

Substance Abuse Treatment

Obj. 3.9: Explain the spectrum of substance use, abuse, & addiction and the Developmental Model

This lesson is derived from Chapter 2 “Understanding Addiction, Substance Abuse Treatment, and Recovery” in the report: *Blending Perspectives and Building Common Ground, A Report to Congress on Substance Abuse and Child Protection* (April 1999). Accessible at: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/subabuse99/chap2.htm>



Read each of the following Myth/Fact pairs. Then complete the reflection prompts below:

Myth	Fact
1. Addiction is a bad habit, the result of moral weakness and overindulgence.	Addiction can be a chronic, life-threatening condition, like atherosclerosis, hypertension or adult diabetes. Addiction has roots in genetic susceptibility, social circumstance, and personal behavior.
2. If an addicted person has enough willpower, he or she can stop abusing alcohol or other drugs.	Most people addicted to alcohol and other drugs cannot simply stop using them, no matter how strong their inner resolve. Most need one or more courses of structured substance abuse treatment to reduce or end their dependence on alcohol and/or other drugs.
3. Many people relapse, so treatment obviously doesn't work.	Like virtually any other medical treatment, addiction treatment cannot guarantee lifelong health, although nearly one-third of clients achieve abstinence from their first treatment attempt. Relapse, often a part of the recovery process, is always possible and treatable. Even if a person never achieves perfect abstinence, addiction treatment can reduce the number and duration of relapses, minimize related problems such as crime and poor overall health, reduce impact of parental addiction on children, improve the individual's and his or her family's ability to function in daily life, and strengthen the individual's ability to cope with the next temptation or craving. These improvements reduce the health, social, and economic costs of addiction.

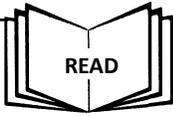
Reflect:

1. Which of these myths do you think is most prevalent in society? Why?
2. What are some possible negative consequences of these myths?

DISCUSS

With a partner, discuss the following questions:

- Who suffers negative consequences of substance abuse? (ex: individuals, hospitals)
- How do they suffer? (ex: financial burden)



Substance abuse is a major public health problem that affects millions of people and places enormous financial and social burdens on society. It destroys families, damages the economy, victimizes communities, and places extraordinary demands on the education, criminal justice, and social service systems. To understand the connections between substance abuse problems and the child welfare system, it is important that substance abuse and the medical, social, and economic problems that are associated with the use and misuse of alcohol and other drugs, as well as addiction to these drugs, be clearly understood.



The Spectrum of Substance Use, Abuse, and Addiction

The use of alcohol and other drugs is a multifaceted phenomenon, varying with the individual's level of use and the dysfunction he or she experiences as a result of his or her use. The range includes the following:

Drug experimentation: The use of alcohol or illicit drugs at any time for experimentation. While in and of itself experimentation may not appear to be abusive, even a single episode of experimentation can result in harm to self or to others. Also, if experimental use continues or serves as a gateway to additional use, as often it does, patterns of alcohol and other drug abuse may develop.

Social use of drugs: Use of any drug or combination of drugs in social situations, or for social reasons. If such social use causes any harm, physical or otherwise, to the user or others, it is also considered abuse. Social use of alcohol or other drugs often leads to further and elevated use.

Binge drinking: Heavy use of alcohol periodically. This can result in harm to the physical health of self and others, and negative behavioral consequences, which may result in bodily harm to self or others. The National Household Survey on Drug Abuse defines binge alcohol use as drinking five or more drinks on the same occasion at least one day in the past 30 days.

Substance abuse: The characteristic feature of abuse is the presence of dysfunction related to the person's use of alcohol or other drugs. One standard definition (HHS/SAMHSA, 1994) describes it as "the use of a psychoactive drug to such an extent that its effects seriously interfere with health or occupational and social functioning." Abuse may or may not involve physiologic dependence or tolerance. According to the DSM-IV, substance abuse is "a maladaptive pattern of substance use leading to clinically significant impairment or distress, as manifested by" a variety of possible symptoms of impairment.

Addiction or Chemical Dependency: With continued use, many persons' use or abuse of alcohol or other drugs becomes addiction, a disease in which the substances have caused changes in a person's body, mind, and behavior. As a result of this disease, addicted persons are unable to control their use of substances, despite the bad things that happen when they use them. Addiction may be a chronic, relapsing disorder and if the disease process progresses, recovery becomes more difficult. Chemical dependency occurs most frequently in those who have a family history of the disease. The DSM-IV distinguishes dependence from abuse primarily by the presence of more abuse symptoms (three or more rather than at least one), and the possible presence of tolerance (needing more of the substance for the same intoxicating effect) or withdrawal (physical symptoms when the substance is not used).



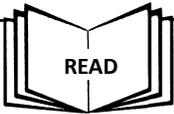
For each of the following example scenarios, write whether the person is in a 1) drug experimentation; 2) social use of drugs; 3) binge drinking; 4) substance abuse; 5) addiction or chemical dependency.

_____ 1. Jean is a college sophomore who has gotten quite involved in the party scene. She usually drinks one day per weekend, but consumes 8-12 drinks throughout the night on those occasions. Although she has a pretty severe hangover the following day, she tries to carry on with her college life activities as much as possible.

_____ 2. Brett is a 26 year-old who uses heroin. After several harmful events transpired, his family staged an intervention recently to try to get him to stop but his withdrawal sickness was so bad that his intense irritability and stomach pain were too much for his family to handle.

_____ 3. Marcus is curious about marijuana, so he tries smoking it with some friends over the weekend. This was his first time using it and he's not sure whether or not he wants to continue yet.

_____ 4. Julia always carries a pack of cigarettes in her purse, but the only time she takes one out to smoke is when she is with friends at a bar. She loves to step outside into the cold (or warm) air and converse with her drinking buddies as they puff on the smokes.



Read the following excerpt from “Understanding Addiction, Substance Abuse Treatment, and Recovery” about substance abuse treatment:

Substance abuse treatment refers to a broad range of activities or services, including identification of the problem (and engaging the individual in treatment); brief interventions; assessment of substance abuse and related problems including histories of various types of abuse; diagnosis of the problem(s); and treatment planning, including counseling, medical services, psychiatric services, psychological services, social services and follow-up for persons with alcohol or other drug problems (Institute of Medicine, 1990).

Treatment may occur in various settings, such as inpatient, hospital-based programs; short- and long-term residential programs; or outpatient programs; and may be augmented by self-help/12-step and other support groups. Treatment may also use a combination of therapies, such as pharmacological therapy to treat certain addictions (for example the use of methadone for heroin addiction or the use of antabuse to treat alcoholism); use of psychological therapy or counseling, education and social learning theories; and non-traditional healing methods such as acupuncture. Treatment may extend over the course of weeks, months, or years, depending on the severity of the problems and the level of burden created by clients' multiple disorders such as alcoholism, other drug addiction, HIV/AIDS, mental illness (especially depression), and serious physical illnesses. The type and intensity of treatment depend on the patient's psychological, physical, and social problems; the stage (or severity) and type of addiction; personality traits; and social skills before the onset of addiction (HHS/SAMHSA, 1996a).

The concepts of treatment and recovery are not one and the same. However, treatment is a very important part of the recovery process.

One widely accepted model of recovery, known as the **Developmental Model**, identifies six stages that addicted individuals must undergo for long-term recovery:

1. **Transition**, the period of time needed for the addicted individual to come to grips with the realization that safe use of alcohol or other drugs for them is not possible;
2. **Stabilization**, during which the chemically dependent person experiences physical withdrawal and other medical problems and learns how to separate from people, places and things that promote substance abuse;
3. **Early recovery**, when an individual faces the need to establish a chemical-free lifestyle and build relationships that support long-term recovery;
4. **Middle recovery**, seen as time for the development of a balanced lifestyle where repairing past damage is important;
5. **Late recovery**, during which the individual identifies and changes mistaken beliefs about oneself, others and the world that caused or promoted irrational thinking; and
6. **Maintenance**, the lifelong process of continued growth, development, and managing routine life problems.



For each of the following example scenarios, write whether the person is in: 1) Transition; 2) Stabilization; 3) Early recovery; 4) Middle recovery; 5) Late recovery; or 6) Maintenance.

_____ 1. Mary has been drinking for seven years. She usually has 4-6 drinks per day on most weekdays, and much more on the weekends. Her relationships have all fallen apart and she is depressed most of the time. When her sister talks to her, yet again, about her problem, Mary's reply is, "Not everyone can be perfect like you. I am totally fine with how much I drink, so stop saying I have a problem. If you really won't leave me alone about talking with that counselor I will, but I'm not saying I'm going to change."

_____ 2. Bernard has been drug free for eighteen years. He is a member of Narcotics Anonymous (NA), and has recently become a sponsor for a young man who is trying to eliminate drugs from his life. Bernard has many close friends who support his drug-free lifestyle, and took many years to repair damage to relationships with his family. He knows how much he has changed and views his former "drug addict self" as a distant memory now.

_____ 3. Jose just entered a substance abuse rehabilitation clinic one week ago, when he finally came to terms with his cocaine addiction. He is still experiencing withdrawal symptoms and is feeling pretty miserable, but everyone keeps telling him it will get easier every day. One big accomplishment that his case worker wanted him to celebrate was removing his two closest friends who use drugs from his contact list and screening their calls.



For the following example scenarios, write whether the person is in a 1) drug experimentation; 2) social use of drugs; 3) binge drinking; 4) substance abuse; 5) addiction or chemical dependency.

_____ 1. Paul started using methamphetamine five months ago and is quickly spiraling out of control. He is now at the point where it is the first thing he thinks of when he wakes up, and the last thing he wants to do before going to bed. He just lost his job, his girlfriend broke up with him, and the worst part is that he doesn't seem to care as long as he can get his daily meth high.

For the following example scenarios, write whether the person is in: 1) Transition; 2) Stabilization; 3) Early recovery; 4) Middle recovery; 5) Late recovery; or 6) Maintenance.

_____ 2. Luciana has made a New Year's resolution to quit smoking. It is January 8th and she has not had a cigarette yet, but she is struggling with pounding headaches and feels like she will throw-up every few hours. She is also extremely depressed. She is hoping she can keep it up, but is starting to have some doubts.



Research a substance abuse treatment philosophy, program, or organization (ex: Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous). Write a short description of the one you choose below and answer the question.

Name of substance abuse program: _____

Website: _____

Description:

How does it identify stages of recovery? How does this compare to the Developmental Model?