

Dual Diagnosis Treatment — Healing the Root Causes of Addiction



A 21st Century Approach to
Healing Addiction

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Introduction

Have you ever had one of those mornings in which you wake up thinking that you'd rather not spend another day inside your own head?

If so, you're not the only one. As bestselling author Anne Lamott once wrote, "My mind is a bad neighborhood I try not to go into alone."

Lamott, a self-described "recovering everything", knows of what she speaks. For years, she struggled with alcoholism, drug addiction, bulimia, depression, and anxiety. But mental health professionals, a supportive community, and a willingness to look at her past traumas and do healing work made all the difference.



*"My mind is a bad neighborhood I try not to go into alone."
—Anne Lamott*

When your mind and emotions are giving you a tough time ... when shame and self-loathing dog your heels ... that's a prime setup for substance abuse and addiction. But the good news is that once you address the underlying core issues that drive your desire to use, you can heal on every level.

Just a few of the insights you'll discover in this eBook:

- What dual diagnosis is and why it's important
- The connection between addiction and specific mental health issues (including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, and eating disorders)
- What constitutes true dual diagnosis treatment and how to find it
- Whether residential treatment is an option and how to choose a good program

Addiction and mental health concerns are tough topics, but when you address them together you can change your life.

It's our hope that this book will provide you with the information and support you need in order to move forward on your journey.

Why we wrote this eBook

The Clearing is a residential treatment program, and so you might suspect our goal is to convince you to sign up.

It's not.

For us, this is a labor of love.

In the United States today we face an epidemic of addiction to opioids, alcohol, food, sex, gambling, gaming, and much more. We are passionate about the insights and concepts you'll read about in this eBook. We also know choosing a treatment program is difficult and daunting.

We hope this eBook will be a valuable tool in helping you find the right approach for you, regardless of where that might lead you.



Part I:

An Overview of Dual Diagnosis: What It Is and Why It's Important



Chapter 1

Dual Diagnosis and the Root Causes of Addiction

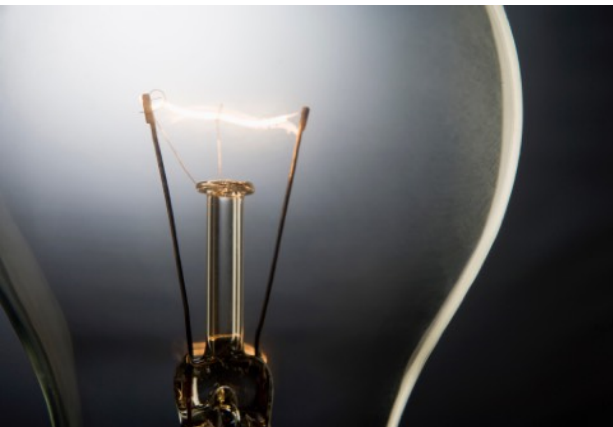
Have you ever suspected that your addictions are actually attempts to “numb out” from an underlying emotional pain? If so, then you already understand a great deal about the root causes of addiction and have a sense of what dual diagnosis is.

Whether or not you are even consciously aware of the emotional root causes, the slightest reminder or trigger can lead you back into that pattern of self-medicating. So you continue even though your drug of choice is causing collateral damage.



The Definition of Dual Diagnosis

Dual diagnosis is the term for a substance addiction coupled with a mental health condition. For example, if you are addicted to prescription painkillers and you're also dealing with depression and anxiety, then you have a dual diagnosis. Likewise, an individual who abuses alcohol and is bipolar has a dual diagnosis, as does someone with an eating disorder and depression.



To clarify, having two mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression does not meet the dual diagnosis definition. In order to have a dual diagnosis, one must have a mental and emotional health issue along with an addiction.

Dual diagnosis is a very broad category. It can range from mild depression and occasional binge drinking to severe bipolar disorder and heroin abuse. Typically the mental health issue comes first, as untreated mental health issues fuel addictive behaviors.

A person with a mental health condition may turn to drugs and alcohol as a form of self-medication to improve the troubling mental health symptoms they experience. However, research shows that drugs and alcohol only make the symptoms of mental health conditions worse.

It's worth noting that an addiction doesn't have to involve substances. We can abuse other things like food, sex, gambling, video games ... even work or exercise. The common attribute is that the behavior is being used compulsively to numb out from a deeper emotional issue. We now know that the brain's chemical response to compulsive sexual and food inputs is very similar to that of cocaine.



The prevalence of mental health issues in addiction

Though popular culture tends to portray alcoholism and substance abuse as isolated issues, the reality is very different. In real life, addiction generally doesn't appear for no reason. Typically, it arises because of an unaddressed mental health issue.

