



not your usual treatment center



Table of Contents

- Understanding Addiction
- Getting Help
- About New Method Wellness
- Affordable Access: Insurance and Other Payment Options

Understanding Addiction



Scientific knowledge surrounding addiction is relatively new, so there are many deeply rooted belief systems and myths about the disease.

Dr. Kathleen Brady, a professor at the Medical University of South Carolina says, “There are two main misconceptions that really drive me crazy when it comes to addictions. One of them is this whole idea that an individual needs to reach rock bottom before they can get any help. That is absolutely wrong,” she maintains, “There is no evidence that that’s true. In fact, quite the contrary; the earlier in the addiction process that you can intervene and get someone help, the more they have to live for. The more they have to get better for. “

The second biggest myth, also disputed by Dr. Nora Vokow, director of the federal government’s National Institute on Drug Abuse, is that an addict has to want treatment in order to get well. Much research has proven that even people who are compelled into treatment through legal, professional or familial pressure, do recover. Courts may offer treatment in lieu of a prison sentence or even mandate that a convicted person attend a program, employers may threaten termination and spouses or parents may give ultimatums regarding recovery and the family unit. Studies show that these people accomplish recovery as often as people who enter rehabilitation voluntarily.

5 More Common Myths About Addiction & Recovery



1. Addicts are bad, insane or lack intelligence.

Evolving research shows that addiction is a result of a brain disease that goes beyond the use of drugs and alcohol and that addiction is a result of key changes in the brain. All recreational drugs affect the dopamine pathway in the brain. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter, which produces feelings of pleasure and is often referred to as the “pleasure pathway”.

“What happens when people develop a substance use disorder is that they tax the ability of their dopamine system to keep up”, says Dr. Kathleen Brady. “The amount of dopamine we have in our brain is limited by the substances that the brain uses to make dopamine. If we release it too often, we get into a situation where the brain has less dopamine. What that means is that an individual who has depleted their dopamine source in their brain has a difficult time feeling pleasure from even the normal events that would make someone happy- a mother seeing her child, or having a good meal”

The dopamine pathway isn’t the only part of the brain affected. The frontal lobes of the brain are also affected, thereby inhibiting the individual’s ability to measure consequence against gratification.

2. Addiction is just lack of willpower.

This old belief probably stems from the observation that most addiction treatment is based in behavioral (talk) therapies, which are believed to build self-control. However, studies show that addiction occurs in the area of the brain called the mesolimbic dopamine system

that is not under conscious control. It is easy to want to blame the addict for using in excess; however, science is proving that, though the choice to use drugs and alcohol is there initially, it probably stems from an already imbalanced system and long term use can turn to compulsion due to the deeper chemical imbalance that is caused by excess.

3. People addicted to one drug are addicted to all drugs.

While sometimes dual addictions occur, most people who are dependent on a substance may be dependent on more than one, but not all. This is probably due to how different drugs affect different individual's brain chemistries.

4. Addicts cannot be treated with medications.

In actuality, addicts are often medically detoxified in hospitals or clinical settings, when appropriate, and it is sometimes found to be beneficial as a continued treatment after detox. New pharmacotherapies are being developed to help patients, who have already become abstinent, to help further curb their cravings. These medications reduce the chances of relapse and bolster behavioral therapies.

5. Alcoholics and addicts can stop by simply going to AA so it must not be a brain disease.

For most, AA is work. "Working" a program based in the 12 steps of Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Over-eaters Anonymous, Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous or Gamblers Anonymous and other 12-step programs that are available for varying "drugs of choice", is often difficult and painstaking. Based on research, it is known that a support system of people who share a common experience, one of the key factors of recovery in 12-step programs, is often a fundamental element to successful recovery. However, 12 step programs do not work for everyone; even those who really want to stop.

