go on, admit it, you can’t get enough, you know you will be back for more....
Welcome. This edition of Artisan looks at Addiction and once again I am grateful to our writers who have helped unpack this issue in an honest and insightful way.

If this is your first experience of Artisan then it’s worth knowing that we have been producing these publications for a number of years. In the past we have looked at issues such as Ambition, Rejection, Money, Sexuality, the Bible and many of the articles from these past publications can be found online at www.artisaninitiatives.org.

The main corporate expressions of Artisan are the industry prayer events in a growing number of cities. In London people involved in the Media, Arts and Fashion industries have been meeting most months for nearly ten years with three words as the call and passion, Unity, Humility and Prayer. This vision is now also happening in other cities in the UK and the US with more coming on board soon in other parts of the world.

As you may know we also hold these collaborative prayer events in New York with the next event on October 8th. I read recently about the life of Jeremiah Lanphier who in 1857 was a New York City businessman who was desperate to see transformation in the city. In response to this he began a businessmen’s prayer meeting on Fulton Street, Manhattan on September 23rd, 1857. The meetings began slowly, but within a few months, 20 noonday meetings were happening daily throughout New York. Before long the New York Tribune and The New York Herald issued articles on the meetings, officially making them the city’s biggest news. Within months thousands of business leaders were meeting daily to pray and these prayer meetings were springing up across America. From this foundation of prayer nearly one million people became Christians out of a population of 35 million including 10,000 people becoming Christians weekly in New York for a season.

There are many stories of God bringing transformation through our biblical obedience to Unite, Humble ourselves and Pray for each other, our industries and our nation. This I believe is a pivotal and central role that we have — to come together and stand before God on behalf of the industries that he has placed us in. This means that whatever your professional scenario you are an important catalyst for change as you are able to pray with greater industry understanding and knowledge.

In the same way God transformed the business community in New York I believe God’s nature and desire is to do the same within every sphere of influence including the media, arts and fashion industries. I am not interested in building brands or empires I simply want to see a generation involved in the heart of the industries with a passion to pray. Details of the prayer events can be found online www.artisaninitiatives.org/networkevents.

In this edition of Artisan we are looking at Addiction. A gruity issue that will no doubt open up all kinds of feelings and emotions within us. In Don Williams’ lead article he quotes Dr Drew Pinsky who describes addiction as the “predominant health disorder (SAMHSA).”

10 percent of adults surveyed admitted to internet sexual addiction; 26 percent of those are women (internet-filter-review.com).

In recent times there has been a growing awareness of email addiction with some people admitting to their lives shaped around the send and receive button.

One of every eight Americans has a significant problem with alcohol or drugs, with 40 percent of the group having a ‘dual diagnosis’, or concurrent mental/nervous disorder (SAMHSA).

10 percent of adults surveyed admitted to internet sexual addiction; 26 percent of those are women (internet-filter-review.com).

According to research for The Observer 89 percent of the 28 musicians behind the top 10 bestselling albums of all time have admitted regular illegal drug use. The same source suggests that one in every ten concert-goers is in need of help with their drug problem.

According to the UN the estimated number of regular users of heroin, cocaine and synthetic drugs worldwide is around fifty million. In recent times there has been a growing awareness of email addiction with some people admitting to their lives shaped around the send and receive button.

Each of these descriptions describes a journey towards 200 mark, the 300 mark... no proviso, I’ve seen this person, I even think I’ve spoken to them... click... We all approach this issue on the same level playing field. None of us have the right to make judgments. My hope is that the articles in this publication are an encouragement and a springboard into Christ and his power, grace and love.

Love to you all
Steve Cole
One day at a time

Christy Strum

"I'm Christy and I'm an alcoholic." I couldn't believe I was saying it. I said it for the first time almost a year ago in a group therapy session at a substance abuse rehab center. A few days prior to my public admission of powerlessness over alcohol, I was in a state of complete depression, hopelessness, self loathing and stagnation. I had been on a steady drinking bender for about 6 months. Checking myself into rehab felt like my only choice.

My drinking began as innocently as most. It was my 17th birthday when I picked up my first drink, a screwdriver. I followed up with a beer and I was buzzed. Laughing uncontrollably and making an ass of myself – I felt on top of the world. Drinking became a part of my life after that and as soon as I arrived at college (I attended one of the most renowned party schools) it quickly shifted into an unhealthy habit. I didn't see it that way at the time because so many people drank the way I was drinking. It felt normal.

I fell into an abusive relationship that lasted over a year. When that relationship ended, I was spent. I was a fraction of who I used to be. I drank everyday to fill the void where my soul and heart used to be. My drinking was completely out of control. I was losing friends, barely making it to my classes and I had become severely depressed and suicidal. Little did I know that two of my friends called my parents to inform them of my binge drinking and irrational behavior. They all planned an intervention. I spent 5 weeks in an outpatient program at a psychiatric center and stopped drinking for 3 months.

Fast forward a couple of years and there I was in New York. What a change from the simple life in Georgia. I was determined to 'make it' and push through the constant feelings of fear, depression and anxiety that whispered in my ear to pack up and move back to Georgia. My drinking, of course, continued but I still didn't see it as a problem. It just seemed normal to get wasted, vomit and wake up with a massive hangover forgetting parts of the evening and swearing to never drink again. A few years into my crazy New York life, I became involved in another abusive and damaging relationship. It ended and I was again left hollow. I went back to my old habit of loading up on booze to comfort myself. Throughout those years, I was not a believer. I was actually a card carrying atheist but finally life had become so lonely and destructive that I started to pray. I didn't know who or what I was praying to but I pleaded with this 'God' person to save me from my miserable life. And he did. I was born again into a life of faith, love and hope and became part of a community that helped carry me through my struggles. I thought that was it and that the work was done. I thought the Lord had picked me up and solved everything for me, which wasn't exactly true. I still hadn't admitted that I was an alcoholic.

When I was finally able to confess my addiction to myself, my family and friends, my boyfriend and to God, I knew I would be in for a difficult journey. I didn't care because I was just thankful to be alive. I met people in rehab who had lost everything to this powerful and evil addiction. I was one of the lucky ones. Now, I pray for God to take away my constant desire to drink. I pray for him to keep healing me. As he does, I'll continue to do the next right thing. I'll go to AA meetings, I'll find a sponsor, I'll do whatever I have to do to keep from picking up a drink. I've already slipped a couple of times in the past year but I know that God's grace is sufficient and that he has purpose for me. Thank you Lord for your abundant love!

