



COUNSELING

companion

How To Navigate Your Way
Through Addiction
Counseling

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Foreword

Many people became victims of addiction because of different reasons. But, according to a survey, the majority of those who get addicted to a substance like drugs or alcohol don't have any idea about what addiction could bring into their lives. Since using drugs and taking alcohol gives them the best feeling in the world, they think that it is a good thing. However, once addiction strikes, many end up overwhelmed with their current status and get frustrated just trying to get their normal life back. Fortunately, there is a thing called counselling, which is a great way to overcome addiction effectively.

Counseling Companion

*How to Navigate Your Way through Addiction
Counseling*

Chapter 1

Addiction Counselling Basics

Synopsis

Addiction is one of the common problems encountered by people from different parts of the world. There are certain factors that affect a person's behavior towards his use of medications or drugs. The good thing is that the number of people and groups that work to help overcome drug addiction continually increases.

In fact, even in the virtual world or the internet, they can find helpful sources about drug addiction and how to overcome it. Thus, they all have a reason to stay free from drugs. To get started, it is highly essential to understand the basics of drug counseling. This form of treatment plays a vital role in the overall success of a person's battle against drug addiction.

What is Drug Addiction?

Drug addiction is also referred to as substance use disorder. This refers to the situation in which a person becomes dependent on illegal or legal medication or drugs. Remember that nicotine and alcohol are both legal substances; however, these are also considered to be drugs.

Addiction refers to a relapsing and chronic brain disease. This is usually defined by compulsive use and longing for drugs, despite their harmful consequences. Addiction is regarded as a form of brain disease since drugs are capable of changing the brain. They can change its functionality and structure. Such changes in the brain may last for long periods of time and may bring various harmful and self-destructive behaviors.

If a person is addicted, they cannot control their drug use. In addition, they may continue taking the drug, even though they know it can bring harm. Drug addiction also causes intense drug cravings. It causes long term and serious consequences, which usually involve problems with mental and physical health, employment, the law and relationships.

Fortunately, addiction can be treated and managed successfully. Studies have revealed that the combination of behavioral therapies and correct medications is a great way of ensuring success. There are treatment approaches that should be tailored to in order to address the drug use patterns of each patient. At the same time, it can even resolve social, drug-related medical, and psychiatric problems.

An addicted person may want to quit, however, it is not as easy as what they may think it is. If they want to get started, they can seek out the support of a

medical expert, reliable treatment programs, friends, relatives, or support groups to overcome drug addiction. There are also several institutions and groups that are dedicated to providing support to those who want to change their ways.

Benefits of Drug Rehab Counseling

Drug Detox can rid the body of toxic substances. It even prepares the body for a good beginning. On the other hand, counseling is the process in which the work of rehabilitation occurs. There is no magical 'treatment' for drug addiction or substance abuse, but the essential advantages of counseling overcome any destructive thought and habit. As time passes you will learn coping skills in group therapy sessions or one-on-one session. These can help maintain sobriety while leading a positive and healthy life.

1. Increased Motivation

Motivation to quit using or drinking is a great challenge that people in rehabs encounter in the early stages of recovery. When it comes to family members and friends, they can obviously notice the devastating results of substance abuse. Drug addicts will likely be in a state of denial. Motivational counseling is an essential therapeutic technique to overcome fear and ambivalence.

2. Self-defeating Behaviors

Drug addiction makes a person spin completely out of control. Their longing for drugs can make them do various self-destructive things in which can undermine self-esteem, relationships and their health. Through using CBT or Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, a person can change repetitive thoughts and compulsive behaviors. As a result, this treatment can offer more constructive and healthier approaches to beating their addiction.

3. Creating a Strong Relationship

Substance abuse severs the connection between parents, children, spouses and partners. Re-establishing broken relationships is a very valuable benefit that can be gained from counseling. With a rehab program, relatives and friends will find a better chance to acquire counseling individually. In this way, they can participate in all therapy sessions.

4. Preventing Relapse

Relapse is very common among recovering addicts. There may be instances when a recovering addict will feel compelled to take drugs again. It usually happens months, years, and even decades into sobriety. There are several factors that drive a person back to drug addiction, in spite of their hard work. Preventing relapse provides

several benefits like building new networks of social support and learning the signs of relapse.

The knowledge of the recovering addict, their family members and friends will be the key to make a good start and keep them from turning back to destructive behaviors. By understanding every concept present in drug addiction counseling, a recovering addict and the people around him will be able to perform their responsibilities toward living a drug-free life.

If the addicted person has decided to look for a treatment center to get over alcohol or drug addiction, this will be a tough step. Choosing the right treatment center with reliable programs will provide the support and resources for their commitment.

Chapter 2

Realize That You Need Help

Synopsis

No matter what your addiction is, whether you are addicted to drugs or alcohol, it is always wise to seek out assistance or help from the experts or other people who could give you support and proper treatment to overcome your addiction. Although not all consider asking for help because of so many reasons, you should bear in mind that addiction will not just ruin your present life, but also the brighter future that awaits you. That's why it is always important to realize that you need help. But, what are the signs that you need help? When do you need help?



Signs You Need Help with an Addiction

It is essential to recognize the signs of alcohol and drug addiction in another person, which is relatively easy. However, it is quite another thing to entirely recognize when you have a problem with alcohol or drugs. The majority of individuals live with blinders on and don't realize that they are consuming too much alcohol or drugs until they end up experiencing an addiction. But, it is still never too late to look for treatment for addiction and you should first recognize that you have an addiction before searching for a rehab program. Below are some of the signs that you need help with an addiction:

- **Loss of Control**

This is another sign of addiction. Some people plan to use a bit of drugs, but before they realize it, they have already spent more than what they want to use at the first place. As a result, others end putting some interests and abandoning responsibilities. You have just lost control of your daily activities, which is something that might get worse if this is not acknowledged.

- **Chasing the Dragon**

Developing tolerance to alcohol or drugs is actually one of the first signs that you're becoming an addict. You start to take more drugs and drink more alcohol to experience the same feeling you used to enjoy. In drug culture, it's called chasing the dragon and this can lead to reckless behavior. If you drink alcohol or take drugs and find that

your typical dosage does not do it for you anymore, you will need to check into a particular rehab program.

- **Creating Plans around Getting High**

No other recreational activities must ever dominate your free time, but that is exactly what taking drugs and drinking alcohol does for numerous addicts. If they are not using, they are creating plans to use and are willing to cancel any planned activities. If you are ignoring your family members, friends, and other essential commitments to get high, you should look for help.

- **Withdrawal**

Anyone who is addicted to substances knows how tough withdrawal is. Fear of withdrawal is another sign that you need help and may prolong alcohol or drug use. Withdrawal happens when the person is addicted to the substance that she or he can't function without. In major cases, withdrawal symptoms may be fatal. Although you are determined to be sober, your dependence on the substance could break the solution and might force you to start using it again. This is the reason why you should check into rehab clinics as withdrawal turns addiction into illnesses, which should be treated by the right professionals.

If you're experiencing any signs, you must consider a professional evaluation of your situation and considering a rehab program can be a great step. Just make sure to deal with the right professionals as they can make a difference.

When Do You Need Help?

If you think it's too late for you to change everything, well, think again. It is never too late for you to take a step and overcome your addiction.

Everybody can succeed in overcoming their addiction. What you only have to do is to take a step forward and find out the right time for you to make a move. If you don't know how, keeping in mind the signs that you need help will let you determine the perfect time to call for help and start overcoming addiction.

Chapter 3

Realize the Importance of Selecting the Correct Treatment

Synopsis

When you are trying to seek out drug addiction help, it is essential to look into various options and select the program that's right for you. Many people beat addiction every day, using several types of programs. The kind of program you pick must depend on your personal requirements.



How to Choose the Correct Addiction Treatment for You

When determining which addiction treatment program is right for you, keep in mind that everyone has different needs. You have to take note that the longer you use drugs, the longer and intense the treatment will need to be to help you beat your addiction.

No matter how long the program will last, long-term follow-up and support are important for your recovery. A top notch quality treatment program doesn't only addresses the drug abuse, but also this addresses one's emotional pain and some life problems, which can contribute to your addiction.

What to Look for in an Addiction Treatment Program

Once you start searching for an addiction treatment, you will see advertisements for programs in a tranquil setting with a gorgeous view. While the amenities are a great part of the program, they might cost you an amount that you have never expected. Focus is important when looking for a treatment program. Some of the things you must check include quality of care, staff credentials, appropriate licensing, and follow-up services.

- **Licensing and Program Accreditation**

Ensure that the treatment program is accredited by your state. In addition to that, check if the program is run by a well-trained, licensed mental health professionals as well as addiction specialists.

- **Kind of Aftercare Programs Offered to Prevent Relapse**

A good treatment program should include an aftercare program. It's also essential to ensure that the staff members will collaborate with you to make a discharge plan before leaving the program.

- **The Effectiveness of the Treatment Methods Used in the Program**

Treatment centers must have statistics on the success rate of their program offered so that those who are planning to get treatment will have a clue on how they can overcome their addiction.

Types of Treatment Programs Available in the Market

- ❖ **Residential Treatment**

This involves living at a particular treatment facility while you are undergoing an intensive treatment program during the day.

Normally, this kind of treatment lasts from thirty to ninety days.

- ❖ **Intensive Outpatient Program**

This is not a live-in treatment program, but it needs a major time commitment. Typically, intensive outpatient programs meet at least three days every week for two hours every day. Prevention of relapse

is the major focus in this kind of treatment. Such outpatient programs are scheduled around school or work.

❖ **Partial Hospitalization**

This is best for those who require ongoing medical monitoring, yet have a stable living environment. Such treatment programs meet at a hospital for three to five days every week and four to six hours per day.

❖ **Brief Intervention**

This treatment is only appropriate for individuals who are at risk of drug addiction or drug abuse, not those who already develop serious problems. Unlike other treatments, it consists of some visits to a healthcare professional to discuss the effects of drug addiction as well as methods for cutting back.

❖ **Sober Living**

Typically, this follows an intensive treatment like the residential treatment. You will be living with some recovering addicts in a drug-free yet stable environment. The facilities in a sober living environment are very beneficial if you are worried about returning home too soon out of fear of relapse.

❖ **Counselling**

This is best with the combination of other treatments. Therapy may help you determine the causes of drug use, learn much healthier coping skills, and repair your relationships.

Finding the Right Treatment Center for Your Needs

If you have already determined which program or treatment is best for you, the next thing that you need to do is to find a good treatment center for your personal needs. There are tons of treatment centers you can choose from. Choosing a treatment center with programs that will answer your needs while providing you with complete resources as well as support to overcome addiction successfully is very important.

If you are a bit confused with the options, you must pick a good treatment center that will provide you with motivation and will tailor to your needs. If these two things are present in a treatment center, don't hesitate to set an appointment with them and discuss the things you need to overcome with your addiction.

Chapter 4

Work On Identifying the Source of Why You Have an Addiction

Synopsis

Those who enjoy gardening know that if they do not remove the weed's root, it will keep coming back. This logic also applies to various areas of one's life. If an individual has concerns in life, they have to know the underlying cause. Dealing with the addiction symptoms isn't actually enough as the root will cause weeds to grow again.

Those who hope to escape from addiction have to get the problem's root or they might encounter relapse. This doesn't mean that individual has to understand the reasons for everything. What it means is that they should determine the root of the destructive behavior. Therefore, for instance, if a person fell into addiction due to the reason that they are struggling to cope with life, they will have to make effective coping strategies for the future.

Getting the Root of Addiction

Obtaining the root of addiction is an action taken to ensure that addicts will never fall into the booby trap of this destructive behavior ever again. Here are some of the ways you can get rid of the root of addiction:

- ✓ Those individuals who have dual diagnosis will have conditions treated.
- ✓ Developing emotional sobriety for them to get rid of the feeling to hide from life or everyone that surrounds them. People who have this kind of maturity often fall into the destructive behavior patterns.
- ✓ For them to deal with life on the terms of life, a person will have to develop some effective coping strategies.
- ✓ Once individuals become sober, they need to start chipping away at the flaws of their character, which will lead them into addiction. Through this, they will have the chance to move away from the addictive personality, which could be their driving force behind their behavior.
- ✓ Knowing the facts regarding the substance abuse dangers will help them get the root cause of addiction. There are several individuals who engage in using drugs because they do not know anything about them.
- ✓ Therapists are trained in the art of acquiring the root of the personal problems. This can guide individuals and provide them support to overcome such issues.

- ✓ People who are still under the process of recovery are reminded that it's all about the progress and not the perfection. They're not expected to acquire the root of addiction right away; it may actually take years to do this.
- ✓ It's recommended that individuals treat their recovery like an adventure. Their goal is to reach as far as possible away from addiction and this only means eliminating such things, which led to their behavior.
- ✓ There's not much that other people can do about genetic inheritance, yet this doesn't mean that the individual is required to accept addiction. The genetic predisposition on drug or alcohol abuse is just an evidence, which a person should abstain from drug and alcohol use.
- ✓ If individuals find it hard to resist the peer pressure, they need to find out why they have that problem. It may be hard but it is highly advised that you cut ties with the people you used drugs with in the past.
- ✓ It's vital that people start repairing their self-esteem. They may do this through setting little goals as well as achieving them. Remember, no matter how small your goals are, if you are determined to reach them, they will lead to larger goals and improved self-esteem.
- ✓ Contemplative methods including meditation will let the individual dig deep. This means that they will have better ideas of their inner drives.

Chapter 5

Have an Open Mind

Synopsis

If you are undergoing the process of addiction recovery, it is always important to be open-minded. You can say that a person is open-minded if he or she is receptive to different and new ideas and opinions. It is also the willingness to consider that some people could have something with value to say. This may also mean that individuals have enough humility to admit that they don't have the answers. The opposite of being open-minded is arrogance and closed-mindedness.



How to Be Open-Minded

Normally, the majority of addicts are not open-minded. It's something that they have to work at. These are the things that individuals may do when encouraging a flexible relationship with their surroundings. Some of these are:

- An individual will have to get out of the habit of refusing others suggestions automatically. Even the weirdest proposal could appear to have merit after considering it carefully.
- This can be helpful if individuals put themselves in the position where their views and opinions are challenged. If what a person believes in is right, then there may be no threat from such opposing views. Just reading the book or checking out a website, which supports the opposing view may show open-mindedness.
- Being open-minded may mean that an individual has agreed to leave their own comfort zone occasionally. It only means being willing to try new stuff even when there's a great temptation to disagree.
- When a person is open-minded, he or she seeks knowledge and is not out to score points. This only means that they don't resort to personal attacks once they feel that they're losing an argument. If other people's views are more persuasive, then an open-minded individual may accept this without having a feeling that they are being attacked.
- It's good that some people question their own beliefs and opinions. When individuals become sober, they are shocked frequently to find out how many of their beliefs are based on misunderstandings or ill-informed ideas. Even sober individuals will pick up numerous errors

whenever they absorb new information. This just means that they can carry a good deal of faulty thoughts.

The Dangers of Having a Closed Mind

If individuals approach sobriety while being closed-minded, this might mean that they put their entire recovery at risk. The dangers of having a closed mind may include:

- If some people are closed-minded, they might develop a syndrome that will just make their situation worse. They will continue to be the same and will remain addicted to drugs or alcohol.
- Those who are closed-minded may easily become stuck in the process of their recovery. They will face challenges, yet don't have the resources to tackle them effectively. Individuals who are also not willing to admit that they actually need help might encounter huge issues. Also, they will not see any progress in their recovery.
- Usually, there are warning signs before a person relapses. If he or she is closed-minded, he or she may refuse the thought of taking the correct path toward recovery. Therefore, they will ignore the impending relapse's warning signs.
- When an individual decides to give up his or her addiction, he or she will have free time, which could lead to boredom, that is also an important factor that everyone should remember as this may trigger relapse. This only means that you should always experiment with new interests and hobbies. If you are closed-minded, you will not be able to engage in various activities.

Chapter 6

Be Honest With Yourself and Others

Synopsis

Recovery from addiction is never an easy job. That is the reason why you need to be honest with yourself and other people who are always there to support you. Honesty is considered to be one of the most respected moral characteristics a person can have. If a person is known to behave dishonestly, this may cause devastating harm to his or her reputation. Several kinds of dishonesty are acceptable compared to others. The majority of people tell white lies or fibs from time to time. In fact, there is also a form of therapeutic fibbing. Some people will claim that these kinds of dishonesty are not good.

Those who are trying to bring back their normal life after addiction have to pay attention to honesty. They have to be truthful not only to others, but also with themselves. Failure in establishing honesty as a personal quality can mean that a person will have a much higher risk of relapse. This could also mean that they will live a life that is not really fulfilling after recovery.

Increasing Honesty during Addiction Recovery

Honesty is said to be the key element of a successful life away from addiction. Therefore, it is important that everyone develops this kind of moral characteristic. Below are some of the ways you can consider to increase honesty in your recovery from addiction:

- It's usual for individuals to play down the importance of particular lies as they can quickly justify the telling of a white lie. While there are several times when telling a lie could be less of the two evils, it's not a great idea to view dishonesty in recovery as an acceptable trait. Ideally, an individual must be aiming for honesty, even if they can't achieve it.
- If individuals don't value honesty, then they won't put much effort into living the life that's built upon it. Thus, it's vital that the person has a clear understanding of the significance of honesty as well as the dangers of not being honest in recovery.
- Keeping your own journal is also a good way to track your behavior. This provides individuals the chance to look back on their day if they have dishonest behavior. Moreover, journaling can reduce the risk of being caught up in self-delusion as things appear clearer when they're written on a notebook or sheet of paper.
- Developing honesty is the same as building up muscles. The more that people are honest, the more honest they become.

Dishonesty and Addiction

Those who are addicted to drugs or alcohol will typically live a life that involves tons of dishonesty. The reason behind it is that addiction will bring conflict with numerous individuals. To avoid these conflicts, addicts have to lie. Therefore, when their boss likes to know the reason why they're not at work, they may claim that they have picked up some type of stomach bug. The lives of addicts tend to involve telling one lie after another and other lies will cover the past lies.

Addicts rely on denial and self-deception to abuse their favorite chemicals over and over again. The evidence will be revealed by their addiction. But, addicts who are dishonest will always hide the truth until they are overwhelmed with the destruction of their behavior. Honesty will lead people to recovery. So, if you are dishonest, you might experience inconveniences and serious problems in the end.

Chapter 7

The Dangers of Not Getting Help When You Need It

Synopsis

More often than not, addicts tend to lie about their real condition or behavior because of various reasons. But, what they don't know is that there are actually dangers of not getting help when they need it. That is the reason why you should always ask for help if you can't handle your situation. Through this, you will not just be able to get rid of your addiction, but also you will be able to bring back your normal life just like the way you used to live it.



Why You Need Help with Addiction?

If you always rely on yourself when trying to overcome addiction, you will never succeed, especially if you often deny the truth about your real status. Therefore, it is essential to ask for help if you want to get rid of addiction successfully.

There are many reasons why you need help with addiction. One of these is that you will never understand the impact of addiction to your life.

Oftentimes, many people get addicted to substance because they don't have any idea about what addiction will cause their lives. Most addicts think that addiction will lead them to their dreams because this makes them feel good about everything without realizing that they are actually losing themselves and ruining their lives.

The best step that you should take when asking for help is to seek out ways to get educated. Having a deep understanding and knowledge about the real impact of addiction will help you fully recover and get back on the right track.

Another reason why you need help with addiction is that you can't beat it on your own. There is a saying that "no man is an island". You can't live life to the fullest without having other people you love around you. Though there are others who can be happy even if they are alone, it still makes a difference if you have someone whom you can share your happiness with. The same logic can be applied with addiction. If you will try to overcome addiction on your own and you will not consider some things that will help you get rid of it, you will not achieve success as you will always end up with relapse.

If you know some people who are also trying to overcome addiction and you do it together, you will be able to succeed as you get support from each other. With this, you will have the motivation to do more and make some effort overcoming addiction.

Addiction recovery professionals are very knowledgeable about what you are going through and what you should do to overcome addiction. If you will decide not to get help from the experts, you are not giving yourself the chance to fight against addiction as you will insist that you are always right and what experts say are wrong. You have to take note that professionals who deal with addiction are have knowledge and understand almost everything about addiction.

If you will rely on the assistance of a professional, you will get the right treatment that would help you overcome addiction. Since everyone is unique, treatments may vary depending on the needs of a person. With the help of a professional, you can easily determine which treatment is right for you and what steps you should take to overcome addiction effectively.