Understanding Addiction as a Chronic Disorder

*Adapted from Myths of Addiction by Carlton K. Erickson,
Ph.D., University of Texas Addiction Science*



For a long time society in general has considered addiction to be a will power issue or moral failing. We now know that addiction is a disorder very much like other chronic illnesses that involve lifestyle and behavior. Many of these illnesses start with voluntary behaviors like poor nutrition, lack of self-care or failure to exercise. As a result, biological changes occur in the body to create a chronic condition. Many people who suffer from chronic conditions fail to act in the best interest of their health, thereby causing relapse or a worsening of their disease. Some diseases like this include hypertension, adult onset of type 2 diabetes and atherosclerosis, among others. These diseases are similar to addiction because they are chronic, influenced by biological as well as behavioral factors and incurable, but manageable.

Drug abuse damages the ability to make decisions, affecting both the mesolimbic dopamine system which helps us pursue things for survival like food or sex and the frontal lobes which help us with our judgment and controls our impulses; for example, the frontal lobes might prevent us from running into a burning building to get our favorite belongings because the brain tells us that doing so would be dangerous. In this case the frontal lobe system would tell us that the consequences of satisfying the impulses of the mesolimbic dopamine system would be too negative.

“When things are working right, the ‘go’ circuitry and the ‘stop’ circuitry really are interconnected and are really talking to each other to help you weigh the consequences of a decision and decide when to go or not to go,” says Dr. Anna Rose Childress, a psychology researcher at the University of Pennsylvania. “It’s not that they are separable. They’re interactive. They’re interlinked at all times.” That means that even when you are desperate to save your favorite pair of jeans, diamond watch or photo album full of good memories, you still don’t enter that burning building because “stop” and “go” have communicated and “stop” has come out on top as the rational decision to keep you safe.

With the addicts that Childress studied, however, “It’s as though (the systems) have become functionally disconnected. It is as though the ‘go’ system is sort of running off on its own, is a rogue system now and is not interacting in a regular, seamless, integrated way with the ‘stop’ system.”

When addicts, even those who are working on recovery, are triggered, the ‘go’ system overwhelms that part of the brain that is warning them to stop and take care of themselves. When that happens, Dr. Childress says, “instead of being able to say, ‘what? Wait a minute. Think about what happened last week. You lost your job. You almost lost your life.’ The ‘stop’ system doesn’t seem to get into the picture at all. It’s all about ‘go’.

Abuse or Dependence?



Often people who start out as casual drinkers or recreational drug users will stay that way. However, others will become substance abusers or dependent. The difference is not always clear to most people, but medical doctors and recovery professionals use a set of criteria to distinguish the two.

Clinicians diagnose substance abuse if, during a twelve month period, a person is in one or more of the following drug or alcohol related situations:

- ✓ Engaging in reckless activities
- ✓ Experiencing legal difficulties
- ✓ Using despite serious personal problems
- ✓ Failure to meet obligations or keep commitments

Dependence is more severe. Medical professionals will look for three or more criteria from a set that includes two physiological factors and five behavioral patterns, again over a twelve-month period. Tolerance and withdrawal alone are not enough to indicate dependence and not all behavioral signs occur with every substance.

Physiological signs include tolerance and physical withdrawal while behavioral patterns include the inability to stop once started, exceeding self imposed limits, cutting back on time spent with other activities, spending excessive time, energy or money getting and using drugs or drinking despite health issues.

Getting Help

*Adapted from Addiction:
Why Can't They Just Stop © 2007 Rodale, inc.*



When we are at a loss as to what to do about our own problem drug or alcohol use or that of a loved one, it is hard to know where to turn or how to find answers. In the face of the sometimes devastating consequences of our own addictive behavior, we can feel lost, depressed, hopeless, ashamed, embarrassed, guilty or confused. When dealing with the destructive actions of someone we love we can feel angry, sad, betrayed, confused, worried, anxious, embarrassed, guilty and ashamed.

Reaching out for help is difficult, but if achieved can be life-saving.

