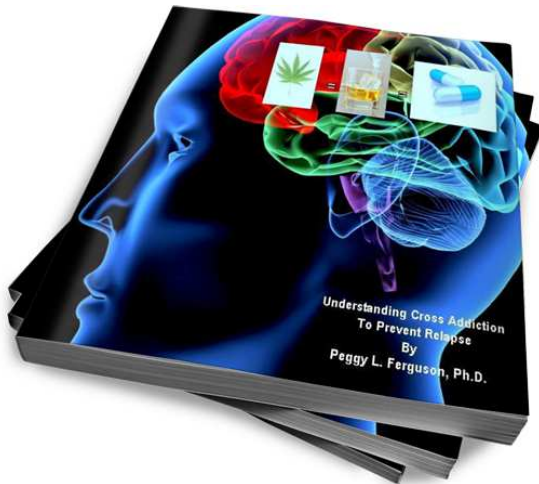
By Peggy Ferguson, Ph.D.

Cross addiction is one of the leading causes of relapse in early recovery. Essentially what cross-addiction means, is that if you are alcoholic or addicted to other mood altering drugs, you are potentially addicted to all mood altering drugs.

The following are illustrations of cross addiction.

1. Some people become cross-addicted in their efforts to camouflage their addiction. Alcoholics may change to a different drug of choice to hide the smell, or the obvious tell-tale signs of consumption.
2. Cross addiction can occur while trying to "soften" the effects of withdrawal. This is where you use a different drug to avoid or reduce the symptoms of withdrawal.
3. The effects of a drug may change over time and cross addiction can be a response to these changing effects of the drug on his/her body.

4. Addicts often trade drugs of choice in an attempt to take control over their addiction. They choose a different drug that they believe will have fewer negative consequences.



5. Addicts can also use different drugs for different purposes and may use them in a predictable pattern.
6. Cross-tolerance is a component of changing drugs of choice. When the addict changes drugs of choice, a certain amount of "tolerance" transfers to the new drug of choice. Tolerance means that more the chemical is needed to achieve the same effect or that the same amount achieves a reduced effect.

7. The effects of cross addiction can include a) return of cravings for "original" drug of choice, b) a return of defenses that makes it OK to use that drug again, c) putting you back in "using" environments, d) simply switching drugs of choice, e) never actually achieving abstinence.

2009, Examples of Cross Addiction Relapse
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Changing mood altering drugs of choice is not recovery. Trading one for another prevents you from recovering from the effects of drugs. Relapse is a process and an event that involves a return to old thinking, old feelings, and old behavior. This process occurs over time and by the time that you switch one drug for another, you are in the relapse event.

Understanding Cross Addiction To Prevent Relapse
by Peggy L. Ferguson Ph.D.

A simple guide for professional and the general information seeker. This relapse prevention guide specific to cross addiction issues explains the nature of addiction and cross addiction, examples of how cross addiction leads to relapse, and includes a **worksheet** to assist in relapse prevention.

PDF file format. \$9.95



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