

The Balancing Act

Loving someone with an addiction

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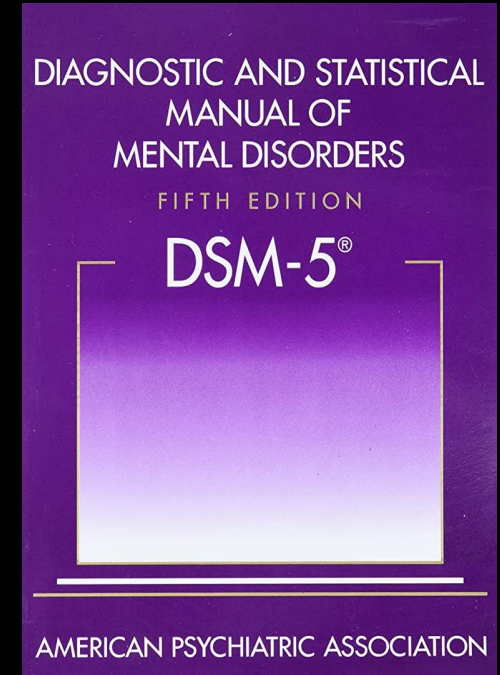
Objectives:

- Understand addiction
- Why do people use drugs
- Understanding that Substance Use Disorder is a disease
- Understand the development of the brain/SUD affects
- Understanding how to create internal peace
- Identifying stress from anxiety
- Health risks caused by chronic stress
- Nature & neurology of stress
- Stress management techniques
- Support groups
- Resources

Over the last decade, the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) has proclaimed addiction to be a chronic, relapsing brain disease caused by prolonged substance use (Leshner 2001; Volkow 2005). In the official publication “Drugs, Brains, and Behavior: The Science of Addiction,” NIDA director Nora Volkow writes, “Today, thanks to science, our views and our responses to drug abuse have changed dramatically. Groundbreaking discoveries about the brain have revolutionized our understanding of drug addiction, enabling us to respond effectively to the problem” (Volkow 2007).

According to the DSM 5, these criteria fall under four basic categories:

- Impaired control
- Physical dependence
- Social problems
- Risky use



What is Addiction?

Addiction is defined as a chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite the harmful consequences.

It is considered a brain disease because alcohol and drugs change the structure and how the brain works. These brain changes can be long-lasting, and lead to the harmful behaviors.

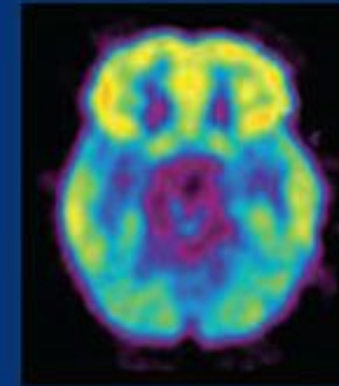
Ex: Let's compare addiction to heart disease.

When there is disruption of the normal, healthy functioning underlying organ, it creates serious harmful consequences. If left untreated, they both can have effects that last a lifetime.

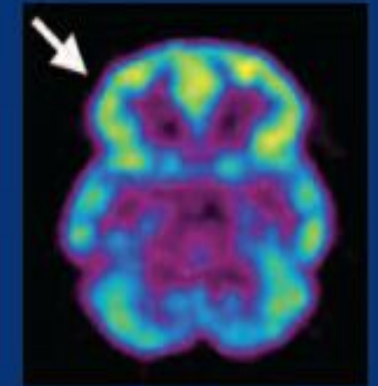
Source: From the laboratories of Drs. N. Volkow and H. Schelbert

The term addiction as used in this booklet may be regarded as equivalent to a severe substance use disorder as defined by the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fifth Edition (DSM-5, 2013).

