

The Clinical Alternative to the 12 Step Treatment Model

The integrative approach blends together a variety of “best practices” in substance abuse treatment today. Without addressing all the multiple holes and traps that await the substance abuser, they cannot stay on the safe road to recovery and therapy.

Our integrative approach has evolved over the last 10 years of working with substance abusing clients. Substance abusers are not all alike, and different patients have very different medical and emotional needs.

The cornerstone of our approach is clients must be treated as individual, not as stigmatized and “labeled” members of a diagnostic classification. We acknowledge what extensive research has now confirmed; basically, that no one approach to treatment is superior to all others and that effective treatment must be customized to meet individual goals and needs. The essence of the integrative approach is that it neither requires nor recommends compliance to one theoretical model or method of treatment.

We focus on five core areas of psychological functioning

- 1) Balancing, identifying, and regulating all emotions, avoiding the traps of impulsivity and dumping anger on others.
- 2) Understanding and maintaining a secure sense of self. For example, the stable self is sometimes a container with boundaries and limits and sensitive areas. Adults can become aware of how they are either affirmed or invalidated by others.
- 3) Identifying and not avoiding realistic conflict with others. Learning conflict resolution skills.
- 4) Maintaining adequate self care. All medical and nutritional needs are addressed.
- 5) Dual diagnosis and co-occurring disorders. How about alcohol use and depression feed into each other? How does amphetamine use and anorexia feed into each other?

Our program blends together many seemingly disparate and competing therapy approaches, including cognitive behavioral therapy, abstinence-based counseling, supportive therapy, narrative, motivational effectiveness, couples and family therapy, patient education, and pharmacotherapy. All are brought together to meet and gratify the clients needs at their particular stage of recovery.

Some of Our Passionate Core Beliefs in the Integrative Approach

1. The supreme importance of the fragile alliance, the individual therapy with the clients primary therapist.
- 2) Use of the stages of change model to match the client with all the appropriate therapies, that fit current needs,
- 3) Application of motivational techniques to address clients ambivalence and mixed feelings. Helping clients truly see the advantages of sobriety.
- 4) Helping clients identify and describe the various stages of recovery; early recovery is the first six months. This helps clients become more realistic in their personal goals.
- 5) Help clients address, identify, and describe the personal meaning of their addiction. For example, are they self-medicating, filling up an inner emptiness, numbing out feelings related to a trauma, or all of the above. Unless clients understand what they are actually doing on a deep level, they will become chronic relapsers.
- 6) Clients are building a recovery plan and discharge plan from day one; possibly including a sober living house and outpatient program that they will attend.
- 7) Individual must “keep it fresh” and stay motivated in their aftercare efforts. Apathy is a killer.