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## Addiction or Determination?

LET US CHECK THE DICTIONARY meaning of addiction: it says “dependent on a certain substance or activity.” That could include dangerous drugs, cigarettes, alcoholic drinks and gambling. Drugs, smoking and strong drink are very dangerous to the addict’s health, and eventually may cause death at an early age. Gambling is extremely addictive. It often leads to big debts, family disruption, and sometimes ends up in violence or suicide.

There are other activities which can be addictive, such as playing the computer – and eating. Yes, eating. Quite recently, a young man died after surfing the Internet for many hours. Another man became so fat from eating that when he needed surgical treatment, he was too fat to be carried through the door of his home to a hospital.

A young person who has strength of character to resist temptation to all these addictions shows that he has courage, principle, and determination. Those who take part in these harmful activities may think it looks “cool”. In fact, it is not smart. It shows that they are weak-minded and easily led by peer pressure.

In fact, most addictions are anti-social. Smoking not only puts your own life at risk, but it can also damage the health

of your family, your close friends and your workmates, who are forced into passive smoking. Those who cannot resist drinking alcohol will eventually kill themselves with cancer, or may abuse their wives and children. I knew an English lady many years ago who would not believe me when I told her the shameful things that she unconsciously did after heavy drinking. The effects of drug taking are similar, leading the addict to activities he never thought of doing when not under the influence of drugs.

I think gambling is probably the most common of addictions. I knew a young Hong Kong boy who, at the age of twelve, said he hated gambling. Then he went to a boarding school and shared a dormitory with some naughty boys who taught him how to gamble. Before long he became addicted, and got into so much debt that he eventually committed suicide because of threats from loan sharks.

While there may be psychological reasons leading to addiction, I believe that it can be controlled if people exercise determination. Any person who wants to lead an honest life, have a happy home, a good career, and be useful to society, can do so through sheer determination.