

ENTERING THE ADDICTED CLIENT'S WORLD: A COLLABORATIVE APPROACH

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ENTERING THE ADDICTED CLIENT'S WORLD

- Willingness to be Present with Suffering
 - Despair and addiction

HOW TO ENTER

- Curiosity and Not Knowing
 - Put theory and personal experience aside for awhile
 - Remain humble
- Co-Explore Multiple Realities
 - Have client join you in spirit of curiosity
 - "Am I addicted? What does that label mean to me?"
 - "Who believes I am addicted? Based on what?"
 - "In what ways do I agree and disagree?"
 - "What are the implications [personal, relational, social, spiritual] of believing I am addicted? What are the implications of not believing?"

SLOW AND TENTATIVE

- Be slow
 - Don't force solutions too fast
 - As much as possible, let client lead the way to solutions, even if you "know" sobriety is the answer
 - Always best if motivation comes from within
- Tentative
 - Identify potential perspectives, actions, beliefs, but be slow to select one as "definite/correct"

BRAIN TYPE

6 TYPES OF ADDICTION

- 6 Types of Addiction
 - Based on Dan Amen's SPECT imaging (www.amenclinic.com)
 - Identifies which parts of brain are over- or under-functioning and if there is damage (low blood flow) to parts of the brain
- Diagnosing
 - May have more than one type of addictive brain pattern
 - Standard diagnostic interview with focus on specific types of addiction symptoms and comorbid diagnoses
 - Amen Clinics use questionnaires and SPECT brain imaging to get exact diagnosis

TYPE 1: COMPULSIVE ADDICTS

- **Characteristics**
 - Trouble shifting attention
 - Get stuck on thoughts of substance, gambling or other addictive behavior
 - Have trouble seeing other options or shifting focus
- **Brain Function**
 - Increased anterior cingulate gyrus ("gear shifter") activity
 - Low serotonin levels
- **What Helps**
 - Serotonin boosters: SSRIs, St. John's Wort, 5-HTP, etc.
 - Balanced diet with carbs, protein
 - Exercise
 - Identifying alternative behaviors and distractions from urges
 - Offer choices rather than single option for treatment

TYPE 2: IMPULSIVE ADDICTS

- **Characteristics**
 - Trouble with impulse control, even though may start the day with refraining from addictive behaviors.
 - More common in males
 - Often comorbid with ADD/ADHD
- **Brain Function**
 - Low prefrontal cortex ("supervisor") function
 - Low dopamine
- **What Helps**
 - Stimulant medications
 - High protein diets to raise dopamine
 - Exercise to increase neurotransmitters
 - Outside supervision; someone to check in with on regular basis

TYPE 3: IMPULSIVE-COMPULSIVE ADDICTS

- **Characteristics**
 - Both compulsive and impulsive types
 - Common in bulimia
- **Brain Function**
 - Low prefrontal cortex activity
 - Too much anterior cingulate gyrus activity
- **What Helps**
 - Medications/supplements that raise serotonin and dopamine
 - Exercise
 - Avoid automatic nos or yeses.
 - Give options
 - Identify distractions and alternatives

TYPE 4: SAD OR EMOTIONAL ADDICTS

- **Characteristics**
 - Tend to use alcohol, marijuana, painkillers or food to manage depression, boredom or loneliness
 - More common in women
- **Brain Function**
 - Hyperactivity in the deep limbic system (emotional tone, bonding)
 - Low prefrontal cortex activity
- **What Helps**
 - Antidepressants or supplements like SAMe
 - Vitamin D
 - Exercise to increase blood flow to brain and neurotransmitters
 - Psychotherapy; cognitive therapy
 - Gratitude journals
 - Improve relationships

TYPE 5: ANXIOUS ADDICT

- **Characteristics**
 - Tend to use alcohol, marijuana, painkillers or food to manage anxiety, tension, nervousness
 - More common in women
 - May also have physical symptoms such as muscle tension, headaches, stomachaches, nail biting, etc.
- **Brain Function**
 - Hyperactive basal ganglia (anxiety, motivation)
 - Low levels of GABA
- **What Helps**
 - Increase GABA: supplements, magnesium
 - Exercise
 - Meditation, hypnosis
 - Cognitive therapy

TYPE 6: TEMPORAL LOBE ADDICTS

- **Characteristics**
 - Problems with temper, mood swings, learning/memory problems
 - May have past head injury, infections, lack of oxygen
- **Brain Function**
 - Decreased activity in temporal lobes, often due to injury
- **What Helps**
 - Increase GABA, magnesium
 - Anticonvulsant or anti-seizure medications (e.g., Lamictal)
 - New learning
 - Preventing head injuries

WORKING WITH TYPES

- Collaboratively Exploring Types
 - What does it mean to client to identify area of brain associated with addictive behavior?
 - More shame or less?
 - More motivated or less?
 - More hope or less?
 - Psychoeducation
 - Provide information that helps client move to greater motivation, less shame, and more hope
 - Link to Other Life Issues to Increase Motivation
 - Mental health: depression, anxiety, ADD, etc.
 - Relationships
 - Anterior cingulate: Obsessive, focus on negative
 - PFC: Impaired executive functioning, decision making, etc.
 - Deep limbic: Moodiness
 - Basal ganglia: Anxiety, worry
 - Temporal lobes: Mood swings, temper

HOW CHANGE HAPPENS

- Horizons of Meaning
 - Shift and transform meaning/lived reality
- Shifting meaning from within
 - When meanings change, new possibilities emerge

THE EDGE OF NEW MEANING

- "Appropriately Unusual" (Tom Andersen)
 - Too usual
 - Too unusual
- Multiple, Contradictory Descriptions
 - Allow for multiple meanings to co-exist
 - Shifts internal dialogue

GETTING STUCK AND UNSTUCK

- Therapeutic impasse
 - Dialogue breaks down
 - Dueling monologues
- Getting Unstuck
 - Become curious about client
 - Humble about own ideas and assumptions

STAY FOCUSED

- Your Job: The Process
 - Keep dialogue going
 - Trust the process
- Trust Client
 - Allow autonomy

IS RELAPSE FAILURE?

- Relapse
 - What is the client's story?
 - Is it always failure?
 - What can be learned?

ADDITION AND SPIRITUALITY

- Humanity and Human Condition
 - Client
 - Counselor
- Constructing God/Universe
 - Assumptions about Life/God
 - Purpose of life
 - Good/Evil
 - Human nature
 - Nature of God/Life/Universe

TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Self
 - Physical health
 - Emotional health
 - Rejuvenation
- Relationships
 - Partner
 - Children
 - Friends
 - Community
- Spirituality
 - Connecting with something greater
 - Small, regular habits