

**Chapter 1 : 5 Signs You Have An Addictive Personality - mindbodygreen**

*An addictive personality will consistently engage in excessive risk-taking and sensation-seeking behaviors that typically lead them develop addictions to drugs, alcohol, food, gambling, pornography and/or sexual activities.*

A Look at Drug Abuse. Common Signs and Symptoms 5 Traits of an Addictive Personality The American Society of Addiction Medicine ASAM defines addiction as a prolonged disease of the brain, which involves changes to the reward centers, leading to alterations in behaviors, drive, retention, and cognition. These personality traits are collectively called the addictive personality , a psychological term that has been argued by medical professionals; however, these traits do show up in about percent of the population. The five leading traits of addictive personalities include: People who struggle with addiction or substance abuse problems typically display poor impulse control skills. They are more likely to make sudden decisions with little regard for the consequences, especially the long-term consequences. They often do not care if a substance will leave them with negative side effects, or abuse of the substance will cause chronic health issues. While they may be engaged in their surroundings and interested in trying new things, these traits may have a downside too. They may seek adventure, but this could include party atmospheres or the mental escape offered by drugs. Many people who abuse substances do so because they experience higher levels of stress than considered normal. In many cases, this stress may be self-imposed, such as when a person chooses a high-pressure career or worries about the future. People who struggle with mood disorders, especially anxiety or bipolar disorder, are prone to experiencing high levels of stress due to brain chemistry imbalances. Without an appropriate medical diagnosis, this could turn into self-medication with alcohol or drugs. While experimenting with or abusing intoxicating substances can negatively impact brain chemistry, people who struggle with depression, low self-esteem, or personal stress may attempt to self-medicate these feelings. They may drink too much at a party or take stimulants to complete tasks that require a lot of energy. They want to feel good about themselves, but the intoxication often goes too far, leading to worsening brain chemistry, and induced or worsened mood disorders, which then contributes to a continuation of the original negative self-image. Few or no long-term goals: While the stereotype of an addictive personality involves someone who is lazy, carefree, or seeking constant stimulation, these are not the only signs. A person who is very driven and competitive may also have an addictive personality, which may show up in shying away from setting specific goals for the future. Even if a person is very focused on their job, their family, or other pursuits, they may not have an idea of what they actually want out of these. This problem can be enhanced by consuming intoxicating substances, leading the person to wonder if they have a future. Whether social isolation comes from abusing drugs that are not culturally acceptable, from intently focusing on work or school, or from feeling bad about oneself and being afraid to go out, alienation from peers is a sign that a person may be abusing drugs or at risk of becoming addicted to drugs. The individual may feel like they need a substance, like alcohol, to make social situations easier; they may feel like they need to take a stimulant to focus on work, causing them to avoid their friends; or they may become addicted to opioids and abuse heroin instead of leaving home to seek companionship. Ready to leave your addiction behind? Call now to speak to a consultant about your treatment options Get Help Today.

**Chapter 2 : 6 Traits of an Addictive Personality - Drug Rehab Options**

*Although the term "addictive personality" is not an official psychiatric diagnosis, research has shown that some individuals may be more prone to addictive behavior than others. Many studies have demonstrated links between certain personality traits and alcohol and drug abuse problems.*