"I'm Christy and I'm an alcoholic." I couldn't believe I was saying it. I said it for the first time almost a year ago in a group therapy session at a substance abuse rehab center. A few days prior to my public admission of powerlessness over alcohol, I was in a state of complete depression, hopelessness, self loathing and stagnation. I had been on a steady drinking bender for about 6 months. Checking myself into rehab felt like my only choice.
Gerald May writes, "We are all addicts in every sense of the word." You may respond, "Not me!" But remember, denial is the first symptom of addiction. May goes on to say that he is not reducing the meaning of addiction—neurologically, psychologically and spiritually we are all predisposed to become addicted to something or someone.

But why must we deal with this? In essence, because addiction is not simply moral failure, it is bondage. It is also central to the human condition, namely, your life and my life. Dr Drew Pinsky writes, "For me addiction is the predominant health issue of our time. Abuse, neglect and abandonment— all are actions that interrupt the healthy development of an individual. These are the problems that affect the whole society which includes not only [chemical] addiction but domestic violence, crime, homelessness, rising health costs, and above all else individual emptiness." We all know people who are actively struggling with addictive issues in their lives. Headlines aside, the creative community seems to have more than its share of casualties. As we deal with this we are learning to care for our friends as well as for ourselves.

Diagnosis
God has created us with three basic instincts: to eat (our hunger drive), not to be eaten (our security drive, our 'herd instinct') and to reproduce (our sex drive). Since the Fall (Genesis 3) all of these are now corrupted. We suffer with food addictions such as obesity, gluttony, starvation, anorexia and nervosia. We suffer with survival addictions such as fear, anxiety, isolation, loss of self, absorption into others (co-dependency), aggression, violence, domination and control. We suffer with sexual addictions such as fornication, adultery, pornography, compulsive masturbation, serial sex, prostitution, eroticizing relationships and perverting our fantasy life. But there is more. Our own personal history contains triggers to addictions. As we grow up, our brain is 'landscaped', moulded and modified by our life experiences and hormonal surges. Many of us suffer from childhood trauma such as verbal, physical and sexual abuse. The German psychiatrist Alice Miller says we are all "decent people once beaten". As a result we experience abandonment and loss of security and love. We fear rejection, suffering from low self-esteem. We find value outside of ourselves and confuse love with approval (rampant in the artistic community). Most of us also carry ungrieved childhood losses. Through adolescence, due to hormonal changes, if we regularly ingest alcohol, nicotine, pornography or street drugs we are likely to become life long addicts. Then adulthood brings its own pain: death, divorce, illness, accident, losses of all kinds—which we easily self medicate to suppress our loneliness, anxiety and depression.

Furthermore, we are all set up for addictions because we are wired to seek pleasure and avoid pain. Because we quickly reach tolerance for any pleasurable experience (say one beer, joint or pint), we must increase our consumption to have the same effect. This is a short road to addiction. Deeper still, we all suffer from what John Bradshaw calls "the hole in the soul." This is the core emptiness and loneliness which only God can fill.
Moreover, we also live in a highly addictive consumer culture driven by constant arousal and gratification. And we often attend addictive, graceless churches which confuse law and gospel. They demand performance for acceptance in turn causing fear of rejection and failure, where we mask the true pain in our lives. But how do addictions work? The ‘Three Cs’ provide a simple model. First the craving sets in. We may have sexual ache or lust triggered by a thought connected to a fantasy which then drives our behavior. Good feelings, overcoming anxiety and depression mark the relief phase. A hangover, more anxiety, guilt and depression are the crash phase. Shame and self hatred are the consequence phase. Then, out of increased pain, the build up begins again. But what drives addictions? First, denial. Addicts are out of control – since addicts are out of control, they try to control everyone else and especially their ‘stash’, their source of supply. Fifth, dishonesty – to protect their addictions they lie, cheat, rationalise, justify, explain, psychologise, generalise (“everybody does it”), rather than face their disease head on.

What drives addictions?

Moreover, we also live in a highly addictive consumer culture driven by constant arousal and gratification.

Our addictions run in cycles. First, there is the pain, the build up phase of loneliness, anxiety and longing. Second, there is the compensatory behaviour, the addictive act. Third, there is the relief phase. Fourth, there is the crash. Fifth, there is the consequence phase. Sixth, we then move back into the build up phase. For example, emotional pain may be the build up phase. Getting drunk is the compensatory behaviour. Good feelings, overcoming anxiety and depression mark the relief phase. A hangover, more anxiety, guilt and depression are the crash phase. Shame and self hatred are the consequence phase. Then, out of increased pain, the build up begins again. But what drives addictions?

First, denial. Addicts are out of control – since addicts are out of control, they try to control everyone else and especially their ‘stash’, their source of supply. Fifth, dishonesty – to protect their addictions they lie, cheat, rationalise, justify, explain, psychologise, generalise (“everybody does it”), rather than face their disease head on.

Get to the Core

Above all, addiction is a spiritual disease. In Alcoholics Anonymous, the turning point is admitting our powerlessness and turning our lives over to a ‘higher power’. For the Bible, the ‘higher power’ is Jesus. Here is Paul’s diagnosis of our condition in Ephesians 2:1-3. First, we are the victims of generational sin, spiritually dead, unplugged from God. Second, we are subject to environmental sin, this fallen, addictive world system, controlled by Satan. Third, we contribute our own personal sin to this. We are sinners both by nature and by choice (‘sin’ may be an unpopular word, but every addict out of denial knows it is true, we are morally broken and can’t fix ourselves).