DECREASED BRAIN METABOLISM IN *PERSON WHO ABUSES DRUGS*

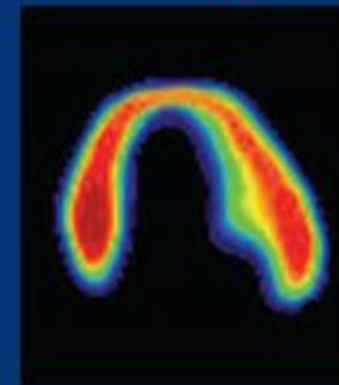


Healthy Brain

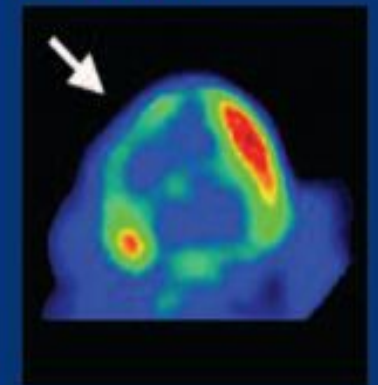


Diseased Brain/Cocaine Abuser

DECREASED HEART METABOLISM IN *HEART DISEASE PATIENT*



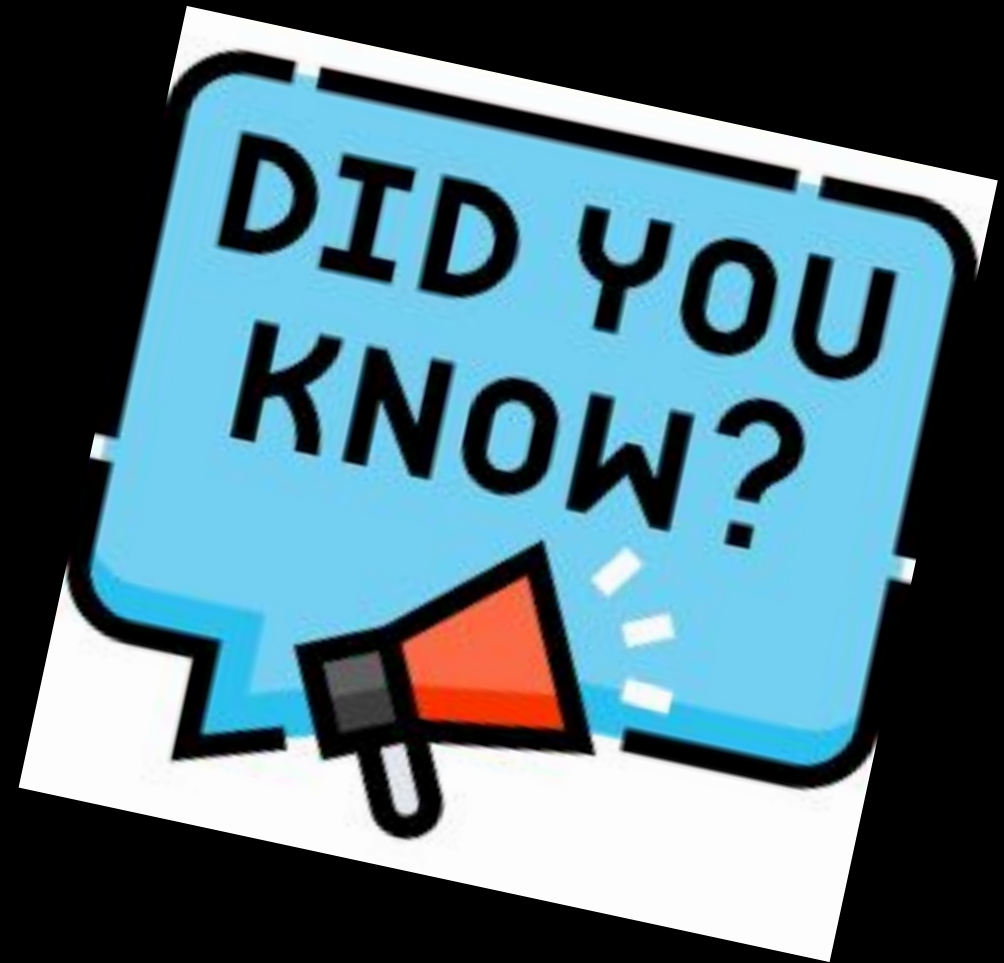
Healthy Heart



Diseased Heart



- Abuse and addiction to alcohol, nicotine, illicit and prescription drugs cost Americans more than \$700 billion a year in increased health care costs, crime, and lost productivity.
- Every year, illicit and prescription drugs and alcohol contribute to the death of more than 90,000 Americans.
- Tobacco is linked to an estimated 480,000 deaths per year.





Babies exposed to drugs in the womb may be born premature and underweight.

