

"Principles of Drug & Alcohol Rehab in the 21st Century-10 Critical Questions Re Effective Treatment: Alcoholic Help for Families

Alcoholism and drug addiction have reached epic proportions in the 21st century. Data continues to show that substance abuse contributes greatly to hospital and prison occupancy, dramatically decrease workplace productivity, and are a leading contributor to fatalities in the United States. Alcohol consumption is the third most leading preventable cause of death in America. (Journal of the American Medical Association, 2004). People from every race, age and socio-economic background are becoming increasingly addicted to such drugs as prescription drugs, i.e. Vicodin, Oxycontin, Valium, Xanax, and many more, Crack, Crystal Meth, Heroin, Alcohol and Cocaine. As a result of alcohol and drug abuse, families are being wrecked apart and children are being exposed and/or endangered. An estimated 6.6 million children under the age of 18 live in households with at least one alcoholic parent, according to the NIAAA.

The most widely known and therefore used "treatment" is AA, or other 12-step program. Unfortunately, according to the current research, the statistics are less than encouraging. According to many government and independent surveys, including one by AA's own General Service Office, AA has a success rate of around 5% for those who can make it their first year. In other words, 95% of its participants will be gone before one year can even be attained. Yet, 93-97% of the treatment centers in the US are STILL using primarily 12-step programs for treatment. While this might have been acceptable in the 1930's, when there were no other options, but this is now 2009, where much research has revealed many wonderful alternatives, ones that are taken for granted in most other countries.

Fortunately, there are treatment programs that ARE taking what the past three decades of research has shown, and have developed a much more effective program as a result of this. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, "No single treatment program is right for everybody. Matching the treatment program to each individual's needs is critical to success." In other words, the best predictor for your success is your ability to choose your own program, and set your own goals. Therefore, if it is your choice to go into a treatment program, please ask the following questions, ensuring that an appropriate drug and alcohol program is chosen that will meet the particular needs of the person entering the program. This is crucial for the alcoholic help for families.

Drug and alcohol treatment facility: Critical Questions to Ask:

1. What kinds of treatment programs do they offer? Is it primarily 12-step based, or do they offer other self-help options as well, i.e., SMART Recovery, SOS, or Women/Men for Sobriety? Do they match treatment settings, interventions and services to each individual's particular problems and needs, since this is critical to one's ultimate success in returning to productive functioning in the family, workplace and society?
2. Does the program address multiple needs of the individual, not just his or her drug use, such as any associated medical, psychological, social, vocational and legal problems?
3. What types of credentials does the staff have, such as doctors, counselors, and anyone else who has contact with the clients, and what is the ratio between the staff and clients?
4. Is there a doctor on the treatment's premises 24 hours a day, or just a couple times a week to dole out medication?

5. What is the treatment program's philosophy or theory towards addiction? Is it religious, bio-psycho-social, psychological, neurological, physical and psychological, trauma-based (addiction that has stemmed from a sole traumatic event in one's life), and does their particular approach suit your own personality, beliefs and values, or is it one that you can believe in, and rebuild your life based on it?
6. Does the treatment program detailed, positive approaches towards treatment, using up-to-date methods, such as motivational therapy, cognitive-behavioral therapy, stress personal responsibility, this is a disease/not a disease but a choice among many others?
7. Do you think that this approach resonates with you, or your loved one, that may need inpatient help?
8. Does the program offer counseling (individual or group) and other behavioral therapies, where issues of motivation, building life-skills to resist drug and alcohol use, relapse prevention, improving problem-solving skills, and facilitation of interpersonal relationships and ability to function in the family and community often take place?
9. How does the drug rehab program assist an individual during the withdrawal process, i.e. is medical treatment for withdrawal provided, or must this be done somewhere else, prior to entering the facility?
10. To what extent is the family involved in the treatment process?

Again, alcoholism and drug addiction has reached epic proportions in the 21st century, and we can no longer afford to ignore the research that has been going on for over three decades, which provides scientific evidence that the 12-step programs have only about a 5%-20% success. Therefore, it is imperative that addiction professionals and treatment programs continuously change and reevaluate the effectiveness of their treatment approaches. If a drug rehab is determined to be necessary, asking the critical questions in this article will at least give you the important information of whether or not they are a simply a traditional treatment center, only offering only one option, the 12-step method, or whether they have taken all the vital research into account and have now incorporated many different alternative modalities into their program.

Remember, the notion that "one size fits all" in the treatment of alcohol and drug problems has been completely destroyed by the scientific evidence, and therefore, there can not be a "one size fits all" solution.

About the Author:

This article was written by Melanie Solomon. Ms. Solomon is the author of the newly released 2nd Edition of "AA-Not the Only Way; Your One Stop Resource Guide to 12-Step Alternatives, which can be found on <http://www.aanottheonlyway.com>. She also used to speak to teens at The Huntington Beach School District Drug & Alcohol Program, and has led workshops at The Learning Annex in California. She now resides in Florida.

Please visit <http://www.aanottheonlyway.com> for the most up-to-date information and resources, such as helpful books, articles and special reports, and sign up for your FREE discussion forum membership. Ms. Solomon is always available for questions and consultations. To contact the author, you can [click here](#). She is also available for interviews.

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