Mental health conditions are more prevalent than people think. According to the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA), 50% of the people who have a severe mental condition also have a substance abuse problem ... [and] 37% of alcoholics have a mental illness, as do 53% of drug addicts.

In fact, most addictions are actually dual diagnosis because they are related to an underlying mental or emotional issue. In order to facilitate healing, the person dealing with addiction likely needs professional help to confront those deeper issues.

Dual diagnosis gets to the root causes of addiction

When individuals don't address the core issues that drive addiction, they stay stuck in dysfunctional habit loops.





The pattern plays out like this:

A person has an unresolved issue that they may or may not be aware of, and then they use alcohol or drugs in order to feel better.

However, the underlying emotional disturbance ensures that before long, they will feel bad again.

So they use again, and a habit develops. At that point the individual may try to stop, but it's difficult. Any number of triggers can send them right back into using.

Further, they may struggle with chemical dependency and withdrawal. Perhaps they go through a chemical detox to break through physical withdrawal, only to face an emotional trigger and relapse soon thereafter.

Their recovery won't be complete until they work to heal the emotional issues that led to the addiction. This is how dual diagnosis reveals itself in addiction treatment.

That's not to say that facing such issues is easy... far from it!

As humans, we tend to try and outrun discomfort rather than facing up to it. Instead of allowing ourselves to feel "off-limits" emotions such as anger and sadness, we numb out.

We may do this with alcohol and drugs, or with more subtle and socially acceptable behaviors such as binge shopping or overwork.

Either way, the drive toward pain avoidance is the same. Inner anguish fuels a drive to escape, which then leads to addiction.

Why acting out doesn't work

When we consume drugs or alcohol, our unexpressed, unprocessed inner pain doesn't go away. Sometimes we feel a welcome sense of relief and freedom, but it's fleeting. Then as the

effects of the alcohol or drugs wear off, the original discomfort multiplies. Now there's shame and self-judgment surrounding the addiction and making the situation worse. That's one reason why attempting to push and shame ourselves into making positive changes doesn't work - it only adds to our suffering.



Feeling the pain and finding peace

When we abuse alcohol and drugs, we do so in an attempt to avoid facing our inner tangles of grief and anger and fear. But the avoidance behaviors don't bring the relief we seek. Instead, the pain persists until it is addressed.

As John Green wrote in his bestselling novel *The Fault In Our Stars*: "That's the thing about pain. It demands to be felt."

Once we allow ourselves to feel pain (and also understand and process it), we are often surprised to discover that it passes away fairly quickly, and that we feel stronger for it.

As the *Principles of Spiritual Psychology* remind us, unresolved issues are not bad. Rather, they are opportunities for growth. And when a person can stop running and face the emotions they've been avoiding, they discover a greater capacity for peace within themselves.

Dual diagnosis is not a label that condemns people to a life of futile struggle against addiction. Rather, it's an invitation to address the underlying core issues of their behaviors and effect lasting positive change.



Chapter 2

The History of Dual Diagnosis

Until recently, many people believed that there was little overlap between addiction and mental health conditions. Dual diagnosis was seen as fairly unusual.

However, statistics show that dual diagnosis is actually the norm for people dealing with addiction. Today, we know that most people who abuse substances have a concurrent mental health condition.

Though some people do have purely physical addictions, most are coping with physical addictions that came into being as a result of mental and emotional drivers.



According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) “Among the 20.2 million adults in the U.S. who experienced a substance use disorder, 50.5%—10.2 million adults—had a co-occurring mental illness.” Many in the recovery industry believe that those numbers are much higher, but even so, this is an astonishing statistic.

Likewise, the 2011 National Survey on Drug Use and Health found that, “Among the 18.9 million adults with a past year substance use disorder, 42.3 percent (8.0 million adults) had a co-occurring mental illness in 2011.”

Clearly, there is a strong connection between substance abuse and mental health. Yet if mental health conditions impact at least half of individuals with addictions, then why isn’t dual diagnosis treatment standard in the recovery industry? In order to answer that question, we need to look at past approaches to addiction treatment and see how these traditions persist in present-day rehabs.

One Past Approach: Sequential Treatment

Integrated dual diagnosis treatment is very much a modern development. In times past, the preferred approach to addiction treatment was called “sequential treatment”.

The theory behind sequential treatment was that addiction treatment and mental health treatment should be separate. Recovery professionals thought that individuals needed to

stabilize one aspect of their lives before addressing another.

In many cases, individuals were required to undergo treatment for their substance abuse issues before they'd be eligible to receive mental health treatments.

The results of sequential treatment proved poor over time. As the DualDiagnosis.org article Dual Diagnosis Treatment states:

“‘Sequential treatment’ was the norm before the 1990s Clients with a Dual Diagnosis were excluded from one area of treatment until they were considered stable in the other [Yet] research showed that [sequential treatment] led to a higher rate of relapse.”