→ This exposure can slow the child's intellectual development and affect behavior later in life.

Adolescents who abuse drugs often act out, do poorly academically, and may even drop out of school.

→ They are at risk for unplanned pregnancies, violence, and infectious diseases.

Adults who abuse drugs often have problems thinking clearly, remembering, and paying attention.

→ Oftentimes, adults develop poor social behaviors as a result of their drug abuse, and their work performance and personal relationships suffer.

What happened to the person I once

To feel good?

Most abused drugs produce intense feelings of pleasure. This feeling provides a sensation of euphoria. Stimulants such as cocaine, provide a “high” followed by feelings of power, self-confidence, and increased energy. In contrast, the euphoria caused by opiates such as heroin is followed by feelings of relaxation and satisfaction.

To feel better. People suffering from social anxiety, stress-related disorders, and depression begin abusing drugs in an attempt to decrease or eliminate feelings of distress.

** Stress can play a major role in beginning drug use, continuing drug abuse, or relapse in patients recovering from addiction.

To do better. To chemically enhance or improve their cognitive or athletic performance.

This can play a role in the initial experimentation and cause continued abuse of drugs such as prescription stimulants.

Curiosity. This is where adolescents are particularly vulnerable because of the strong influence of peer pressure.

Teens are likely to engage in risky or daring behaviors to impress their friends and express their independence from parental and social rules.

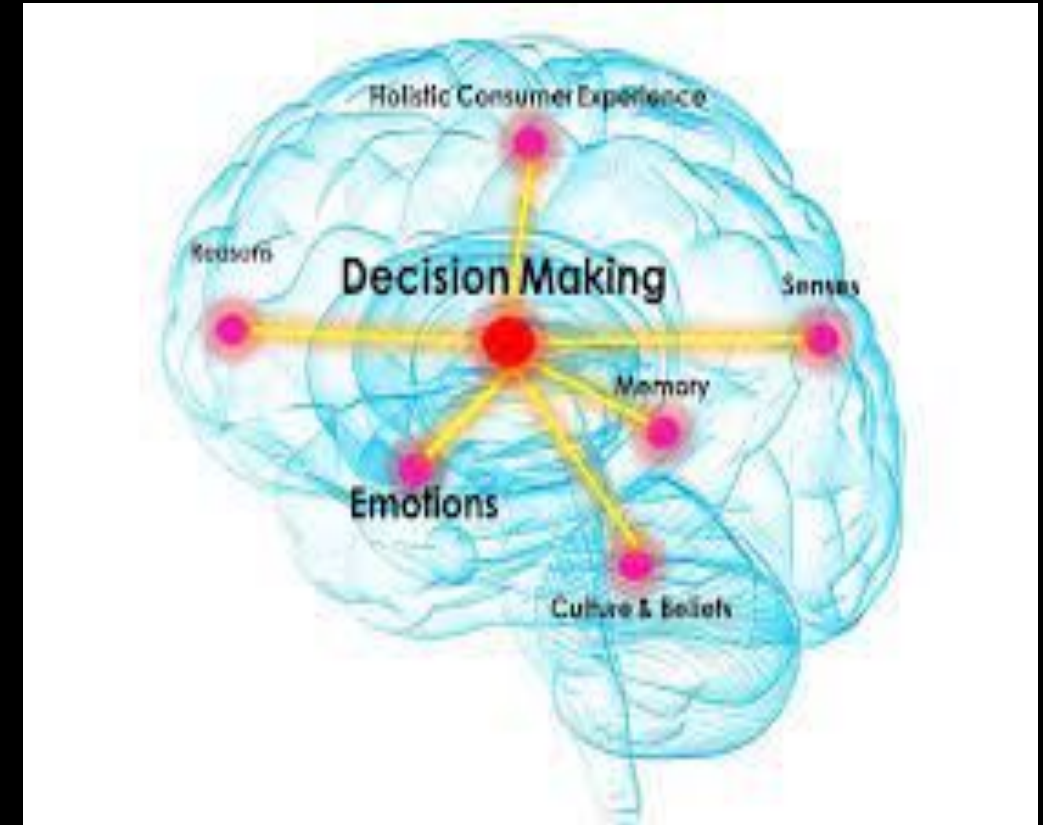
Is continued drug use a voluntary behavior?