Antisocial personality disorder For example, as explained by Brain Facts , multiple studies over the last decades have demonstrated a strong link between schizophrenia and addiction to nicotine. In fact, it has been shown that nicotine can even temporarily lessen some of the symptoms of schizophrenia. The use of cigarettes to manage these symptoms is a phenomenon known as self-medication, which is a common source of substance abuse that later becomes addiction. The Adventurous, Risk-Taking Trait Some personality traits have higher risk of addiction than others. Individuals who like to take risks and who have little impulse control around experimenting and playing with new experiences and dangerous activities are more likely to try drugs. People with high levels of dopamine in the brain may have a lower sensitivity to its effects, meaning that they need to have more intense experiences in order to feel the pleasure that this brain chemical causes. In this way, the adventure-seeking, risk-taking personality can have a higher likelihood of experimenting with and, later, becoming addicted to these substances. The Disconnected, Cautious Trait According to the Scientific American article, the bold, risk-taker type who develops addiction is more likely to be male. On the other hand, cautious people who have difficulty with social relationships " and who at the same time may suffer from depression, anxiety, or both " can also develop addiction; these personality types are more often women. Considering the self-medication idea mentioned above, people with these personality traits may be more likely to try to manage symptoms of anxiety or painful feelings of loneliness, disconnection, and depression by using alcohol or drugs that dull those feelings. This may then lead to the person becoming dependent on the substance to feel good in general, which in turn can lead to tolerance and addiction. The Obsessive, Compulsive Trait Addiction sometimes has to do with a lack of impulse control, but this is not exclusively the inability to resist impulses. In fact, people who are too rigid with managing their impulses may also end up using substances as a manifestation of an obsessive-compulsive behavior pattern. In fact, addiction often becomes a compulsion to use the substance based on a habit that has formed over time rather than a single impulse to try something new. In this way, people with intense focus and habitual behaviors may be as likely to develop addiction as those who are unable to control impulses. The obsession with using psychoactive drugs is a main symptom of the disorder, and it can exist both separate from and in concert with a lack of impulse control that can also be a hallmark of addiction. Being Unable to Self-regulate What all of these traits have in common is an inability for the individual to regulate behaviors, thoughts, and feelings that might otherwise enable an ability to moderate use of alcohol or other substances. As explained in an article from the University of Rochester Medical Center , studies are beginning to show that an inability to regulate behavior around the anticipation of receiving a reward is strongly linked to the development of addiction. However, this is not the end of the issue. Individuals who pursue the idea of reward so strongly often do not experience as much pleasure from having gotten the reward as those who do not have this issue. This diminished sense of pleasure leads the person to push harder to win more in the hope that the reward response might be stronger. How to Help a Person with High Addiction Risk Various forms of behavioral therapies can help individuals struggling with these issues to learn to manage their behaviors and acquire self-regulation skills that can moderate the addictive response. In addition, for those who have already developed substance use problems, treatment programs can incorporate these therapies with other demonstrated treatments. This approach may help the person safely stop using drugs or alcohol and live a sober life as well as gain control over the various traits above. Seeking out research-based, professional care can provide the individual with tools to understand and manage these various traits, making recovery possible. Last updated on October 5, T

### Chapter 3 : Understanding What an Addictive Personality Means

*An addictive personality is a set of personality traits that make addiction more likely. Addictions can come in a wide range of forms, including drugs, alcohol, gambling, exercise, pornography and more.*

If so, what does having such a personality even mean? According to experts, people can have certain addictive characteristics that make them more likely to develop an addiction to drugs or alcohol. What Is an Addictive Personality? An addictive personality means that someone has certain traits that put him or her more at risk for developing an addiction. Having these traits puts them at risk for all kinds of addictions, not just drug problems. For example, they can also develop addictions to gambling, sex, and exercise. In general, people with addictive characteristics tend to develop an addiction to anything that releases endorphins in the brain. The brain uses endorphins to trigger a reward response. Eating good food, laughing, or even exercising releases endorphins. However, people should look out for those that put them more at risk. For example, poor coping skills put people at a greater risk. People who have impulsive behaviors are also at a greater risk of developing an addiction. Those who drink all night when they know that they have to work the next day are at risk. Compulsive behavior is another concern. When someone suffers from compulsive behavior, they already have trouble controlling their own actions. However, they need to be more aware of the consequences of their actions. Experts believe that bad personality traits can make the difference between some people developing addiction. For example, some people can go out and have a few drinks on the weekend without any problems. Others, however, have trouble stopping, and it starts affecting their work week. With that said, you can learn how to handle addiction and these traits with the right guidance. At 1st Step Behavioral Health, we provide this kind of guidance. Some of the different drug addiction treatment programs that we offer include:

**Chapter 4 : Addictive Personality: Understanding and Coping With an Addictive Personality**

*Addiction to alcohol is a particularly easy addiction for someone with an addictive personality disorder to fall in to because of the availability of alcohol. For the true addict there is a variety of alcohol for every budget and since the high lands in the "numbness" that comes with drinking, it rarely matters what type of alcohol is used.*

