

Impulsive-Compulsive Shopping/Buying: An Addiction?

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McElroy et al. Adaption of Diagnostic Criteria Characterized by [at least one of the following]:

- Frequent preoccupations with buying or impulses to buy that are experienced as irresistible, intrusive and/ or senseless
- Frequent buying of unnecessary items
- Frequent buying that can not be financially supported
- Shopping for longer periods of time than intended
- Buying preoccupations, impulses, or behaviors:
 - Cause distress
 - Are time consuming
 - Significantly interfere functioning
 - Result in financial problems
- Behavior does not occur exclusively during periods of hypomania or mania

(Lejoyeux & Weinstein, 2010)

Currently can be Classified as an Impulse-Control Disorder Not Otherwise Specified in DSM IV or ICD-NOS

Characterized by:

- Impulsive drives and compulsive behaviors
- Personal distress
- Impaired social and vocational functioning

Shopaholic Test:

Constructed by University of Illinois

Answer each on a 7 point scale, & being agree strongly

- My closet has unopened shopping bags in it.
- Others might consider me a "shopaholic."
- Much of my life centers around buying things.
- I buy things I don't need.
- I buy things I did not plan to buy.
- I consider myself an impulse purchaser.

If the score of all six answers combined is 25 or greater the test concludes that you have a compulsive buying problem

Demographics

- Prevalence in the United States estimated between 1.8- 8.1%
- Females account for around 80-95%
(Noted in video segment that may be just as prevalent in men)
- Average onset age: 30
- 58.3% of individuals are largely in debt
- 41.7% of individuals are unable to pay off their debt
- 8.3% of individuals have financial legal problems
- 45.8% have feelings of guilt about their problem buying

(Dell'Oso, Allen, Altamura, Buoli & Hollander, 2008)

Loss of Control

- Hard time saving money
- Once individuals have money they spend it
- Spend and buy unnecessary objects
- Unable to spend/buy in moderation
- Unable to cope with not engaging in the behavior
- Will charge up credit cards until they are in large debt



(Clark & Calleja, 2008)

Long term Negative Consequences :

- Financial problems
- Legal problems
- Psychological distress
- Marital conflict
- Impairment of functioning

Short term Positive Consequences:

- Act of shopping and buying is pleasurable and relieves emotional distress

Shopping is not the Problem:

- The act of buying seems to be the problem
“I have four evening dresses and I rarely have a wedding. So I say: When am I going to wear this, you know? Why am I going to buy them? Just for the sake of buying one.”
- Buying releases a momentary high
- Items are not rewarding, the actual experience is
- Tend to hide purchases from others, some report trying to sell purchases



(Clark & Calleja, 2008)

- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DkKSbXRU2Yo&feature=related>



Treatments Used

- Therapy
 - Addresses any underlying mental disorders that may be present
 - Provides coping skills
- Group Therapy
 - Similar to AA meetings
 - Shopaholics Anonymous

(Shopping Addiction Treatment: The Control Center, 2012)

Essential Features of Addiction:

- Behavior is excessive
- Behavior causes harm & results in negative consequences
- Engaging in the behavior started as a pleasurable experience & has positive consequences
- Distress is experienced when not able to engage in behavior
- Loss of control
- Behavior becomes a priority
- Behavior persists despite having knowledge of the negative consequences

Analysis of Impulsive-Compulsive

Buying/Shopping

- **Behavior is excessive:**

Yes

- **Behavior causes harm & results in negative consequences:**

Shopping and buying causes financial and psychological harm and results in negative consequences such as financial problems, psychological distress, & social & occupational functioning impairment

- **Starts as pleasurable & has positive consequences:**

Engaging in shopping/buying relieves negative emotions and distress

- **Distress and negative emotions are experienced when not able to engage in behavior:**

Yes

- **Loss of control:**

Individuals report loss of control- 91.7% attempt and fail to resist their urge to buy, it was found that they would engage in behavior within 1-5 hours (Dell'Osso et al., 2008)

- **Behavior becomes a priority & impairs functioning:**

Individuals neglect tasks because they are too preoccupied on shopping/buying. In one study preoccupation seemed to be experienced as a part of psychological dependence (Clark & Calleja, 2008)

- **Behavior persists despite negative consequences:**

Yes

Works Cited

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