The initial decision to take drugs is typically voluntary. However, with continued use, a person's ability to exert self-control can become seriously impaired.

Brain imaging studies of people with addiction show physical changes in areas of the brain that are critical to:

judgment, decision making, learning and memory, and behavior control.

Scientists believe that these changes alter the way the brain works and may help explain the compulsive and destructive behaviors of addiction.





At what age is the brain's prefrontal cortex considered to be fully developed?

- A) 18
- B) 25
- C) 21

Answer:

Our brain's prefrontal cortex does not fully develop until the age of 25!

The PFC is responsible for our:



- Logical thinking
- Decision-making
- Impulse-control
- Planning ahead
- Self-regulation

zümbini.

THE AGE YOUR BRAIN MATURES AT EVERYTHING



THE AGE YOUR BRAIN PEAKS AT EVERYTHING



What does studies show?

In 2011, the majority of substance abuse treatment admissions aged 18 to 30 with known age of initiation information (74.0 percent) began substance use at the age of 17 or younger; 10.2 percent initiated use at the age of 11 or younger.

More than three quarters (78.1 percent) of admissions that began substance use at the age of 11 or younger reported abusing two or more substances at treatment entry; in contrast, only 30.4 percent of admissions that initiated at the age of 25 or older reported multiple substances of abuse.

Nearly two fifths (38.6 percent) of admissions that initiated substance use at the age of 11 or younger reported a co-occurring mental disorder.

How does substance use affect the brain?

Dopamine:

- A neurotransmitter that is released during a pleasurable experience
- Connected to the reward circuit of the brain
- Acts by reinforcing behaviors that are pleasurable
- Leads to neural changes that help form habits
- Released during substance use and reinforces the connection between the substance and the pleasurable experience
- Trains the brain to repeat the pleasurable experience

Is change possible?

NOTHING
IS IMPOSSIBLE,

THE WORD ITSELF SAYS
I'M POSSIBLE

-AUDREY HEPBURN

What does this mean?

In order to help your loved one you must take care of yourself first!

- Educate Yourself.
- Get information about addictions
- Get Support for yourself
- Get Counseling
- Seek Specialty Help
- Don't Enable
- Have Realistic Expectations
- Set Boundaries You Can Keep

How do I take care of myself?



Understand What Stress is

- A feeling of emotional or physical tension. Can be experienced by an event or thought that cause feelings of frustration, anger, or nervousness.
- That feeling is your body's reaction to a challenge or demand.



Different types of Stress

Stress can be **positive** or **negative**

Acute- **Healthy**

- Short term, goes away within 30 days or less
- Helps manage dangerous situations
- Occurs when you do something new/exciting

Examples: slam on the brakes or small argument/fight with someone

Chronic- **Unhealthy**

- Body in a constant state of alert, even though no danger is present
- Lasts longer periods of time (over 30 days)
- Can lead to physical/mental health problems

Examples: financial problems, unhappy marriage, troubles/issues with work

Stress vs Anxiety

Stress is caused by a short term situation that is recognized as a threat.

Anxiety is stress that continues after the threat is gone but the discomfort re-occurs due to an identified trigger.

MEDICALNEWS TODAY

Stress vs. Anxiety

Stress



cause / origin

short term and in response to a recognized threat



symptoms

faster heartbeat
faster breathing
diarrhea or constipation
anxious thoughts
moodiness, irritability, or anger
general unhappiness
a feeling of being overwhelmed
loneliness
nausea
dizziness

Anxiety



can linger and may not have an identifiable trigger



faster heartbeat
faster breathing
diarrhea or constipation
a feeling of unease or dread
sweating
nervousness
tenseness
restlessness

Symptoms of Stress vs Anxiety

- Diarrhea/Constipation
- Forgetfulness
- Frequent aches/pains
- Headaches
- Lack of energy/focus
- Sexual problems
- Stiff jaw/neck
- Tiredness
- Trouble sleeping/sleeping too much
- Upset stomach
- Use of alcohol or drugs to relax
- Weight loss/gain

- Feeling nervous, restless or tense
- Sense of impending danger, panic, doom
- increased heart rate
- Sweating
- Trembling
- Feeling weak or tired
- Trouble concentrating
- Excessive worry

Health Risks of Chronic Stress

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Depression/Anxiety
- Skin problems
- Menstrual issues
- Performance issues

Examples of stressors

- Having a baby
- Marriage/Divorce
- New job
- Death of a loved one
- Losing a job
- Financial issues
- Moving
- Problems within workplace
- Problems at home
- New medical diagnosis



Nature & Neurology of Stress

Stress control center is located within the Nervous system

- Learning how to take conscious control of your involuntary nervous system through the practice of mindfulness or relaxation activities, helps to self-regulate your nervous system's responses to various situations experienced.
- Extensive research shows controlling the breath in the human body also helps us to regulate our thoughts, blood pressure, and heart rate.