Social alienation and tolerance for deviance Heightened stress coupled with lack of coping skills. For example, depression due to physical disease [6] can cause feelings of hopelessness that are mitigated after successful treatment of the underlying condition, and addiction can increase dependence on others. For example, depression, poor self-control, and compulsive behavior are linked to neurotransmitter abnormalities, i. In this way, many people who maintain an addictive personality isolate themselves from social situations in order to mask their addiction. They have trouble handling situations that they deem frustrating, even if the event is for a very short duration. The combination of low self-esteem , impulsivity and low tolerance for stress causes these individuals to have frequent mood swings and often suffer from some sort of depression. They wish to fit in, hence they are very easily influenced by others. Likewise, those who have low self-esteem also seek peer approval; therefore, they participate in "attractive" activities such as smoking or drinking to try to fit in. In fact, lack of stress tolerance is a telltale sign of the disorder. Long-term goals prove difficult to achieve because people with addictive personalities usually focus on the stress that comes with getting through the short-term goals. They may often find it difficult to make commitments in relationships or trust their beloved because of the difficulty they find in achieving long-term goals. People suffering from addictive personality disorder usually undergo depression and anxiety , managing their emotions by developing addiction to alcohol, other types of drugs, or other pleasurable activities. Addictive substances usually stop primary and secondary neuroses , meaning people with personality disorders like the relief from their pain. Behavior-based addictions , on the other hand, are those that are not linked to neurological behavior as much and are thus thought to be linked to personality traits; it is this type of addiction that combines a behavior with a mental state and the repeated routine is therefore associated with the mental state. Lang, a psychology professor at Florida State University , wrote in a study that the continuing search for the personality traits that play a part in the development of addictions are important for the broader fight against addiction. This is different from substance abuse in that abuse of a substance is not really definable while substance addiction is a behavioral addiction where there is an overwhelming involvement with the use and buying of drugs or alcohol. When an addict behaves mindlessly and irresponsibly while gambling, it can grow to be a bigger problem. A gambler with an addictive personality goes through three stages. Second comes the "losing phase" where the individual starts to gamble alone, borrowing cash and gambling large sums of money, compiling debt which he or she may not be able to pay off. Finally, the "desperation phase" of the addictive behavior gambler is when the person takes further risks, may engage in illegal loans and activities and even experience depression or attempt suicide. Those with anorexia nervosa channel their success into this one goal: Once a person starts dieting, it is very difficult for him or her to quit. This is similarly true for those suffering from bulimia. A person is said to have bulimia when he or she binges on large amounts of food and then prevents digestion by purging laxatives, vomiting, water pills, etc. This addictive behavior often results in obesity. Compulsive buying is different from hoarding or normal purchasing behavior in that it is about the process of buying, [22] not the process of acquisition: Many are experiencing depression and buy things to make themselves feel betterâ€”to them, the act is much the same as taking a drug. And like people with other addictions, people with compulsive buying problems tend to get confused by their feelings and to poorly tolerate aversive psychological states such as bad moods. A recent study indicates that people who are addicted to their cell phones share common traits with those who suffer from an addictive personality. Improvements in cell phones such as GPS , music players, cameras , web browsing , and e-mail can make them an indispensable instrument to an individual. This can lead to psychological, social, school and work difficulties. Symptoms of this addiction include the following: In a recent study, researchers have proved that many frequent tanners demonstrate signs and symptoms adapted from substance abuse or dependence criteria. Melatonin plays a key

