



CHRISTIAN COUNSELING SERIES (CLASS #16)

Counseling Topic: "ADDICTIONS"

I) ADDICTIONS: DRUG & ALCOHOL STATISTICS AND INFORMATION

> Costs of Substance Abuse: Abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs is costly to our Nation, exacting over \$600 billion annually in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and healthcare.

- How do drugs work in the brain? Drugs are chemicals. They work in the brain by tapping into the brain's communication system and interfering with the way nerve cells normally send, receive, and process information. Some drugs, such as marijuana and heroin, can activate neurons because their chemical structure mimics that of a natural neurotransmitter. This similarity in structure "fools" receptors and allows the drugs to lock onto and activate the nerve cells. Although these drugs mimic brain chemicals, they don't activate nerve cells in the same way as a natural neurotransmitter, and they lead to abnormal messages being transmitted through the network. Other drugs, such as amphetamine or cocaine, can cause the nerve cells to release abnormally large amounts of natural neurotransmitters or prevent the normal recycling of these brain chemicals. This disruption produces a greatly amplified message, ultimately disrupting communication channels. The difference in effect can be described as the difference between someone whispering into your ear and someone shouting into a microphone.

- How do drugs work in the brain to produce pleasure? Most drugs of abuse directly or indirectly target the brain's reward system by flooding the circuit with dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter present in regions of the brain that regulate movement, emotion, cognition, motivation, and feelings of pleasure. The overstimulation of this system, which rewards our natural behaviors, produces the euphoric effects sought by people who abuse drugs and teaches them to repeat the behavior.

- How does stimulation of the brain's pleasure circuit teach us to keep taking drugs? Our brains are wired to ensure that we will repeat life-sustaining activities by associating those activities with pleasure or reward. Whenever this reward circuit is activated, the brain notes that something important is happening that needs to be remembered, and teaches us to do it again and again, without thinking about it. Because drugs of abuse stimulate the same circuit, we learn to abuse drugs in the same way.

- Why are drugs more addictive than natural rewards? When some drugs of abuse are taken, they can release 2 to 10 times the amount of dopamine that natural rewards do. In some cases, this occurs almost immediately (as when drugs are smoked or injected), and the effects can last much longer than

those produced by natural rewards. The resulting effects on the brain's pleasure circuit dwarfs those produced by naturally rewarding behaviors such as eating and sex. The effect of such a powerful reward strongly motivates people to take drugs again and again. This is why scientists sometimes say that drug abuse is something we learn to do very, very well.

- What happens to your brain if you keep taking drugs?

Just as we turn down the volume on a radio that is too loud, the brain adjusts to the overwhelming surges in dopamine (and other neurotransmitters) by producing less dopamine or by reducing the number of receptors that can receive signals. As a result, dopamine's impact on the reward circuit of a drug abuser's brain can become abnormally low, and the ability to experience any pleasure is reduced. This is why the abuser eventually feels flat, lifeless, and depressed, and is unable to enjoy things that previously brought them pleasure. Now, they need to take drugs just to try and bring their dopamine function back up to normal. And they must take larger amounts of the drug than they first did to create the dopamine high - an effect known as tolerance.

- How does long-term drug taking affect brain circuits?

We know that the same sort of mechanisms involved in the development of tolerance can eventually lead to profound changes in neurons and brain circuits, with the potential to severely compromise the long-term health of the brain. Conditioning is one example of this type of learning, whereby environmental cues become associated with the drug experience and can trigger uncontrollable cravings if the individual is later exposed to these cues, even without the drug itself being available. This learned "reflex" is extremely robust and can emerge even after many years of abstinence.

- What other brain changes occur with abuse? Chronic exposure to drugs of abuse disrupts the way critical brain structures interact to control and inhibit behaviors related to drug abuse. Just as continued abuse may lead to tolerance or the need for higher drug dosages to produce an effect, it may also lead to addiction, which can drive an abuser to seek out and take drugs compulsively. Drug addiction erodes a person's self-control and ability to make sound decisions, while sending intense impulses to take drugs.

> Popular Drugs Today:

- Synthetic Marijuana (MJ)—Since bursting on the scene a few years ago, synthetic marijuana (MJ)—often called “Spice” or “K2”—has become the second most popular illegal drug among American teenagers, after MJ. It is especially popular among teenage boys. Sometimes touted as a “natural,” “safe,” and (until recently) legal alternative to pot, this very un-natural class of designer chemicals has shown itself to be a dangerous threat. Thousands of teens and young adults, mostly young males, are ending up in emergency rooms with severe symptoms that may include vomiting, racing heartbeat, elevated blood pressure, seizures, or hallucinations.

- Bath Salts - The term “bath salts” refers to an emerging family of drugs containing one or more synthetic chemicals related to cathinone, an amphetamine-like stimulant found naturally in the Khat plant. Reports of severe intoxication and dangerous health effects associated with use of bath salts have made these drugs a serious and growing public health and safety issue.