Behind Paul’s diagnosis lie the opening chapters of Genesis. There we are made in God’s image as male and female. We are to live in unbroken communion with him and with each other. Our first parents were “naked and not ashamed” (Genesis 2:29). But, suddenly everything changes. They rebel and become their own gods. Now they are naked and ashamed, hiding from each other and hiding from God. Shame is their ‘being wounded’. This is the result of rejecting God and consequently being rejected by him. John Bradshaw distinguishes between guilt and shame. Guilt says, “What I did is wrong.” Shame says, “There is something wrong with me.” Guilt says, “I made a mistake.” Shame says, “I am a mistake.” As a result we cover up, we create a Hollywood movie set, a false front. In Romans 7, Paul calls this living life “in the flesh” or the “sinful nature”. While we know the good, we cannot do it. We are divided. We are in bondage. We then use our addictions to cover our shame and medicate our pain. Often we are told to go into recovery to get free. But if we only ask, “What program or therapist can deliver me?” we ask the wrong question. At the end of Romans 7, after his penetrating analysis of addiction – knowing the good but being unable to do it – Paul asks, not, “What can deliver me?” but “Who can deliver me?”

Anticipating his full answer in Romans 8, he responds, “Thanks be to God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Christ is the ‘who’, he is the higher power who alone can deliver us, break generational sin, release us from Satan’s kingdom, wash us clean and pour his life into us through his Spirit. In Christ alone I can be ‘born again’ by God himself.

Cure

As I come to the end of myself, ‘hitting bottom’, I am ready for Jesus. As addicts, we all need an intervention. We need someone to show up, confront us with our denial and help us to face the spiritual root of our obsessions and compulsions. As I cry out to Jesus, he comes. He loves me unconditionally. He accepts me just as I am. He is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. He doesn’t say, “I love you but…” He says, “I love you, period.” Jesus shows us our bondage, and embraces us with his love, breaking through our shame and reconnecting us to the living God. Coming into this grace is the beginning of our new life. He is the way to ‘Get Free’.

My friend, Tommy, was dying of his heroin addiction. In the darkness of his despair he cried out, “Jesus, help me,” hardly knowing who Jesus was. Instantly his room filled with light. Jesus came and confronted him in that moment and put him on the road to recovery. He spent the next 10 years working with drug addicts and alcoholics right off the streets. Jesus tells the story of the Prodigal Son. He declares his independence from his father, takes his inheritance and goes into the far country to live it up. But when he runs out of cash, he runs out of friends. Destitute, he decides to return to his father and ask to be made a servant in his house. But when his father sees him coming back, he is filled with compassion, runs to him, kisses him, embraces him, fully restores him to the family and throws a party for him (Luke 15:11-24).

This is the real God whom Jesus reveals to us. He comes for the lonely, the least and the lost. He hugs us and kisses us and welcomes us home. It is all by grace. He alone fills the ‘hole in the soul’ by plugging us back into himself.
Staying Free

How do we recover from our addictions? First, once Jesus is our Saviour, we need to ask him also to become our Sponsor. He is the sinless Son of God and the only perfect person who has ever lived since the Fall. So Jesus can show us how to become human again. As we ask him to sponsor us, we will become more and more like him. Addicts are fear driven. Jesus is fearless. Addicts are slaves. Jesus is free. Addicts are liars. Jesus is Truth itself. Addicts are in bondage to Satan’s kingdom. Jesus delivers us into God’s kingdom. Addicts live for themselves. Jesus lives for others. He restores our true humanity as we walk with him and live with him day by day. John Wimber says, “Build your secret history with God.” We do this through prayer and letting him show us how to live.

Second, we need to adopt spiritual disciplines such as the 12 Steps of AA. In sum, we admit that we are powerless over our addictions and give our lives over, not simply to a ‘higher power’ but to Jesus, the higher power. Then we take our moral inventory and face how we have hurt ourselves and others. We admit this to another trusted person and to God and ask for his forgiveness. Then, wherever possible, we make amends to those we have wronged and keep our moral inventory current. Next, we develop a spiritual life of prayer and meditation, asking God for his will and the Holy Spirit’s power to live it out. Then we seek to bring other addicts to Jesus to be set free by him.

Third, we need to join a community that is getting healthy. If I am an alcoholic, I can’t get sober in a pub or bar. I need fellow recovering addicts who are committed to Jesus and to each other to live out this new life. Here is what the church must become – a community in recovery from bondage to Satan, this fallen world system and our own dysfunctional ways of living. When I am with people committed to Jesus and to the lifestyle he lives, I will be supported as I follow him. I need to be with those who love as he loves, who forgive as he forgives and who live for others as he lives for others. This is our adventure out of the shame and pain of addiction. This is the spiritual journey, fighting against Satanic darkness and becoming human again. Jesus is our King. Worship him and go for his Kingdom. Get free and stay free!
Although most addiction problems have complex social and personal difficulties at their root, Mental Health Services are often involved in helping people recover. Here I discuss some of the approaches used from a Christian point of view.

Are addictions and substance misuse illnesses? Perhaps not like pneumonia or cancer, but with time many substance misuse problems become something more severe. The person loses control, becomes trapped and cannot help themselves. If they could, they would have already done so. If family and church could, would they not have? In these situations, seeing a mental health professional may be part of the answer.

Understanding Addictive Potential

There are some things that have the ability to take us more quickly down the slippery slope. Heroin is the classic – cheap, reliable, quick to act and withdrawal can be relieved by taking more. Alcohol is cheaper still, more easily available and can be made reliable if we stick to our favourite high alcohol brand. Other substances have strong psychological drivers such as a pick-me-up when feeling down or blanking out unpleasant reality – so not surprisingly substance misuse is more common if we are going through a rough patch or have things in our lives to which there seems to be no other answer. A Christian faith certainly helps, if only to remember that there are always other answers where God is concerned. However, repeated failures and a lack of support from the church can dim this truth and our relationship with God.

Stages of Change

One model of addiction describes five stages to full recovery. Precontemplation is the mouth saying, “Yes,” but the person’s life crying, “No!” Contemplation is serious thinking about giving up, leading to preparation for stopping in the next month. Action is the actual stopping (but also starting a new life). Maintenance is six months onwards – and for some a lifetime of abstinence. Understanding our stage is vital. We all think we are ready to give up tomorrow, but the old adage says we must give up for ourselves and not for our spouse, family or job. There must be sufficient motivation. An addiction therapist will help with this process using a technique called Motivational Interviewing. Different exercises at each stage help us move through the process. For some, setting a goal of reducing the level of misuse may be more realistic than going for abstinence.

Working through stages is something Christians should be familiar with. We often look for a ‘magic touch’ from God or the Holy Spirit, but the Bible actually teaches a staged approach to many things. A good example is the famous ‘renewing of the mind’ passage in Romans 12:2. If you look closely, you will see that a person is to “no longer be conformed to the pattern of the world”, and only then to go on to “discern God’s will”.