There are many different treatment options and it is important to research the right treatment approach for you or the individual in question. No one single treatment approach is right for every person.

The US Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administrations Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) provides a toll free,

24 hour treatment referral service that can help those in need find treatment options nearby.

For information, you can call:

1-800-662-HELP

1-800-487-4889 (TDD)

1-877-767-8423 (Spanish)

According to the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, a division of SAMSHA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, there are a few good questions you should ask when researching the right treatment or rehabilitation program for you.

1. Does the program accept your insurance? If not, will they work with you on a payment plan or find other means of support for you?
2. Is the program run by State accredited, licensed and/or trained professionals?
3. Is the facility clean, organized and well-run?
4. Does the program encompass the full range of needs of the individual (medical: including infectious diseases; psychological: including co-occurring mental illness; social; vocational; legal; etc.)?
5. Does the treatment program also address sexual orientation and physical disabilities as well as provide age, gender and culturally appropriate treatment services?
6. Is long-term aftercare support and/or guidance encouraged, provided and maintained?
7. Is there ongoing assessment of an individual's treatment plan to ensure it meets changing needs?
8. Does the program employ strategies to engage and keep individuals in longer-term treatment, increasing the likelihood of success?
9. Does the program offer counseling (individual or group) and other behavioral therapies to enhance the individual's ability to function in the family/community?

10. Does the program offer medication as part of the treatment regimen, if appropriate?
11. Is there ongoing monitoring of possible relapse to help guide patients back to abstinence?
12. Are services or referrals offered to family members to ensure they understand addiction and the recovery process to help them support the recovering individual?

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A New Approach to Treatment

About New Methods Wellness

The directors and counselors at New Method Wellness, collectively, have years of experience in dealing with the hardships of addiction and the hope that recovery can bring to individuals who's lives have been on the brink of ruin as a result of their drug or alcohol addiction. Our extensive experience with addiction treatment, in conjunction with our own personal journeys, created a desire to develop a program that was different; we succeeded in building a treatment model that is unparalleled in the practice of addiction medicine.

We believe in the power of positive personal growth and have found that looking deeply into the underlying cause for addiction renders a marked influence on the chances for long-term success in sobriety. This “new method” is empowering and teaches our clients how to love themselves again so they can live freely. As a result, our approach offers

clients a new chance at life, equipped with the tools to navigate normal ups and downs without the dangerous self- anesthetizing practices they have employed in the past to survive their debilitating emotional issues.

Our mission at New Method Wellness is to bring hope to families and suffering individuals where, often, it has been lost.

In addition to our proven methods for detox, primary treatment, dual diagnosis, family outreach and extended aftercare, New Method Wellness goes a step further by incorporating individual, as well as group, counseling along with Neuro-feedback and holistic healing techniques like acupuncture, massage, meditation, equine therapy, artistic expression workshops and more.

Finally, we strive to provide specialized treatment for the individual. To that end, we offer optional programs that speak to personal needs, lifestyles or concerns; for example, the Executive Professionals Program or the Faith Based Program. Executive Professionals is geared specifically to busy executives who's lives encounter additional stresses due to the high demands of a professional career and, of course, our optional Faith Based Program is for those who feel that a God centered curriculum would be more beneficial to their recovery than a secular one.

**Affordable
Access:**
Insurance and Other
Payment Options



As with any other life- threatening disease, competent doctors and professionals should treat substance abuse in a trusted, safe, licensed facility. There are many options to help you and your family pay for treatment, including medical insurance benefits, medical loans for people with good credit as well as damaged credit, scholarship programs and financing.

Talk with an intake specialist at New Method Wellness today about your options. Don't bypass treatment just because you think you can't afford it. You deserve the best treatment possible and if we can't find a way to help you at New Method Wellness, we will refer you to a program where you can get the treatment you need.

Don't wait. Get in touch today and get your life back.



www.newmethodwellness.com

Toll Free Number: 866-951-1824