Stress Management Techniques

How to take care of YOU!

Mindful Breathing/Body Scan Meditations

- Mindful Breathing: Becoming aware of your breath and focusing on it. Allows you to feel more relaxed as air moves in and out through your mouth, lungs, and nose.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NV_4uKjHTw&feature=youtu.be

- Benefits
 - Reduces stress levels
 - Lower heart rate
 - Lower blood pressure
 - Reduce depression
 - Helps manage chronic pain
 - Better regulate body's reaction to stress and fatigue

Mindful Meditations (breathing)

- Mindfulness: When one becomes aware of the state that they are in already and learning how to be present in that moment unconditionally.
- Learning how to observe the state, no matter what is happening, no judgement happens while in that state
- Learning how to accept the present moment
- Using the brain (rather than the body) to calm itself down and bring relaxation to the body.

- Focus on breath/breathing while sitting in a relaxed comfortable position, with spine upright in a relaxed and peaceful environment



“What’s good?” Thinking Patterns

- Learning how to rewire our brains through thinking patterns,
- Conditions the brain to default on positive thinking versus negative thinking.
- Done by journaling/writing down or actively vocalizing what’s good in our lives, daily.

Benefits: help with processing and learning the feelings life challenges might bring and teaches us how to purposely choose to move on and remember what’s good in our lives.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NV_4uKjHTw&feature=youtu.be



Mindful Eating

- Mindfulness: form of meditation that helps you recognize and cope with your emotions and physical sensations.
- Helps you gain control over your eating habits
- Promotes weight loss, reduce binge eating, and helps you feel better
- Based on mindfulness, a Buddhist concept
- Used to treat eating disorders, depression, anxiety, and various food-related behaviors.
- Focuses on using mindfulness to focus full attention to your experiences, cravings, and physical cues when eating



Cont. Mindful Eating

- Mindful eating involves....
 - eating slowly and without distraction
 - listening to physical hunger cues and eating only until you're full
 - distinguishing between true hunger and non-hunger triggers for eating
 - engaging your senses by noticing colors, smells, sounds, textures, and flavors
 - learning to cope with guilt and anxiety about food
 - eating to maintain overall health and well-being
 - noticing the effects food has on your feelings and figure
 - appreciating food

Yoga

- Studied since the 1960s by various medical organizations/institutions
- Many different kinds; typically combined focus of physical postures, breathing techniques, meditation, and relaxation.
- Helps to stimulate the parasympathetic nervous system
- Benefits range from improvement of physical flexibility to psycho-emotional stability

- <https://youtu.be/v7AYKMP6rOE>



Qi Gong

- Recognizes the necessity of combining focused concentration with simple body movements and balanced breathing.
- Known as Chinese yoga and used to remove blockages of the body's life force energy.



Concept

Body's tightness and stiff muscles cause blockage in natural energetic flow of the body's system.

Health benefits

Brain function, blood flow, and heart function.



Tai Chi

- Slow meditative physical exercise designed for relaxation and balance and health.
- Typically known as a self-defense practice
- Based on lightness, agility, and softness
- Practice of integrated body movement
- Movement begins in the feet, released through legs, motion occurs at the waist, and full expression experienced at the fingers