Getting Help

The first step of Alcoholics Anonymous is to say, “I am an alcoholic” – and the church community badly needs to do this. Addiction is a hidden problem in most churches, and the isolation many with addictions face only compounds their problems and can lead to depression which will make recovery even more difficult. Another key aspect of recovery is to make honest friends with those who are not addicted, and this cannot be done if the topic is taboo.

Medication may also be offered and can be helpful but only if combined with a comprehensive program of change. There are drugs that make drinking very unpleasant, others that decrease the craving somewhat and, if there is also depression present, anti depressants may be helpful. More can be read about NHS options at www.cmf.org.uk/index/addiction.htm.

Please do seek professional help, especially if others have noticed a change in you. Your GP will be able to put you in touch with an addiction therapist. For the most part, they will be glad that you have a faith to grow and a community to join as the addiction is left behind.
It strikes me as odd; their country has been destroyed, everyone has lost at least one family member, yet they are so joyful.

On the eve of our trip we said our goodbyes to our concerned looking friends. They all hugged us a little longer and harder than usual, and looked deep into our eyes as if etching our faces into their memories. It was pretty obvious that they were doubtful we’d make it back. Most of them had only heard of Liberia in the context of rebel activity and unrelenting civil war. I have to be honest this too was the extent of my knowledge of the country, but I answered their apprehensive questions with well rehearsed lines from the four page Liberia section of my favourite new book – Lonely Planet: West Africa (at the same time wondering why there are no comprehensive travel guides to Liberia available on the market. The lady at Foyle’s put it perfectly “maybe not enough people want to go there…”)

You may have gathered by now that this trip was not wholly our idea, it’s safe to say Liberia was never on any of our lists of top places to visit. No, this trip was the brainchild of a New Yorker we met last year – Scott Harrison. In August 2006 Scott set up Charity: Water in New York in an attempt to help the 1 billion people across Africa who do not have access to safe clean drinking water. The idea? Selling bottles of spring water for £1 and using the money raised to commission the building of new wells in the most needy areas. Genius.

In under a year the charity has raised in the region of one million dollars. Double genius. And so the time had come to spread the word to London, but before the £1 Charity: Water bottles went on sale to The Great British Public, Scott wanted a few members of the London team to visit the countries we would be raising money for, to see the need first hand as well as photograph and film the wells that have been commissioned, and the changes that access to fresh water has already bought to thousands of lives.

When you put it like that it’s easy to ignore the government warnings against travel to the area. So that’s how the four of us found ourselves tentatively stepping off the plane into a stiflingly hot Liberian night, wondering just what we’d let ourselves in for. After our first night under a mosquito net we jump into a van and begin a seven hour road trip North to Lofa County. The dirt track drive is spectacular – rust coloured, iron rich soil next to lush green vegetation is breathtaking, though the war torn backdrop is a stark reminder of the brutalities this nation has endured.

Buildings are splattered with bullet holes, burnt out vehicles clutter the roadside. During the fighting the entire infrastructure of the country was destroyed, hospitals and schools bombed and even water pumps ripped out and rendered useless. The struggle to get the country back on its feet is almost impossible without simple things as access to fresh water. Instead of looking to the future, the focus is on surviving day to day. It’s 6.30am. As we drive we pass hoards of villagers, mainly women and children, walking to fetch water for their families. Sometimes they trek for up to an hour to their nearest watering hole, carrying full jerry cans on their heads back to their villages in the searing heat. This walk for water takes place several times a day, taking priority over going to school and looking for work, yet ironically the water they travel so far for is often unsafe and contributes to the spread of illnesses such as dysentery, typhoid and cholera. Across Africa 62,000 people die every week from waterborne diseases and a lack of basic sanitation. 90% of those people are children under five years old.

We stop at a village which will soon have a freshwater well installed. As soon as the door to the van opens children pour out of huts to greet us. It’s mango season and they are covered in it. Sticky hands, sticky faces and snotty noses don’t normally do it for me, but there’s something about the kids here that makes it easy for me to hold their hands, even though I can feel bits of fruit oozing though my fingers. It strikes me as odd; their country has been destroyed, everyone has lost at least one family member, yet they are so joyful.

The chief of the village invites us to see their nearest watering hole. It’s a twenty five minute trek through the jungle and we have to walk tightrope style on logs balanced over swamp water – at one point there is commotion ahead, the chief looks back at us and tells us not to worry: “it’s only a green mamba.”

We are led by his granddaughter who carries an empty jerry can. She is fourteen and has suffered with typhoid for the past year. She looks ill, tired, her eyes are...
flecked with yellow. I ask the chief if she should be resting, his reply is simple: “Yes of course but her family needs water.” With her father working the fields and her mother cooking and caring for her younger children, the responsibility falls to her. The fact that she has typhoid doesn’t warrant a sick note.

We finally reach the watering hole. The smell is overpowering, the water murky and crawling with flies. Our group falls quiet as we watch the girl fill her jerry can, and then drink a cup full of the water before she heads back to her village. We are all sobered by this visit to the watering hole, yet none of us really know what to say to each other so we walk back in silence.

I’m relieved that these villagers will soon have a freshwater well, but for the first time I’m truly struck by the enormity of the water crisis here. This watering hole scene takes place all over Africa every single day because people simply have no other option than to drink water that is killing them. Please help us spread the word. We need you, whatever it is you can offer (your time, contacts, ideas, expertise) to help to make this a success. Every donation counts towards helping to bring hope and health to millions.

For information about how you can get involved go to www.charityis.org
For further stories of our trip to Africa go to www.laurajwillows.blogspot.com
has your efficiency decreased since

Choose

Drinking
Shopping
Gossiping
Smoking
Tripping
Performing
Sleeping
Other...
The question then, “Do we only get addicted to our vices?” is more I believe to do with the fact of our disobedience and the consequent action of wrong choice. Humanity in order to be fully human and not robotic always had the ability to choose against the will of its Creator. Whatever is forbidden seems so much more attractive that what is permitted. When one becomes a child of God by adoption and thus no longer a slave to oneself but rather to Christ, then all have a responsibility to teach and to care for others in such a way as to demonstrate the positive joy, pleasure and wonder of this newly discovered life.

