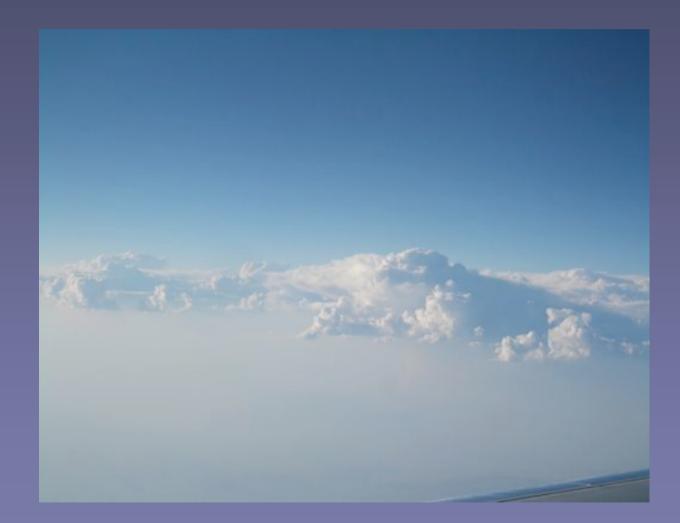
Wendy Richardson, MA, MFT, CAS

AddandAddiction.com (831) 479-4742 3121 Park Ave. Suit F Soquel, CA. 95073

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!