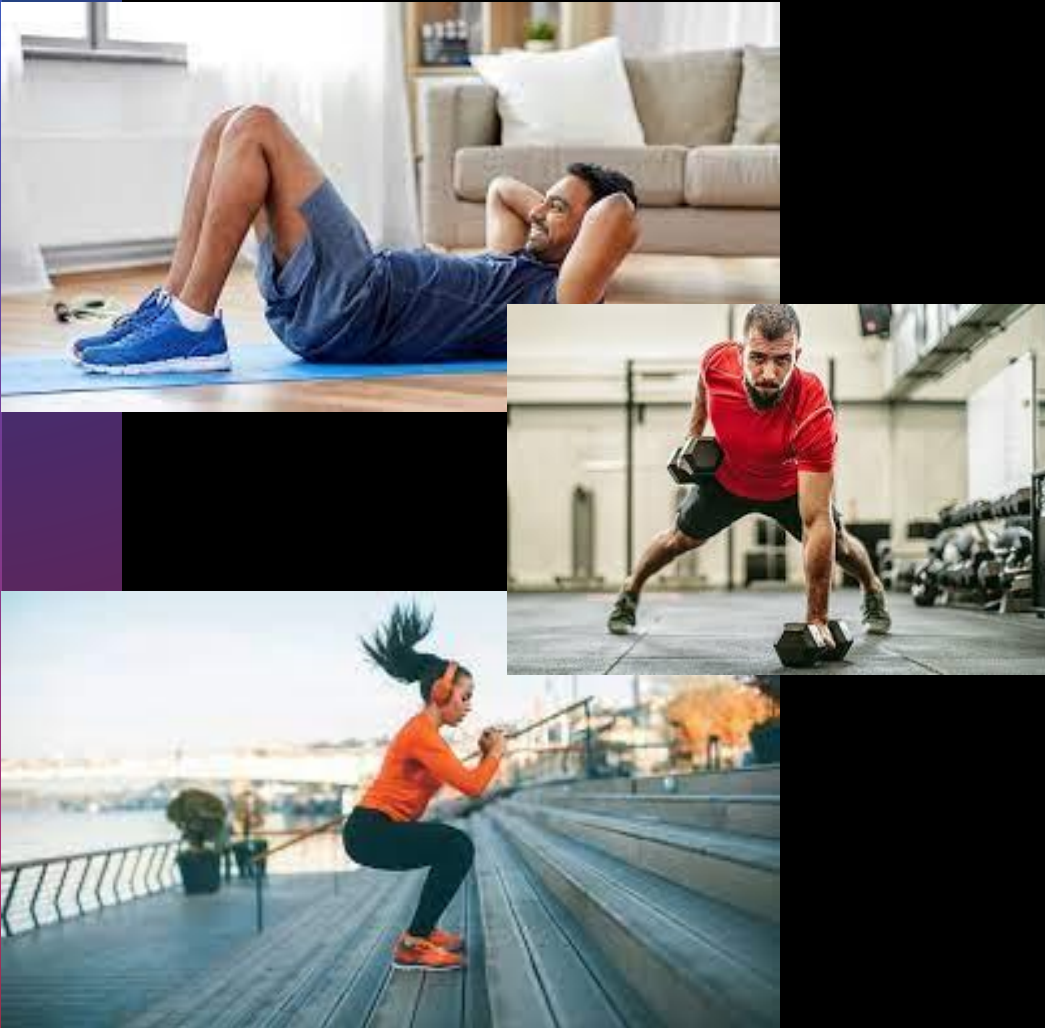


Medical benefits

Pain reduction, improved balance, improved aerobic capacity, reduction in high blood pressure, stress reduction, improved sleep, and increased body strength



Exercise



- Exercise in almost any form can act as a stress reliever
- Increases overall health and sense of well-being
- Pumps up endorphins (also known as body's feel good neurotransmitters)
- Reduces negative effects of stress
- Known as meditation in motion due to the fact that you can only focus on body's movements (mindful practice)
- Improves mood

Support

- Outpatient therapy
- Medication assisted therapy (MAT)
- Music Therapy
- Psychiatry
- Social Support Groups: used when facing major illness or stressful life change.
 - Feeling less lonely,isolated,or judged
 - Reducing distress, depression, and anxiety
 - Improving coping skills
 - Provides sense of empowerment , control, or hope

- Al-anon Groups

- Helps find compassion and support from others experiencing same struggles
- Learn about different coping strategies
- Safe space to vent frustrations and discuss pain
- Helps to end the cycle of codependency and understand why it needs to end
- Helps to recognize alcohol use disorder as a family disease that affects everyone involved
- helps to better understand your involvement and role in loved ones recovery

Resources/Citations

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interested in starting a lifestyle change,
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