Are their specific addictions that are more common for the ‘creative community’?

The creative community are more public, more observed, more exposed to the scrutiny of others than that of almost any other group. All of humanity however, is wide open to both deception and seduction. Both artists and those who love the Arts have been through history the potential perpetrators, if not initiators, of both falsehood and fantasy. They have equally produced incredible and beautiful works of wonder and thoughtfulness. Everyone struggles with the issue of the ego and a public person will always have to deal with fame if and more painful issues that both the Arts and artists have to address is the expectations that others place upon those in the limelight. This is especially true of the Christian community who desire that those who name the name of Christ and work in the public arena should be speaking for all types of issues, simply because of their position. Jesus spoke only as the Father directed him. He was not a puppet, but neither did he give his opinions, rather he spoke truth with compassion and the fullness of both grace and truth were what his followers were to emulate.

one of the greatest and more painful issues that both the Arts and artists have to address is the expectations that others place upon those in the limelight.

Is addiction always wrong?

This question begs the possibility of the answer being: “No, it is not.” I have already said that addiction implies that which is habit forming, or put another way “a deviation to something or someone”. When a way of life loses both essence and substance it becomes meaningless – a dead orthodoxy. The habit of regular church going for its own sake attracts no one. A living, vibrant and vital relationship with the God who is there through his Son and in the power of the Holy Spirit, draws the individual as well as the community together in a pulsating rhythm of worship. Free from the dryness of predictability, one is now addicted to the Truth and to seek after and search for all that is available from the Sovereign Lord himself. “If you seek me with all your heart, you will surely find me.” CS Lewis has called the Christian journey and its witness to the watching world, “a good infection”. He might easily have said “a good addiction”.

only for a few moments. This is an issue for another Artsian. Many on the other hand are both burdened and weighed down by a sense of their own unworthiness and uselessness (read Paul’s short letter to Philenom). Constant unemployment dogs the creative community more than any other. Being the centre of attention even for a short while can be difficult for performers. A few years ago I developed a good relationship with the actor Evelyn Laye, she was Noel Coward’s leading lady and performed many times both on Broadway and in London’s West End. I asked her once how she dealt with fame and applause, she said that she gave everything for her audience and when the curtain came down and rose again to rapturous applause she quietly in her heart thanked God for giving her the ability to give pleasure to others. A humble gracious approach don’t you think?

In recent years I have come to believe that one of the greatest
Addiction is everywhere. It is ubiquitous in my culture. It is the Black Plague of my time. Everywhere I look I see people addicted to something. We are shopping, eating, drinking, snorting, smoking, popping, shooting, gambling, fighting and sexualizing our way into oblivion with unprecedented technological ease and record speed. Addiction is misunderstood. Addicts are treated like criminals and demonized. We are shipped off to places that are supposed to fix us. For people of faith, the dilemma of having a belief in God while simultaneously suffering from a crippling dependency can be the most existentially cold and dark hole that a human being can ever be in. In addition to being criminals, and social outcasts, we have the added misfortune of living with the worst stigma possible – the unrepentant sinner.

I am not a professional therapist, mental health worker, drug abuse counselor or pastor so I am not going to write an analytical clinical treatise on the topic of addiction. I am an addict, plain and simple, and this is my story. I am a child of what Christians call ‘the Ministry’. I grew up on the mission field and in the front pew every Sunday from the age of 8 to 18. I acquired a concept of God that gave lip service to grace and unconditional love, but was in reality entirely based on doing and saying the correct thing. I became a ‘say anything, do anything to win the approval of others’ non entity filled with repressed rage at my father, mother, and more importantly at the real enemy – God. I remember the moment of salvation, not at an altar in front of the church, but the moment I first found relief in a bottle. I remember the ease and comfort that swept over my body and through my mind with each fiery liquid grasp at something greater than my own inability to deal with life. I remember the laughter that shook my being the first time I smoked pot and ate an entire pan of brownies. Led Zeppelin sounded better the ever, people were more interesting and the pain and isolation that I had felt for years was gone. I had found my new god.

I commenced to party my way through relationships, international borders and multiple career opportunities. I tripped and fell up the ladder as it were, peering out my front door looking for the cops or federal agents who I was convinced were around the corner. My best thinking had brought me to a place of complete inability to operate on a physical, emotional or spiritual level. I had sold my soul in the pursuit of optimistic fulfillment and relief from the all consuming pain of separation from God and others – the same God and others that had lived in fear of my whole life. I had exchanged the possibility of relationship with God and others for the promise of not needing either. The lie was the oldest one in existence, “I can be God.” I was willing to pay any price to not have to rely on an angry punishing vindictive God. I was willing to go to any lengths to be the one in charge.

My recovery has been slow and excruciating. Some miracles God works take seconds. Some take a lifetime. It’s not my job to question his timetable. I am learning to find joy in the process – a difficult thing for an instant gratification junkie. Addiction is a particularly acute manifestation of the ‘sin’ disease – a difficult thing for an instant gratification junkie. When I finally admit to myself that need, I have only one place left to turn. Don’t believe for a second that I don’t try other addictions first. Addiction transference is still preferable to the stubborn, ‘self will run riot’ addict in me and no matter how far I progress, desires will always arise in me that intrigue me to think that God can just slightly before the ultimate manifestation of my need for God. It brings me to my knees with the gift of desperation. It bankrupts my accounts (literal and spiritual) and then comes collecting mercilessly for the only thing that I have left – my life. I am ready to submit to the love and care of a power greater than myself. I am willing to be born all over again one day at a time.

Twelve thousand joints, mountains of pills and powder, and ninety nine bottles of beer later, I had a moment of clarity. I was willing to pay any price to not have to rely on an angry punishing vindictive God. I was willing to go to any lengths to be the one in charge. My recovery has been slow and excruciating.
Creature of habit

ARTICLE
JESS BEE

There’s this thing I look for everyday. It eludes me, slips through my fingers, gets washed away, drowned out. I turn a corner sure that it will be there waiting but it’s disappeared. Its echo rings faintly in my ear; its smell and touch are abstracted into memory.

This thing is silence. It is freedom. It is opposite. It is rest. It’s like that space we encounter just at the moment of waking from peaceful sleep where nothing fills our mind or drags us into the day.