Another Past Approach: Parallel Treatment

When a growing body of evidence suggested a correlation between mental health issues and addiction, a protocol known as “parallel treatment” came into being.



In parallel treatment, an individual receives professional services for both addiction issues and mental health concerns concurrently. Nevertheless, the division between addiction and mental health treatment persists in that the support teams operate independently. The individual's doctors and therapists rarely communicate with one another.

As such, there's a lack of continuity and cohesiveness to the treatment approach. It can even be counterproductive. For example, if a psychiatrist prescribes a medication and doesn't consult with the individual's therapist, the individual may experience side effects that affect their ability to progress in therapy.

The Results of Sequential and Parallel Treatment

Research shows that both sequential and parallel treatment yield sub-par results. Unfortunately, they're also prevalent in modern rehabs. True, many people with dual diagnosis do receive some mental health treatment from psychiatrists and therapists. However, often their concurrent "addiction treatment" approach simply involves attending Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or a similar 12 Step meeting.

Though 12 Step groups have helped millions to recover, their overall success rates are not strong. In fact, in a 2014 Radio Boston interview Harvard researcher Dr. Lance Dodes cited the AA success rate as 5-10%.

Furthermore, AA and similar groups were not designed to provide dual diagnosis treatment; rather, they are nonprofessional groups that offer mutual aid and fellowship to people dealing with addiction.

As DualDiagnosis.org's notes, "While self-help programs [such as AA] are not considered treatment ... they are integral adjuncts to professional treatment services."

In other words, while you can find support and camaraderie at an AA meeting, you won't find professional addiction treatment.

A Modern Approach: Integrative Treatment

Sequential and parallel treatment approaches have left millions of people frustrated and discouraged. Increasingly, individuals with dual diagnosis - that is, most people dealing with addiction! - are seeking out more integrative approaches.

What does integrated treatment look like? The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health describes it this way:

"Integrated treatment means that treatment for substance use and mental health problems are combined and ideally provided in the same treatment setting by the same clinicians and





support workers, or same team of clinicians and support workers. This ensures that a client receives a consistent explanation of substance use and mental health problems and a coherent treatment plan.”

In other words, an individual needs to receive addiction and mental health services concurrently, from the same support team if possible. This kind of holistic treatment offers the best opportunity for healing on all levels.

Integrative Dual Diagnosis Treatment

Many recovery programs are focused on helping participants avoid drugs and alcohol. They emphasize coping skills and teach people how to not drink or use substances through behavior modification approaches.

Behavior modification certainly has its place, but effective addiction treatment goes beyond that. Ideally, it zeroes in on underlying core mental health issues. In truly integrative treatment, individuals process their buried anger, grief, and traumatic experiences.

Why? Because those core issues are the very things that are creating the intense negative emotions that lead people to reach for addictive substances in the first place! If a person doesn't have those intense negative emotions arising from within, then they will not need to reach out for those substances to mitigate their feelings.

“We unravel the addiction by working with the mental health issue. We work with the depression, the anxiety, the self-loathing and hopelessness. We teach the counseling skills and strategies that each person needs so that they can hold their issues differently and release that negativity.”

— Joe Koelzer co-founder, The Clearing.

Looking back over the history of dual diagnosis treatment, it becomes clear: It's time to stop doing what doesn't work. It's time to take an integrative approach to healing.

Chapter 3

The Four Levels of Holistic Treatment

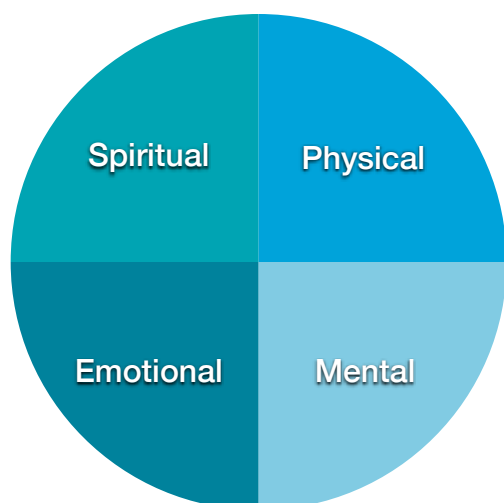
What is a holistic drug rehab approach and why is it important?

Many people believe that once they complete an addiction treatment program, their substance or drug abuse issue is done for good. But addiction recovery is a process, not an event.

According to The National Institute on Drug Abuse, the rate of relapse after addiction treatment is between 40 and 60%. That number may seem high, but it is comparable to the rates of recurrence with chronic illness and medical conditions.

Given those rates, how can an individual prevent relapse effectively over the long term? The answer lies in holistic self care.

Holistic Healing Approach



What is a Holistic Drug Rehab Approach?

