

ABILITY TO SERVE AS SUSTAINABLE SOURCES OF HAPPINESS OR FULFILLMENT AND HOW TO OVERCOME THE NEED FOR MINDLESS PLEASURE

To maintain balance and whole-heartedness, we have to strike a pleasure-pain balance, which, in a time of abundance and over-consumption, means intentionally avoiding pleasure and seeking the kind of purposeful pain that keeps us healthy, such as exercise or resisting certain temptations.

Our brains are wired by dopamine for reward-seeking behavior. Everyday we have the energy and motivation to do the tasks that will enhance our lives. Cheap dopamine gives us an easy way to receive it. We become reliant on cheap dopamine because as it provides a temporary relief, and we convince ourselves that we need it to feel happy or fulfilled. But of course not....(NB :escapism is healthy — in controlled amounts. Sometimes all you need is a good book or movie to cheer you up and renew your enthusiasm for life but Once you used to operate on such a low vibration that you need cheap dopamine sources to pick you up for a few minutes. You end up shooting your mental and physical health to sh*t.)When you spend three days reading a novel after novel and watching an entire series while ignoring the projects that really need to get done — that's not healthy. Our sources of cheap dopamine are practically a gateway to heaven, taking us away from the stresses of everyday life. Ever wondered in a time of unprecedented wealth, freedom, technological progress, and medical advancement, why do we appear to be unhappier and in more pain than ever? The reason we're all so miserable may be because we're working so hard to avoid being miserable. The more pleasure we feel in the moment, the more pain we invite later on. Because that pleasure doesn't last forever — real life catches up. And we need even bigger hits of pleasure to fight that overwhelming pain.

Try to get your dopamine from ticking off a to-do list at the end of the day or what makes us feel positively relieved and accomplished and keep us motivated and go after our dreams. Remember, you don't need cheap dopamine to survive. What you do need is to be in complete control of your life so you can thrive....the response in our brain is the same: It produces the "feel-good" neurochemical called dopamine, which brings on feelings of pleasure and motivation. It may be even more important for motivation than for actual pleasure. Dopamine hits brings about pleasure, and then is quickly followed by pain, or a come-down, in order to keep us motivated. Lembke says this balancing see-saw of pleasure and pain made sense in the time of early humans, when we had to constantly search for our basic needs — food, water, shelter. "It's really an ingenious method to make sure that no matter what we do, that's pleasurable. It doesn't last very long and it's followed by pain so that immediately we're searching again. When we're repeatedly exposed to our pleasure-producing stimuli, our brains adjust and, eventually, we need more and more just to feel "normal," or not in pain. That's called a "dopamine deficit state," and the cycle that leads us there can actually lead to depression, anxiety, irritability and insomnia.

Solutions

1. The first month is key to getting your pleasure-pain balance back in check. It's a lot easier to cut out an addictive behavior entirely at first, and then re-introduce it in moderation after about two weeks, the pleasure-pain see-saw in your brain will start to restore to its natural balance and you'll be able to enjoy more modest rewards.
2. Physical self-binding: Create actual distance between you and your addiction. That could mean just removing the addictive substance from your home and spaces. For someone who's addicted to video games, that could mean a separate laptop for work and one for play.
3. Chronological or time-related binding: The 30-day fast from your addictive behaviors counts as chronological or time-related binding. This could also look like intermittent fasting for someone who has a food addiction, or a time limit control on social media apps.

4. Categorical binding: This means limiting yourself from certain types of "substances" – maybe reality TV sucks you in beyond your control, but you can consume a sitcom in moderation. Cutting out reality TV from your life would be categorical binding