Yet this thing escapes me because my heart is attracted by other things and my mind is lured by the immediacy of my surroundings. The habits I form, the sounds I wrap around myself, the lies I soak up all distract me. My waking life is full of noise and movement; thoughts that fester and emotions that rise and fall. The mundanity of my day to day tasks anesthetise me from moments of beauty. I live at odds with my heart’s cry because I can’t turn off the radio, the ipod, the TV, the computer. These habits are subtle yet powerful. Their very normalcy disguises their presence as they creep into my life.

At best they feed an unsettledness that I unknowingly carry around. At worst they compel my eyes to check the clock as I’m listening to a friend, make up any excuse not to connect with the people I work with, tell my body to deny the rest it craves, and move my spirit to say, ‘Not now’ as God calls my name and invites me closer.

My patterns of behaviour aren’t show-stopping or headline grabbing. They don’t debilitate me or take me out of the game like so many other addictive substances – yet if I don’t chase after my deeper, true craving they rob me nonetheless.

The thing is: these habits are easy and familiar. They trick me into thinking that they’re integral to who I am. Sometimes they appear to fit me so well that I think they belong to me. They are the things I fall into when I’m attacked or tired; when I take my eye off the ball. So sometimes I need to walk away from the distractions, the chatter, the steady hum of life so I can shed these things. In fact, everyday, every moment, whether I’m surrounded by the world or alone, I need to choose something different so that these things start to fade away.

In the quiet spaces I discover who I am, remember those seeds of vision, and start to establish more of what my contribution should be. In the pockets of rest I am nurtured, restored; hope flashes on/off, on/off, on. In the place of safety I am known and protected. This is the rock that stands unshaken as the storm rages; this is the wide open space; this is me being in the presence of my Father.
Addiction and the 'zero' space

By nature, an addiction is anything that controls our mind and heart, and sets up patterns to override the existing network. Addictions grab us and like a weighty cloak wrap their values around us. Then, they begin to penetrate our thoughts, feelings, beliefs – even our personality becomes enslaved by their stronghold. Here we discuss this issue and give some practical advice on how to recognise our addictions and find our 'zero' space:

By nature we crave. By craving we act. By acting we establish the foundations of our addictions. So the questions are, What is an addiction?, Are all addictions wrong?, and, How do we unleash the control they have over us? Normally, we associate the word 'addiction' with drugs, alcohol, sex or pornography. But, addictions come in scores of stages, shapes and sizes – chemical, emotional, psychological, etc.

Eventually, these addictions consume us and become the primary voice of command in our head. They begin to chip away and redefine our individuality, erasing us from the inside out like a cancerous growth. They determine how we act, what we consume, how we spend our time and money – ultimately, our addictions begin to play the role of God in our life.

C craving has been at the very root of our nature from the beginning of human creation. It is in craving that God established our need for him. It is in craving that we learn to love. It is in craving that we long for children. It is in craving that we devote ourselves to our passions, callings and purposes. It is in craving that we strive for habits of freedom and holiness. Craving is not the evil. So then, where does the tragedy begin?

The treachery arrives when we crave the wrong thing or when we have lack of self control in craving a harmless thing, relationship or situation. In other words, not all habits or addictions in and of themselves are wrong. God created the 'longing' factor as part of his perfect plan. But, we have the power to determine whether we make a situation right or wrong – we have the power to choose our habits.

How do we determine what is a right or a wrong habit? Or in other words, how do we choose our 'addictions'? ('habit' and 'addiction' are being used as synonymous terms). In order to choose our habits we must create a 'filter' – a system which is made up of:

1. Healthy scriptural guidelines
2. Honesty and awareness of our own weaknesses
3. Open (not selective or hidden) conversations with a trustworthy friend or mentor

Scriptural guidelines
Romans 8 provides an incredibly balanced perspective on the nature of wrong addictions. Firstly, the guilt factor: no condemnation in Christ. Secondly, the flesh factor: minds set on the flesh are hostile; and thirdly, the bondage factor: wrong addiction and slavery go hand in hand. Use this passage to guide your way as you journey into the realm of discovering your new habits.

Honesty with self
Think back to your childhood. As a child you were aware of your wants. Your needs were simple. Your perceptions were uncomplicated. It wasn’t until you started growing up that you put to sleep these awake spaces. In Matthew 18, Luke 9 and Mark 9, Jesus tells us what it means to be ‘like a child’. Through a child’s heart, we are able to be real and truthful with ourselves, with the world around us, and with God. To be ‘honest with ourselves’, we have the power to determine whether we make a situation right or wrong - we have the power to choose our habits.

We have to go back to our childhood. Recall our memories (perhaps with the help of a journal, a counselor, or a family member) and there, in those hallways, begin to investigate and reshape the wrong patterns and start anew.

Open communication with friend, mentor or counselor
This is probably the most difficult of the three. We are frail creatures and are often consumed with pleasing others just as others are consumed with pleasing us (Galatians 1:10). The most important thing to keep in mind here is that we are ok! We can stop playing the games; nothing is going to fall apart (well, at least not too terribly). In the end, honesty, covered in gentleness, is the best policy. It eliminates the weight of pretense. Because pretense is the fertile ground in which most wrong habits are born and bred. Talk to someone you trust. Completely and openly – get out of the mystery space. Make your ‘self’ known!

Addiction is an enormous issue. Please do not stop here in your venture to conquer your wrong habits if you are already overtaken by an addiction that is destroying you and those you love. Please consider getting professional help.

The goal isn’t legalism (-10). Neither is it liberalism (+10). There is a beautiful land in the exact middle of these two places called the balanced ‘zero’ space; a place where we can experience complete freedom inside. This place is different for each human being. Therefore, the key is to find your ‘zero’ space.
After a number of film projects you are now touring the world with the Royal Shakespeare Company. What is the production and where are you touring? The shows are King Lear and The Seagull. Our journey starts in Newcastle, followed by Singapore and then Melbourne, Australia, Wellington and Auckland in New Zealand, New York, Minneapolis and Los Angeles. We finish in the New London theatre in London’s West End.

How have you coped with the transition from being a film actor in Hollywood to a stage actor in Stratford upon Avon? Badly. This has been a massive shift in the life I am used to, culture, work ethics, community, everything! Stratford is massively isolating – the hours are long and people literally go mad after a few months. I have met some amazing people through Artisan in Birmingham and they really have been my lifeline and means of escaping the craziness of “Disneyland for Shakespeare!”

