



# Compulsive Shopper...or Not?

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**“That’s our new mission statement.”**



# What's in a name?

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- Impulsive Shopper
- Excessive Shopper
- Fanatical shopper
- Emotionally Reactive Shopper
- Compulsive Shopper
- Over shopper
- Shoppaholic
- Oneomaniac

TINA'S GROOVE





# Impulse buying

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- **Unplanned purchase of generally inexpensive items**
- **Occurs when an external trigger, a product, stimulates the individual to make a purchase**
- **Acute Behaviour**



# Compulsive Buying

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- **Motivated by an internal trigger from which shopping and spending is an escape**
- **Compulsive buyer is a person who allows shopping to destructively deflect resources-whether of time, energy, or money- from the fabrication of everyday life.**
- **Chronic State**



# Diagnostic Criteria for Compulsive Buying

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**A. Maladaptive preoccupation with buying or shopping or maladaptive buying or shopping impulses or behaviour, as indicated by at least one of the following:**

**1) Frequent preoccupation with buying or impulses to buy that is/are experienced as irresistible, intrusive and or senseless**

**2) Frequent buying of more than can be afforded, frequently buying of items that are not needed, or shopping for longer periods of time than intended**



# Diagnostic Criteria for Compulsive Buying Cont'd

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- B. The buying preoccupations, impulses or behaviours cause marked distress, are time consuming, significantly interfere with social or occupational functioning, or result in financial problems (e.g. indebtedness or bankruptcy)**
  
- C. The excessive buying or shopping behaviour does not occur exclusively during periods of hypomania or mania.**



# Compulsive Buying Disorder: Oniomania

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- Excessive shopping cognitions and buying behaviour that leads to distress or impairment.
- Women 6%; men 5.5%
- Tends to run in families
- Associated with significant psychiatric co-morbidity



# Concurrent Disorders

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- Mood
- Anxiety disorders
- Substance disorders
- Eating disorders
- Impulse control disorders
- Personality Disorders: (60%) obsessive-compulsive, avoidant or borderline



# Two Distinct Clusters of Compulsive Buyers

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- **Cluster 1) Driven by feelings of low self esteem, dependency and anxiety. Attempt to build self esteem via the sense of worth, power and control they achieve by shopping excessively**
- **Cluster 2) Act out of simple materialism, social isolation or avoidance; they shop simply to acquire, to escape from loneliness or to flee from stress.**



# Compulsive Shopping Process

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- **Anticipation:** thoughts, urges or preoccupations of either having the item or with the act of shopping
- **Preparation:** Where/when to go, how to dress, which credit cards to use
- **Shopping:** actual experience; intensely exciting
- **Spending:** euphoria or relief followed by a sense of let down or disappointment with oneself



# Patterns of Shopping Behaviours

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- Compulsive daily shopping
- Compulsive collecting
- Image spending
- Bulimic spending: binges/ceaseless buy-return cycles
- Co-dependent spending
- Buying multiples of each item
- Compulsive bargain hunting
- Compulsive hoarding



# Signs Of Compulsive Spending

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- Hiding of Purchases
- Excessive credit cards and debt
- Stacks of new items never used
- Depression and anxiety after shopping
- Others are horrified by our spending habits
- Individual writes checks they cannot cover



# Signs Cont'd

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- Preoccupation with shopping and spending
- Devote significant amount of time to shopping and spending
- Shops alone
- Individual feels they have to spend money if they have any left over



# Great Questions to Ask

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- Do you ever feel preoccupied with shopping and spending?
- Do you ever feel that your shopping behaviour is excessive, inappropriate or uncontrolled?



# Questions Cont'd

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- Have your shopping desires, urges, fantasies, or behaviours ever been overly time consuming, caused you to feel upset or guilty, or lead to serious problems in your life such as financial or legal problems or the loss of a relationship?



# Practical Recovery Rules

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- Give up the plastic
- Always shop with a list
- Make a 24 hour rule
- Stay away from “slippery places”
- Make a list of other behaviours you can substitute for shopping



# Compulsive Buyer Disorder (CBD) Resources

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- Financial counselling
- Self Help Groups:
  - Debtors Anonymous
  - Stopping Overshopping Group Telephone Coaching
  - Shopping Addicts Only, Yahoo Group
- Marital therapy



# CBD Resources

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- Psychopharmacological Treatments
- Bibliotherapy
  - I Shop Therefore I am: Compulsive Buying and the Search for Self; Dr. April Benson
  - To Buy or Not to Buy: Why We Overshop and How to Stop; Dr. April Bensen
  - Women Who Shop To Much; Carolyn Wessen