role in sleep patterns and is suggested to reduce anxiety levels. This sensation is what possibly drives tanners to continue tanning regardless of the health risks. More research needs to be done, but many researchers are beginning to add tanning to the list of addictive processes. Relation to leadership[ edit ] When people are seeking a leader they look for qualities like honesty , intelligence , creativity , and charisma , but a leader also needs to be driven and be willing to challenge certain ideas and practices. Dopamine can be artificially created by substances that carry a risk for addiction, like cocaine , heroin , nicotine and alcohol. People with risk-taking and obsessive personality traits , which are often found in addicts, can be useful in becoming a leader. Only once the behavior is under control can the person truly begin to do any of the therapeutic work necessary for recovery. These treatments help patients by providing healthy coping skills training , relapse prevention, behavior interventions, family and group therapy, facilitated self-change approaches, and aversion therapy. People with addictive personalities use their addictions as coping mechanisms when in stressful situations. However, since their addictions do not actually soothe them, so much as they provide momentary relief from anxiety or uncomfortable emotions, these individuals feel the need to use their addiction more often. DBT provides ways to tolerate distress and regulate emotions, both of which are challenging to someone with an addictive personality. A medication called Disulfiram was created in This medication is still used today but two others have been made to help treat alcohol dependence Acamprosate and Naltrexone. There are two sides of this argument, each with many levels and variations. One side believes that there are certain traits and dimensions of personality that, if existent in a person, cause the person to be more prone to developing addictions throughout their life. A major argument in favor of defining and labeling an addictive personality has to do with the human ability to make decisions and the notion of free will. This can be seen in that people are not forced to drink excessively or smoke every day, but it is within the reach of their own free will that some may choose to do so. The theory of addictive personalities agrees that there are two types of people: Risk-takers enjoy challenges, new experiences and want instant gratification. These people enjoy the excitement of danger and trying new things. Some people believe that claiming that there is such thing as an addictive personality belittles the types and significance of many tough addictions. Others also argue that by placing a label on the type of people that have addictions, this stereotypes people and denies that addiction can happen to anyone. By labeling someone with an addictive personality, one may think that there is no way to change the outcome and that he or she will inevitably develop addictions.

**Chapter 5 : ADDICTIVE PERSONALITIES FOOD OR ALCOHOL? | Yahoo Answers**

*People with addictive personalities may develop a sex addiction, a food addiction, an exercise addiction, or any number of other dependencies. Addictive Personality: The Signs There are numerous signs of an addictive personality that can indicate whether one is at a greater risk of developing an addiction.*

Treatment Options Addictions are multifaceted, and the underlying causes of addiction are complex. But historically, a number of personality traits have been associated with developing an addiction. However, just because someone is predisposed to develop an addiction through genetics or personality traits does not necessarily mean they will become addicted. Other factors, such as environment and a support system, play a role. What Is an Addictive Personality? Personality, which reflects the confluence of a number of individual traits, is one of these factors. Genetics, for example, play a role in the development of an addiction. Personality Traits That Can Lead to Addiction Research suggests that certain personality or behavioral traits can make someone more likely to develop an addiction. Traits can vary between substance and addiction type, or even by age of the individual. Impulsivity is commonly associated with a wide range of psychological problems, including addiction. Sometimes described as spontaneous or erratic behavior with little thought of the outcomes or consequences, impulsivity can lead to risky behaviors. This trait is similar to impulsivity in the sense that sensation-seeking individuals might be more spontaneous or also seek out risky situations to fulfill the need for new or varied experiences. Negative affect refers to a set of unpleasant emotions, such as anger and sadness, that can lead to maladaptive behaviors, including substance abuse. Those with negative affect are more likely to abuse substances to cope with stress. Negative urgency is how rashly a person responds to distress. Those with negative urgency who have difficulty managing stress in a healthy way are more likely to turn to substance abuse to cope. People with high neuroticism often respond to challenges or threats with negative emotions, such as anger, sadness, anxiety, and irritability. Research has revealed that people with high neuroticism are more likely to suffer from a substance use disorder. People who are disagreeable are more likely to be selfish, unfriendly, and uncooperative. Studies have shown that a low level of agreeableness is correlated with alcohol or drug addiction. Research has suggested a link between narcissism, or an inflated sense of self-importance, and online gaming addiction. Aggression is characterized by hostility and violent behavior toward others. Research suggests it is positively correlated with online gaming addiction. Not everyone who has the traits will develop a substance abuse problem. Many worry that having these traits will lead to addiction. However, as mentioned above, many other factors influence the development of an addiction. Not everyone who has a set of traits or genes that predisposes them to addiction develops problems with substance abuse. Protective factors, such as a strong support network, an ability to handle life stressors, and resilience can prevent addiction. For example, someone who is sensation-seeking and impulsive may be more likely to engage in risk-taking activities, but may pick up sky-diving or mountain climbing instead of drugs. Conversely, someone who does not display any of these traits can develop an addiction. If you are worried you may develop an addiction, or if you know that addiction runs in your family, educate yourself on substance abuse and the risks of using. Learn to use coping skills when experiencing negative life events or emotions, and surround yourself with positive and sober people. Predictors of Adolescent Substance Abuse and Behavioral Addictions Common traits found in adolescents who abuse drugs and alcohol and exhibit problematic gambling include:

**Chapter 6 : Addictive Personality, and How It Contributes to Addiction**

*The individual with addictive personality can be susceptible to many different types of addictive behavior including: \* Alcohol and drugs (including prescription drugs) \* Eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia, or compulsive eating.*

This is mostly due to the effect that all of these substances and behaviors have on the brain [1]. Our brains have special reward centers that are generally stimulated with certain behaviors, such as being praised, taking care of our bodies, exercising, or with being in love. The reward centers of our brain can also be activated by artificial means through the use of drugs, alcohol, and food abuse. In a typical situation, stimulation of the reward center of the brain is created by neutral and pleasant activities. However, this can also be produced through chemical stimulation from drugs of all kinds, alcohol, and eating disordered behaviors. Since stimulation of the reward center of the brain acts in blocking undesirable feelings and emotions, an addictive cycle is created. When the reward center of the brain is stimulated inappropriately, specifically through drugs, alcohol, or abuse of food, it stops functioning the way it was intended to. Abuse of any substance, whatever form it may be, may create a false sense of temporary happiness or relief, but not without damaging consequences. But relief created by stimulation from food, drugs, or alcohol is brief and only creates greater risk for dependency and addiction-forming habits. Once an addiction is established, it is difficult to relinquish control, especially as an individual comes to need the relief that is found from artificial stimulation. In addition to stopping the addictive behaviors, it is helpful to address the root causes of addictive disorders to promote healing and establish the ability to cope with unsettling emotions. While self exploration can sometimes be a painful process, it leads to a centered, peaceful and fulfilling life, completely independent from any type of substance, food, or drink. Choosing to find relief from outside substances rather than within simply puts off the inevitable, like placing a Band-Aid on a deep gash that requires stitches. It may help temporarily, but a lasting sense of peace and control can never be developed when held captive in the bonds of an addiction. If you or a loved one is struggling with an addictive disorder, know that there is hope for recovery and the prospect of having a true and lasting sense of peace, relief, and wellbeing. Five-Factor Model personality profiles of drug users. BMC Psychiatry , 8: Recognizing alcohol and drug abuse in patients with eating disorders. Epub Feb October 2, Last reviewed: October 2, Search Eating Disorder Hope.

**Chapter 7 : Addictive Personality: How I Made It My Healthiest Trait - mindbodygreen**

*Comfort eating is a common way that we make ourselves feel better when we are disappointed, stressed or overwhelmed. While comfort eating is not harmful in moderation, if it becomes a habit, it can lead to obesity, food addiction, and binge eating.*

What Are the Causes of Addictive Personality? The primary chemical cause of an addictive personality is an elevated dopamine response. Instead they turn to drugs, alcohol, gambling, eating or sex, because these objects or activities are predictable and therefore trustworthy. Causes of addictive personality can have physical, psychological or genetic components. Video of the Day Elevated Dopamine Levels The primary chemical cause of an addictive personality is abnormal dopamine levels. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that binds to certain receptors in the brain and helps to regulate emotions, feelings of pleasure and movement. The researchers found that while the dopamine drug managed symptoms, it also made patients significantly more likely to develop a gambling addiction. Depression Different natural temperaments can predispose a person to different kinds of addiction, reports the August issue of "Alcoholism: But people who naturally have difficulties finding joy in everyday activities tend to develop addictions to mood elevators that promise a quick high such as a amphetamines, gambling or sex. Nervous types of people, on the other hand, more often get addicted to depressants such as alcohol, marijuana or benzodiazepines, the researchers found. Abnormal Reaction to Stress How people react to stressful situations can be a deciding factor in whether they will maintain addictive behavior over time, report researchers from the National Institute of Mental Health. Addictive personality types typically show abnormally high hormonal stress responses to stressful events. Because drug withdrawal can be an acutely stressful and traumatic event, an altered hormone response can make it harder to quit an addiction and easier to lapse back into substance abuse, the researchers say. Genetics Although very little is known about the genetic mechanisms underlying addictive behavior, the traditional view is that an addictive personality can be hereditary. The Minnesota Twin Studies indicate that the heritability of alcoholism is 50 to 70 percent. That means that for any individuals with varying degrees of alcohol dependence, genetic differences explain 50 to 70 percent of that variation. Social and Cognitive Factors Psychologist and author of "The Meaning of Addiction," Stanton Peele, denies the traditional view that biological factors explain addiction. Peele compares an addictive personality to mental illnesses such as obsessive-compulsive disorder and major depression. No one would approach major depression from a purely biological point of view, he says. With these disorders, medical practitioners are open to the possibility of cognitive and environmental influences. But the conventional approach to addiction is to attribute it to genes and then put the addict in a rehab that scares him into exercising future abstinence. According to Peele, this is the wrong approach. He recommends using psychotherapy in the treatment of addiction.