12 months of doing the same thing for not much money is a huge commitment, what made you accept the invitation? After I got the phone call from my agent asking me if I wanted the job I immediately asked how much time I had to reply. I was given a day. After chatting with everyone in my accountability group and my folks I put on my wellies and headed out into the countryside to seek God. To be honest I didn’t hear much but I did get covered in mud and I saw an amazing sunset, followed by a sense of peace about either side of the decision. So I took it – something new, challenging and a ticket around the world helped me say yes!

Paul, John, George or Ringo? Ringo... to not only be a Beatle, but then to become the voice of a talking train – genius!

Matthew, Mark, Luke or John? David

What is your future vision? Getting through this year is top at the moment. As far as work is concerned all I can do is audition for projects I like and find challenging, leaving the answers in my King’s hands. I have woken up with a few script ideas rattling around recently, we’ll see.

How do you react to criticism? I found that theatre is so immediate, that the good or bad press you receive affects me more than a movie I shot over a year ago. Also, you are continuing to go out on stage night after night after a press event. It’s funny how sensitive actors can be sometimes. I’m dealing fine with our reviews now, but at first if I read a bad one I had some really Shakespearean ideas as to what I wanted to do to some unnamed critics.

Last thing you read that inspired you? My horoscope... NO! There are two I read together. The God Delusion by Richard Dawkins and Kingdom Triangle by JP Moreland. Dawkins book focuses on why Christianity is totally crazy and mad and Moreland’s on why it makes not only intellectual sense but is necessary to the future of who we are as a people. I like to understand both sides of the battle, especially now that I am in a company with strong atheist ideas and non Christian lifestyles. I’m not a Christian to live a better life (whatever that means) I’m a Christian because God rocked up one day and knocked the doors off my sense of reality. I would be a fool to not follow, but having said that the struggle is real and remains constant with those I work with. I think it is our responsibility to understand the views of others and beliefs as we present them ours, by the way we live and talk, etc.

Most challenging film and most entertaining? I would have to say Life is Beautiful – how far do you go to cover the truth, but also save the ones you love? Most entertaining? The Fifth Element – great!

A song/album that is a must for your ipod? Oh that’s crap... that’s like the favourite movie line. There really is too much good stuff out. Let’s see... Rodrigo Y Gabriela is playing all the time in my earphones, but then you have Bright Eyes new album, the Beatles, Cash, Amos Lee, John Butler Trio, I can’t leave out Led Zeppelin, do you think Jesus likes some Zeppelin now and then?

How do you keep your faith central in such a pressured scenario? Prayer, Community, Discipline. All the things that seem to go walkies as soon as the work comes. It really is that simple and that hard. But that’s what we are told from the word go – it’s gonna be tough, here’s your armour, now wear it cause I guarantee you’ll get hit!
Every quarter Artisan produces and distributes over 4000 publications around the world for no charge. This is a huge step of faith for us each time. We are seeking to find four partners each year who would each pay £5000 or $10,000 to cover all the costs of producing and distributing one of the quarterly publications. In the meantime we are dependant on the support of readers like yourself to make a donation towards this publication and the wider vision.

Alongside the publications, Artisan in 2007 will be organising over 50 industry prayer events in London, Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco with new cities coming on board in the next twelve months. We are also in the process of raising £8000 to further develop the potential of the website – to enable you to network, and to promote your work and vision more effectively. Apart from all these costs we also have to find money to pay salaries. Today Artisan needs around £80,000 per year to fulfil its vision. We currently have regular giving amounting to just under half of this amount so please consider giving £10 or $20 today or setting up a standing order.

You can support Artisan in three ways:

- You can give both a one off gift and set up a regular standing order through the Artisan website with justgiving.com
- You can also send a cheque to Artisan Initiatives at 9 Adam St, Covent Garden, London, WC2N 6AA
- For people living in America, you can give to Artisan through the American Fund for Charities who will send you the receipt you require for your tax return please go to www.artisaninitiatives.org/contribute for the details.

Does cause you to have difficulty in sleeping?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Select one</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESPN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bebo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chocolate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whisky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Playstation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>QVC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youtube</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Johannesburg, or Jozi, or ‘Egoli’ (which means Place of Gold) was established as a city in the late 1800s when people came from northern parts of Africa and Europe during the ‘Gold Rush’. Forty percent of the world’s gold has been found here.

As a result of this history, Johannesburg began as a place of diversity and multiculturalism. It is South Africa’s most populous and prosperous city and drives a significant part of the country’s economy. It has the largest economy of all African cities and thousands still flock here to find employment. It is a city where the West and the rest of Africa collide and collaborate.

Because of the diversity, it is a city of stark contrasts – poor and rich, very Westernised in upmarket areas yet very African and rural in other parts. You’ll travel to certain parts of the city and feel like you’ve entered a suburb of the new Johannesburg – go there to interact with the musicians, artists and poets from across Africa. Visit the Market Theatre and the Apartheid Museum, the Hector Pietersen Memorial, the Mandela’s and Archbishop Tutu’s homes, the famous Regina Mundi Church, the Hector Pietersen Memorial, the Apartheid Museum and Wandis Shebeen.

Check out Rosebank, Sandton to enjoy shopping and good food. Parkhurst is a quaint suburb with lovely street side cafés and unique stores. Emmerentia is a great place to enjoy a picnic in the park with locals. Newtown is a suburb of the new Johannesburg – go there to relate to one another as brother and sister. They speak openly about race, appreciating their diversity without it becoming an obstacle to unity. This for me has been the true privilege of living in this city.

THINGS TO DO
Parktown and Westcliff are two of the oldest suburbs of Johannesburg and home to the mining magnates from 1892 until today. The concentration of power and money, combined with the extravagant taste of these pioneers, is reflected in the homes they built on the prominent ridges that lie north of the city centre. The Parktown Trust organises tours of the houses and gardens since most are not accessible to the public. Soweto is South Africa’s largest and most famous ‘ghetto’. Go on a ‘Soweto Bicycle Tour’ which includes historic visits to Mandela’s and Archbishop Tutu’s homes, the famous Regina Mundi Church, the Hector Pietersen Memorial, the Apartheid Museum and Wandis Shebeen.

