

Pleasure As the Key To Returning to Emotional Health

Post by “Pacatus” of December 21, 2021 at 4:21 PM

I think there are clearly feedback loops between the physical and the mental. But your chocolate cake example illustrates behaviors that may well become addictive, mask the mental pain, but ultimately create for pain/suffering themselves.

Although most of us are aware of psychosomatic responses that feed from the mental to greater physical health and well-being, it can also work the other way around. Non-stressful exercise for example -- walking, yoga, tai chi, laughter yoga (which starts with the physical rather than thoughts of funniness or good humor, but seems to feed fairly quickly -- 10 to 20 minutes -- into mental pleasure as well; the body enjoys laughing). Certain physical activities produce physical pleasure that fairly quickly translates into mental pleasure. I have personally found that physically stimulating the laughter response (e.g., by fluttering my diaphragm to simulate laughter) soon gets me to actually laughing, and becoming more cheerful. Norman Cousins famously testified to the reverse feedback (mental pleasure to physical pleasure), when laughing at funny movies for 20 minutes or so gave him hours of pain-free sleep.

I came across the following awhile back. Maybe it will be helpful:

