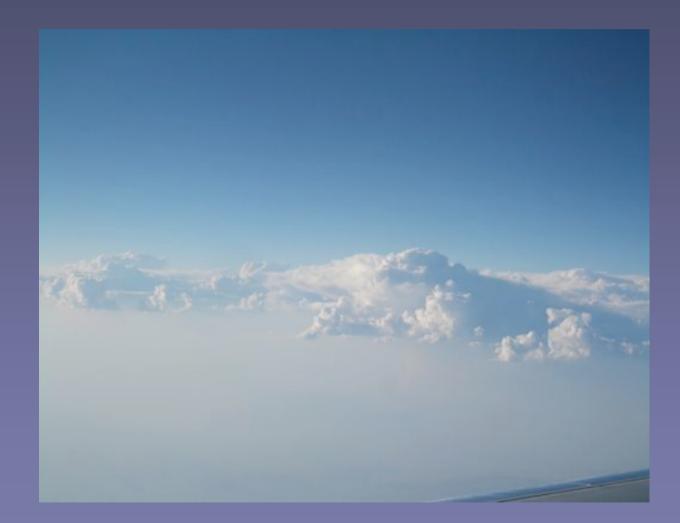
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# Adolescents ADHD and Addiction

## Looking Down at the Problem



## **AD/HD** symptoms

Problems focusing attention
Problems controlling impulses
Problems with activity level
Irregular sleep
Visual, auditory, kinesthetic, emotional sensitivity

## Accurate Diagnosis of all Co-existing Conditions

Mental health diagnosis (s)
Learning disabilities
Addictions
Physical conditions
Life situations

## **Contributions to AD/HD**



Prenatal exposure

Head Injury

## **Co-occurring Conditions**

- Substance use disorders
- Depression
- Obsessive Compulsive disorder
- Bipolar disorder
- Impulse control disorder

## AD/HD traits that are selfmedicated:

- Restlessness of the brain
- Activity level: hyperactive to hypoactive
- Attentional difficulties
- Impulsiveness
- Feelings of shame
- Emotional overload and rage attacks

## Substances

Alcohol Marijuana Cocaine Meth Opiates Prescription medication

## **Continuum of Use**

Abstinence
Experimental
Social
Abuse
Addiction

#### What is an Addiction?

#### Obsessive thinking

- "I want to have a drink"
- "I want to play computer games."

#### Compulsive actions

- Buying a bottle and drinking it
- Playing Poker on line

# An Addiction Affects Any of the Following

- Work or school
- Finances
- Relationships
- Health
- Self-esteem
- Legal issues

## Two Types of Addiction

Substances: alcohol, drugs, sugar

Behaviors: gambling, internet, sex, thinking, work, spending, gaming

## Primitive Brain (AKA) Reptilian

- Meets basic needs
- Food, water, sex, pleasure
- Purpose: to keep us alive
- Without moderating from pre-frontal cortex it can kill us
- "I WANT"



- Reasoning
- Judgment
- Thinking, rational part of the brain
- Job to mediate with the the primitive brain
- "I know you want, but do you need?"

#### Addiction

#### Primitive or reptilian brain hijacks the cortex

 Addiction over rules the cortex's attempt to reason, through consequences

## Meth

- The most addicting drug ever
- Can cause serious physical and emotional damage after weeks of use
- The profound euphoria is favored by many with ADHD
- Meth is easy to make and inexpensive to buy

## Dopamine Disruption

All addictive substances increase dopamine
Increased dopamine provides sense of well being and pleasure
Decreased dopamine contributes to poor attention, impulsivity, decreased sense of well being The AD/HD Brain Seeks Out Stimulating and Novel Events

- People with AD/HD can become over focused on anything
- The rush of behaviors captivate the AD/HD brain
- Behaviors can become a form of selfmedicating
- The primitive brain wants "MORE"

## **Internet Addiction**

Can participate in almost all addictions without leaving home

Those with AD/HD don't have to get organized to go out and gamble, shop, day trade, attend auctions

## **Internet Gaming**

World of War "crack", Halo.
 Some become so addicted to these games that:

They don't work or go to school
Have only virtual relationships
Rarely leave their computer

# Consequences of Untreated AD/HD and Addiction

Success deprivation
 Self-medicating
 Depression, anxiety, PTSD
 Criminal behavior

## COMPREHENSIVE TREATMENT PROGRAM

- Regular visits with doctor and close medication management
- Therapy or counseling regarding AD/HD and recovery issues
- Involvement in addiction recovery programs
- Family and relationship counseling when needed and possible
- Concurrent treatment for coexisting conditions if they are present (bipolar, anxiety disorders, obsessive thought patterns)

#### Treatment

- Coaching
- 12 Step programs
- Medication
- Family and relationship
- Treat all co-occurring conditions

## How 12 Step Programs Help Heal the Brain

- Education
- Repetition
- Telling ones story
- Internalization

## 12 Step Programs and Healing

Spirituality

Relationships

Belonging

## Strengthening Cortex Functioning

Education

Repetition

Internalization

## **Internalizing Recovery Information**

Thinking will not change overnight

- Took many years to over ride cortex
- Time to internalize consequences
- Truth about addiction

### PHYSICAL

Aerobic activity promotes the release of serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine

Physical activity aids in releasing energy and can result in feeling calm

Aerobic activity increases blood circulation to the brain

## Non-therapeutic Relapse

Adolescent doesn't learn anything about behavior or addiction

Little or no changes in attitude and behavior

## Therapeutic Relapse

Adolescent learns from the relapse

Has a change in attitude and behavior

May smash reservations about the consequences of his or her behavior

## **Medication to Treat AD/HD**

Stimulants
 Ritalin, Concerta
 Adderall
 Dexadrine
 Vyvanse

## Non-stimulants

WellbutrinStratteraProvigil

## Vyvanse

Can not be diverted
Can only be taken orally
May be safer for addicts

## **Stay Active**

Aerobic activity promotes the release of serotonin, dopamine, and norepinephrine

Physical activity aids in releasing energy and can result in feeling calm

Aerobic activity increases circulation to the brain

## HELP ADOLESCENTS FOCUS ENERGY

Organized sports

- Biking, surfing, skate boarding, hiking, swimming, rock climbing
- Music, drama, dance, art
- Working out

# The Components of Change Are:

- Awareness
- Willingness
- Tools
- Practice
- Patience

## Live a Stimulating Life

- Many with AD/HD have higher needs for novelty and stimulation.
- Boredom can contribute to substance abuse
- Try a new hobby, sport, travel, meet new people, learn something new
- Keeping young people stimulated is an important part of treating AD/HD & substance abuse

## Those who succeed

## Get help for their limitations

# IF YOU TRY YOU MAY FAIL

# If You Fail You May Learn

# **NEVER GIVE UP!**