Check out Rosebank, Sandton to enjoy shopping and good food. Parkhurst is a quaint suburb with lovely street side cafés and unique stores. Emmerentia is a great place to enjoy a picnic in the park with locals. Newtown is a suburb of the new Johannesburg – go there to interact with the musicians, artists and poets from across Africa. Visit the Market Theatre (for an experience of the best African theatre), Xarra bookshop and clubs such as Bassline.

Visit the suburb of Westcliff to have tea at the Westcliff Hotel and take in the sites at Zoo Lake down the road. Have the buffet lunch at Moyo (African restaurant) and visit the zoo as well. Then relax at Northcliff which has fantastic views overlook the city. Finally don’t forget to spend some time in Melville. This is a very bohemian, old, arty suburb in Johannesburg with lots of alternative restaurants and second hand stores. Service Station, c/o Crestar Mall.

At the heart of Constitution Hill is Constitutional Hill, a large outdoor piazza in which people can eat, relax, enjoy a snack or a meal, or take along a picnic basket. Proclamation Hill Nelson Mandela Bridge Johannesburg Prison (where there is an awesome and thriving theatre), Xarra bookshop and clubs such as Bassline.

HISTORICAL PLACES
Constitutional Hill is situated on a hill overlooking the bustling Johannesburg inner city to the south and the forested suburbs to the north, the site provides a unique perspective on the City of Gold and its dramatic history. At the heart of Constitution Hill is Constitution Square, a large outdoor piazza in which people can eat, relax, enjoy a snack or a meal, or take along a picnic basket.

Proclamation Hill Nelson Mandela Bridge Johannesburg Prison (where there is an awesome and thriving theatre)

CHURCHES
People Johannesburg Grace Bible Church in Soweto Rhema Church (linked to Hillsong) in Randburg Melville Junction in Melville St Martin’s Anglican Church God First

THEATRE
Liberty Life Theatre on Sandton Square Civic Theatre Market Theatre Montecasino Theatre The Barnyard Theatre

HOTELS
You will find very upmarket hotels in Johannesburg, especially in the areas of Sandton and Rosebank. The Witscliff Hotel (great for morning or afternoon tea). Rosebank Grace Hotel (great for brunch). The Rosebank Hotel Park Hyatt (very American) The Hilton The Southern Sun

MUSEUMS
Africa Museum
The Apartheid Museum
For anyone wanting to understand and experience what apartheid was really like, a visit to the museum is fundamental.

MALLS & SHOPPING CENTRES
Sandton City Sandton Square Rosebank Mall Rosebank The Zone Hyde Park (smaller and exclusive) Crestar Mall Eastgate Northgate Southgate Westgate

MUSEUMS
Africa Museum
View some excellent exhibits on the history of the area, notably a reconstruction of Sophia town - the Harlem of Johannesburg, where many artists like Miriam Makeba and Hugh Mackellar first performed in the 1950s before going into exile.

WEBSITE
www.joburg.co.za
Contributors:

JESS BEE
Jess works for Artisan and also for St Mary’s Church in Marylebone as part of the Arts Media department. Her background is in writing and editing with her experience ranging from copywriting projects to writing every now and again for publications such as Artisan.

ROD & FARAH BRADLEY
Rod and Farah have recently migrated just outside of London to Kent. They work within the industries of TV, Music, Film and Fashion, teaching, mentoring and working through the means of their newly established charity called Essentia.

STEVE COLE
Steve is married to Rachel and has two children (Sam 6) and Jasmine (4). Steve founded Artisan over 10 years ago. Having overcome his addiction to West Wing Steve is now working through the equally addictive first series of 24!

NIGEL GOODWIN
Nigel trained as an actor and has worked in film, television and theatre before combining this experience with theological training. After helping found The Arts Centre Group in 1971 along with his wife Gillie, Genesis Arts Trust was set up to expand Nigel’s work.

JULIE MARITZ
Julie trained as a journalist and works as a TV producer for an established national investigative journalism program in South Africa. She is based in Johannesburg and is passionate about telling the stories of those who are war torn, oppressed and voiceless.

CHRISTY STURM
Christy hails from Atlanta, Georgia and has lived in New York for almost 8 years. She works for a non profit organisation that serves people of all ages who have developmental disabilities.

DR ROB WALLER
Rob is a Consultant Psychiatrist in the NHS and one of the directors of Mind and Soul – a national network exploring the overlap of Christianity and Mental Health. www.mindandsoul.info.

DON WILLIAMS
Don is a Vineyard Pastor from the US. He has written a number of books and has also taught New Testament courses at colleges and seminaries. In the late 1960’s he was working in Hollywood with drug addicts and street people. He now edits www.kingdomrain.net.

JULIE MARITZ
Julie trained as a journalist and works as a TV producer for an established national investigative journalism program in South Africa. She is based in Johannesburg and is passionate about telling the stories of those who are war torn, oppressed and voiceless.

LAURA WILLOWS
Laura has worked as a TV Producer for the last five years, but recently left the tantrums and tiaras of Reality TV behind, in order to pursue her passion for writing. Laura is also the proud new owner of a husband called Simon Willows.

PHILIP WINCHESTER
Philip studied acting at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art. He has appeared in numerous stage productions as well as roles in film and TV and is now touring with the Royal Shakespeare Company.

OUTSIDE INITIATIVES
Artisan initiatives is a registered charity in the UK. Artisan runs arts and media projects in prisons, young offender institutions, youth clubs and with drug and alcohol users. Artisan is also involved in research and advocacy campaigns to reduce the harm of drugs.

NIGEL GOODWIN
Nigel trained as an actor and has worked in film, television and theatre before combining this experience with theological training. After helping found The Arts Centre Group in 1971 along with his wife Gillie, Genesis Arts Trust was set up to expand Nigel’s work.

JULIE MARITZ
Julie trained as a journalist and works as a TV producer for an established national investigative journalism program in South Africa. She is based in Johannesburg and is passionate about telling the stories of those who are war torn, oppressed and voiceless.

CHRISTY STURM
Christy hails from Atlanta, Georgia and has lived in New York for almost 8 years. She works for a non profit organisation that serves people of all ages who have developmental disabilities.

DISCLAIMER
The views expressed in this magazine are not necessarily those of Artisan.
“LORD, grant me
the serenity to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.”