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*To be clear, addiction is not limited to drugs, alcohol, and nicotine; it can include anything from gambling and food to television and video games. People who exhibit personality traits such as impulsive behavior, the inability to deal with stress, or the constant search for instant gratification are often said to have an addictive personality.*

Risk factors for addiction People of all backgrounds and beliefs can experience addiction. It can be hard to understand why some people are more prone to it than others. Regardless of your upbringing or moral code, many factors can raise your risk of becoming addicted to alcohol and other drugs. Your genetics, environment, medical history, and age all play a role. Certain types of drugs, and methods of using them, are also more addictive than others. The chemical reactions that happen in your brain when you have an addiction are quite different than those that happen in someone without one. That explains why one person may be able to smoke cigarettes every so often for pleasure, while another needs them on a daily basis to function. Heredity is a major risk factor for addiction. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse , up to half of your risk of addiction to alcohol, nicotine, or other drugs is based on genetics. For example, if you have an alcoholic parent, you might choose not to drink but still become addicted to smoking or gambling. Environment Environmental factors can also raise your risk of addiction. For children and teens, lack of parental involvement can lead to greater risk-taking or experimentation with alcohol and other drugs. Young people who experience abuse or neglect from parents may also use drugs or alcohol to cope with their emotions. Peer pressure is another risk factor for addiction, especially among young people. The availability of a substance in your social group can also affect your risk of becoming addicted. For example, large amounts of alcohol are available in many social settings that are popular among college students. For example, you may need to avoid the people that you previously used drugs with. You may experience cravings in certain social circles and situations, raising your risk of relapse. This might be the case even after a long period of sobriety. Underlying mental health issues can increase your risk of addiction. In turn, an addiction can increase the severity of other mental health conditions. This creates a vicious cycle in which your addiction tends to progress quickly and with severe consequences. You may feel like alcohol or drugs decrease your depression symptoms for a short period of time. But in the long run, addiction will likely make things worse. Other medical conditions can also increase your risk of addiction. For example, if you take prescription pain pills after a surgery, you may be at risk of addiction. An injury or illness may also change your lifestyle in ways that encourage you to use drugs or alcohol as a coping mechanism. Your doctor can help you develop better strategies to cope with changes in your health and lifestyle. Early use Another risk factor for addiction is the age at which you begin the behavior. A survey conducted by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism found that young adults between the age of 18 and 24 were most likely to have both alcohol use disorders and other drug addictions. Drug of choice While some addictions progress slowly over the course of several months or years, others move more quickly. The object of your addiction can play a role. Drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamines tend to be more physically addictive than alcohol or marijuana. This may push you to use them more often and in higher doses to prevent the withdrawal symptoms. This can speed up the process of addiction and raise your risk of serious complications, including overdose. Method of use Just as certain drugs may be more addictive than others, your method of using drugs can also increase your risk of addiction. Drugs that are smoked or injected into your body tend to be more addictive than those that you swallow. Prevention Even if you have many risks factors for addiction, you can combat or avoid it. If you have a lot of risk factors for addiction, talk to your doctor. They can help you learn more about addiction, your risk of developing it, and strategies to avoid it. They may recommend abstinence and suggest that you avoid drinking alcohol, using drugs, or practicing other addictive behaviors. If you suspect you have an addiction, ask your doctor for help. They may recommend counseling, medications, or other treatment options. Medically reviewed by Timothy J.

**Chapter 9 : How addictions and eating disorders are related.**

*"Addictive personality is not an actual psychiatric diagnosis," says Michael Weaver, MD, medical director of the Center for Neurobehavioral Research on Addiction at the University of Texas.*