What Are the Other Health Effects of Bath Salts? Bath salts have been linked to an alarming surge in visits to emergency departments and poison control centers across the country. Common reactions reported for people who have needed medical attention after using bath salts include cardiac symptoms (such as racing heart, high blood pressure, and chest pains) and psychiatric symptoms including paranoia, hallucinations, and panic attacks. Patients with the syndrome known as “excited delirium” from taking bath salts also may have dehydration, breakdown of skeletal muscle tissue, and kidney failure. Intoxication from several synthetic cathinones including MDPV, mephedrone, methedrone, and butylone has proved fatal in several instances.

> Illicit drug use in America has been increasing:

- 50.0% Half of people 12 and older have used illicit drugs at least once.
- 700K Drug overdose deaths in the US since 2000 are nearing one (1) million.
- \$35B The federal budget for drug control in 2020 was \$35 billion.

Substance	% Usership	
	Youth 12	Adults 18+
Marijuana	10.1%	18.7%
Opioids	1.6%	3.6%
Prescription pain medication	1.6%	3.5%
Prescription stimulants	1.2%	1.9%
LSD	0.9%	1.0%
Cocaine	0.3%	2.0%
Prescription sedatives	0.1%	2.4%
Methamphetamines	0.1%	1.0%
Heroin	*	0.4%

> Recovery Position from overdose:

After calling 911, place any unconscious person in the recovery position while you wait for help to arrive. This allows any bodily fluids to drain out of the mouth and nose, reducing the risk of aspiration and asphyxiation.

- 1. Place the person on their side.**
- 2. Bend their knees (as in the fetal position).**
- 3. Rest their head on top of the arm closest to the floor.**

> Alcohol Abuse:

- Though legal, alcohol kills over 95,150 Americans every year.

- 86.4% of people ages 18 or older report drinking alcohol at some point in their lifetime**
- 70.1% report drinking in the past year.**
- 56% report drinking in the past month.**
- Among the 15 million individuals with Alcohol Use Disorder (AUD), less than 8% receive treatment.**
- Alcohol use among 12- to 17-year-olds increased 4.4% from 2018 to 2019, whereas use among other age groups declined.**
- 50-67% of all murders and major assaults involve alcohol.¹**

> Dependence, Addiction, & Mental Health:

- Non-sanctioned/non-medical/non-prescribed use of these controlled substances is considered drug abuse. They are likely to create physical or psychological dependence.

- 9.5 million or 3.8% of adults over the age of 18 have both a substance abuse disorder (SUD) and a mental illness.**
- SUDs affect over 20 million Americans aged 12 and over.**
- Most common disorders are related to marijuana and prescription pain relievers.**
- Major Depressive Episodes (MDE) affect 3.5 million adolescents and 4.6 million young adults nationwide.**
- 51.5 million or 20.6% of adults over the age of 18 have a mental illness.**
- 13.1 million or 5.2% of adults have a serious mental illness.**
- 358,000 or 1.5% of all adolescents in the US have had both an SUD and an MDE within the last year.**
 - 1.2% of all adolescents had both an SUD and MDE resulting in severe impairment.**
 - 8.5% of adolescents with MDE were more likely to binge drink than those without (4.1%).**
 - 32.7% of adolescents with ME were more likely to use an illegal drug than those without (14%).**
 - Among adolescents with both an MDE and SUD, 65.7% received either substance abuse treatment at a specialty facility or mental health services.**

¹ Biblical Counseling Library - Biblical Counseling Keys – Alcohol & Drug Abuse: Breaking Free & Staying Free.

- In 2018, 3.7% or 9.2 million of all adults aged 18 and older in the US had both an AMI and at least one SUD in the past year.
 - 3.2 million adults (1.3% of all adults in the US) had co-occurring SMI and an SUD in the past year.
 - 31% of adults with AMI and 32.3% of adults with SMI were binge drinkers.
 - 49.4% of adults with SMI 36.7% of adults with AMI used illegal drugs in 2018.
 - Among adults with AMI and SUD, around 51.4% received either mental health care or specialty substance abuse treatment.
 - 1 in 3 received no care.


F.Y.I. – HAWAII

Updated on May 17, 2024 - **Updated Drug and Alcohol Statistics for Hawaii** -
Written by Mara Sugue

Hawaii has been facing a significant drug and alcohol addiction crisis, which has had far-reaching consequences for individuals, families, and communities across the state. This article presents an overview of the latest statistics on substance use disorders, the opioid crisis, overdose deaths, youth substance use, and treatment and recovery challenges in Hawaii, highlighting the urgent need for effective solutions.

- Hawaii residents increased their alcohol consumption by 23% from 2020 to 2021.
- Methamphetamine is Hawaii’s most prevalent drug of misuse among adults, playing a role in nearly 94% of drug convictions in federal court in 2015.
- Approximately 10% of Hawaiian residents reported past-month use of illicit drugs.

> **SUBSTANCE USE STATE PLAN - Hawaii State Department of Health**

 health.hawaii.gov/substance-abuse/files/2023/05/Draft-State-Plan-2022-May-20...

