

WESTERN COUNSELLING



Mission Statement

Western Counselling offers a non- judgemental and supportive environment providing care and a haven of safety for those who are drug or alcohol dependent, have eating disorders, gambling or sex addiction issues, intent upon self exploration, personal growth, change and on-going recovery. We provide a forum to help our clients explore and understand the process of addiction and recovery, sharing experiences with others with similar experiences.

ADDICTION

What is addiction?

Addiction occurs when a person surrenders to a substance or activity which gradually takes control over their lives, and eventually destroys them if they do not recover.

What type of people become addicted?

People who feel the intense desire to use a drug or act out behaviour.

Why do people become addicted?

Regular use of a substance or activity to change how they feel.

What behaviours do addictive people display?

Selfishness, self-centredness and manipulation, lying, theft.

How do people recover?

Willingness to change through a treatment process.

RECOVERY

Treatment approaches

The key aspects of successful treatment are a willingness to change, detoxification and changes in their environment, getting the right kind of support, working to plan and understanding long term development.

Willingness to change

The willingness to change does not imply such complex motivations as wanting to change in order to be a better person, or to heal the damage to oneself and others. These are usually the reason for staying clean and sober, rather than those that bring a person to confront their addiction.

Most people in active addiction experience intense feelings of shame and guilt and are therefore unlikely to be driven to recovery by such feelings.

The reasons that many people contemplate change are practical and immediate. Usually because their addiction is threatening them with serious consequences, such as losing their job, spouse, house, driving licence, imprisonment or debt. These are some of the more common motivations that bring people to their need to change.

This type of motivation is based on external factors and is usually enough to bring a person to seek help. It is rarely enough to keep someone away from their addiction for any length of time unless it is supplemented by another motive, and that is an "intrinsic motive" or internal motivation. This means wanting to change for reasons such as; to be a better person, to be a better parent to ones children, to be a better son or daughter to ones parents and a better sibling, to be respectful, to lead a more productive life etc. This type of motivation usually grows along side recovery. The person who is clean and sober begins to build a different set of values and gains greater self-esteem and a more mature attitude to life.

It really does not matter what reason a person has to start recovery, as long as it begins the process.

Detoxification

A person begins the process with the important detoxification element which can be the beginning of long term healing from addiction.

This is usually a short time in hospital or in a treatment Centre, where under sedation the body is cleared out of toxic drugs that the addict has been using.

This aspect is important however what is also important is the detoxification from toxins that are carried in the body due to bad diet, lack of proper sleep and environmental damage. There is connection between our emotional well being and the health of our bodies.

When the body is in an unhealthy state, it is more likely that the emotional well being is easier to undermine.

A strong predictor of relapse in addiction is a negative emotional state.

Changing the environment

Most things people do occurs in context. E.g. eat at a table, go to work, wash in a bathroom, to meet friends in familiar surroundings.

Addicts are no different, and their addiction also occurs in context. This includes their friends and places they frequent, the sounds, tastes and feelings that occur when involved in addictive activity. All of these begin to gain power to trigger the need to use drugs.

It is extremely difficult for the addicted person to stop their addiction if they remain in a familiar addictive environment. The effect of the environment should not be underestimated in understanding addiction and recovery.

Getting the right kind of support

People can only usually make significant changes in their lives with support and influence of others.

Addicts who resist the help of others, have a much poorer prognosis than those who ask for and receive help and encouragement. The important thing is the right kind of support e.g. A using addict

or active alcoholic would be of little help in confronting the other. If anything it could be more destructive because of their minimising and denial.

The two main areas that the supporting person must have are care for the welfare of the addicted person and have knowledge of the addiction. The most obvious is from a knowledgeable carer and counsellor, or a member of a support group. The best source is from people who are themselves in recovery from addiction. This support is widespread through recovery groups including those known as Twelve Step Programmes.

Having a plan

In active addiction life is usually chaotic and unmanageable. With the individuals emotional life in turmoil, finances in a mess which can lead to worry and insecurity. Relationships also suffer greatly. In early recovery a plan can be of enormous help in putting a structure in the day to day life of a recovering addict.

Addicts can have great difficulty in tolerating boredom and ordinariness and it is part of being a healthy person to learn a degree of tolerance.

Looking for a buzz or high is not helpful to recovery.

Working to a plan means a disciplined timetable to include work, recreational exercise and recovery activities. This could also include a change of environment, hobbies and interests, support from friends and meetings.

Long term Personal development

As well as stopping substance use other elements are also required, namely a fundamental change in the persons life style and habits.

In order to move through the changes necessary to live well, most require a long term programme of personal development, if not there is a good chance of the person finding themselves, frustrated and craving for addictive substances.

Through missing out on psychological development through using, many are still adolescents in their maturity.

Counselling and or therapy can help to catch up developmentally to adulthood with its wisdom and responsibilities.

This is a crucial aspect of healing addiction because every person's addiction has a particular meaning and purpose.

These may be of real value, such as for spiritual experience, peace of mind or avoiding suffering. By using addiction to achieve these ends, it can be destructive. Until the addict begins to discover the meaning and purpose of addiction and finds a way of doing so, then they will probably relapse, break down or live in chronic low level misery.

Diversity Statement

Western Counselling promotes diversity by recognising, valuing and respecting the different contributions and needs of our service users, volunteers and staff.

Achieved By:

- Ensuring fair and equitable treatment of all people who have contact with us.
- Striving to eliminate unfair treatment in service delivery and employment to promote confidence and equality.
- Striving to secure a workforce that reflects the makeup of the communities we serve.
- Selecting all staff on a fair and non-discriminating basis.
- Undertaking assessments and accepting service users for treatment ensuring equality of access for all irrespective of race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, beliefs, origin, personality etc, ensuring only that a motivation and commitment to sobriety and abstinence their goal.

Achieved Through:

- Staff members taking personal responsibility for delivering a quality service.
- Delivering a service that is professional, appropriate and sensitive to individual need.
- Valuing difference and encouraging the individual contribution of others.
- Creating an inclusive environment in which everyone feels valued, where individual talents are utilised and staff and service users are mutually respected.
- Challenging the unfair actions and behaviours of others.
- Recognising that every person has a fundamental right to be treated with respect and dignity whilst in the employ or care of Western Counselling.