~ **Substance abuse is a significant public health issue in Hawaii. Here are some key points:**

1. **Prevalence:** Approximately 62.3% of the population over the age of 12 in Hawaii reported using illicit drugs or alcohol within the past year¹.
2. **Common Substances:** Methamphetamine is the most prevalent drug of misuse among adults in Hawaii, involved in nearly 94% of drug convictions in federal court in 2015². Cocaine use, abuse, and dependence are also higher in Hawaii compared to the national average.
3. **Youth Substance Use:** Substance use among young people is a growing concern. From 2019 to 2020, 20.4% of high school students and 7.0% of middle school students reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days.

4. **Opioid Crisis:** The opioid epidemic has significantly impacted Hawaii, with 274 overdose deaths reported in 2020.

The Hawaii State Department of Health's Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division (ADAD) provides leadership and resources for substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment services³. If you or someone you know needs help, you can contact Hawaii CARES at (808) 832-3100 or toll-free at 1 (800) 753-6879

<https://health.hawaii.gov/substance-abuse/>

II) **BIBLICAL COUNSELING FOR ADDICTIONS:**

> **THE Bible says - "The righteousness of the upright delivers them, but the unfaithful are trapped by evil desires." (Proverbs 11:6)**

- **Checklist for Discovering a Chemical Dependency**

C - Do I ever attempt to *conceal* my habit from others?

H - Do I ever think about getting *help* for my habit?

E - Do I ever have problems at my place of *employment* because of my habit?

M - Do I ever experience a loss of *memory* related to my habit?

I - Do I ever become severely *intoxicated*?

C - Do I ever feel unfairly *criticized* because of my habit?

A - Do I ever feel my habit is *abnormal*?

L - Do I ever *lose* friendships or relationships as a result of my habit?

L - Do I ever *lower* my intake but then return to my previous level of consumption?

Y - Do I ever neglect my *young* ones or other loved ones because of my habit?

D - Do I become *defensive* or argumentative about my use?

E - Do I fail to get in touch with my *emotions* because of my use?

P - Is my *physical* health affected by my use?

E - Do I *enjoy* only functions where alcohol or other drugs are available?

N - Is my *need* for the substance affecting my finances?

D - Do I *deny* that I experience any consequences from my habit?

E - Do I *evade* difficult situations by indulging in my habit?

N - Is my *need* to feed my habit affecting my relationships?

T - Is my *tolerance* level for the substance getting higher?²

> **KEYS TO OVERCOMING:**

(Insight: Recognize your sin, Repent of your sin, Resolve to overcome, Resist temptation!)

- **Key #1 – DISCIPLINE** - "*He will die for lack of discipline, led astray by his own great folly.*" (Proverbs 5:23);

- **Key #2 – WISDOM** - "*Wine is a mocker and beer a brawler; whoever is led astray by them is not wise.*" (Proverbs 20:1)

² Biblical Counseling Library - Biblical Counseling Keys – Alcohol & Drug Abuse: Breaking Free & Staying Free.

- **Key #3 – TRANSFORMATION** - "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:2)

- **Key #4 – DESIRE** - "Do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires." (Romans 6:12)

- **Key #5 – NEEDS** - "My God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:19)

- **Key #6 – DENIAL** - "Jesus said to his disciples, If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it." (Matthew 16:24-25)

- **Key #7 – PRAYER** - "Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." (Psalms 25:4-5)

- **Key #8 – LIVE** – Ephesians 5:1-21

Live for Christ! (v1-7)

(v1-2) - **Love Walk!** - Imitate God as dear children. Love as Christ- *an offering & sacrifice*- What is does your life smell like? Sweet, sour, sweet & sour.

(v3-14) **Light Walk!** - *The pathway of darkness (v3-7); Children of light (v8-10) bare the fruit of the Spirit- all goodness, righteousness, and truth, finding out what is acceptable to the Lord-* by living according to His Word and blessing your heavenly Father's heart.

-**Warning** - (v11-14) **Don't fellowship (partake of or be in agreement with the way of darkness) with darkness.** If you're currently in fellowship with darkness, then **WAKE UP! RISE FROM THE DEAD & CHRIST WILL GIVE YOU LIGHT!**

(v15-17) **Life Walk!** - *Walk circumspectly* - That's carefully, with wisdom, with precision. Use your time wisely on this earth and watch out for the days are evil. Seek God's will for your life; Jesus has a plan for you. (Mt. 25:14-30 - Don't bury your talent, invest and multiply!)

> **Be Filled with the Spirit! (v18-21)**

How?

- **Speak to one another in – Psalms** - Praise & worship!

Hymns - Adoration & encouragement. Spiritual songs- Joyful adulation!

Giving of thanks - *For all things to God the Father in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!*

- **Submitting to one another** - notice in the fear of God - in reverence to God.

What is submit? In the Greek it is *hupotasso* - Meaning to arrange under, to be subject to, to yield, or how can I be a **blessing** to someone else.