In order to promote lasting recovery, a holistic drug rehab program needs to address the four levels of self—physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. These must be healed together.

If a person only focuses on changing a given behavior (such as substance abuse), they may ignore the mental and emotional issues that underlay the addiction.

As a result, the various levels of an individual's psyche will go out of balance. If this imbalance isn't handled properly, the risk of relapse is high.

Holistic addiction treatment encompasses the entire person: the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual. Why is it important? Because if you don't address all these levels, you'll be off balance and will begin using again.

You've seen it happen: Someone you know has a favorite approach to weight loss or other issue that has helped them a great deal. As a result, they want to solve everyone's problems with that particular technique.

Maybe your aunt had great success with the 12 Steps, and maybe your friend recovered from addiction with the help of a therapist trained in Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR). Now they're both telling you that you need the exact same experience to treat your addiction. Yet despite their enthusiasm, you sense that their solutions just aren't a fit for you. You know that some people find healing within their particular context, but others try the same thing only to feel worse off than they were before. When this happens again and again, it's likely that something is missing.

What's the missing piece? A holistic addiction healing model that encompasses the whole person.

What Does Holistic Addiction Treatment Look Like?

A true holistic addiction healing model addresses the four main components of health and the whole person:

- Physical
- Mental
- Emotional
- Spiritual

Since all people live at four levels at the same time, it's important to pursue an addiction recovery program that includes them all.



1. The Physical - What You Do

Learning about the physical realities of addiction is important. For example, when counselors teach rehab participants about habit loops and habit formation, it helps individuals to understand the physical forces driving their addictive actions. Likewise, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) empowers people to see how mental illness contributes to dysfunctional behaviors, and it also helps them to create more functional action plans.

All of this is useful when it comes to promoting habit change, but humans can't sustain long-term behavioral change by focusing on the physical alone. If you address the behavioral component of addiction without looking at the deeper realities, you set a person up to fail. True, the individual may start off well, but since no one can be vigilant all the time, sooner or later they will get tired or upset or vulnerable. Then they'll let their guard down and lapse back into familiar patterns. In the end, they'll feel frustrated and discouraged.

Some rehab programs do focus solely on the physical symptoms and realities of drug addiction. Such facilities may use aversion therapy and counter conditioning (that is, triggering physical discomfort in the presence of the addictive stimulus) to treat addiction.

This can work in the short-term, but it can also backfire. Over time, the counter conditioning can wear off. Plus, creating an aversion to one substance can cause a person to turn to a different, more dangerous one. The substances may change, but the untreated mental and emotional pain remains the same.



2. The Mental - What You Think and Believe

Addressing the thought patterns that fuel addiction is vital. If you don't train yourself to still your racing mind or counter your negative thoughts with positive ones, you may be setting yourself up to drink or use again.

For example, one mode of mental therapy is Rational Emotive Therapy (RET). RET is a form of cognitive behavioral therapy, built on the idea that it's usually your thoughts about circumstances—rather than the circumstances themselves—that cause you pain.

As such, RET is about identifying the projections, judgments and limiting beliefs that cause upset within you, and then offering yourself forgiveness for those thoughts. In case you're not familiar with these terms, here's a brief introduction.

Projections are about attributing your disowned positive or negative qualities to other people. If you haven't accepted your strengths and your weaknesses, you'll likely see them much more clearly in others. It's much easier to accuse other people of faults than to acknowledge them within yourself ... but turning the focus on yourself and owning your projections can make a big difference in your health and well being.

Judgments are your criticisms of yourself, other people, and the world. The attitude of judgment says, "Things and people should be different than they are." The process of constantly judging yourself and others is exhausting and shaming too. Fortunately, there is a way out: self-forgiveness. As the Principles of Spiritual Psychology teach us, "Judgment is self-condemnation. Self-forgiveness is freedom." In our Program, we teach Participants clear, accessible techniques for centering themselves and forgiving their own judgments.

Limiting beliefs are the rules you've created for yourself, the thoughts that shape your reality. Many of these beliefs reside in your subconscious, and often they arise from trauma. Chances are, your limiting beliefs helped to keep you safe at some point, which is why they stuck around! But if you're operating with unexamined limiting beliefs from childhood, then you're probably hurting your own growth and development. Some examples of limiting beliefs we hear from our Participants include, "Parents should always know best" and "No matter how hard I try, I'll never be good enough." When we help people set themselves free from these painful beliefs, the transformation is amazing!

3. The Emotional - What You Feel

Taking a look at the feelings of guilt, shame, self loathing, hopelessness, depression, anxiety, and panic that drive alcoholism and addiction is key.

When you work with a trained therapist to address the emotional component of your addiction, you may find that a lot of "old stuff" gets stirred up. That's only natural, as finding the root causes of destructive behaviors takes you back in time.

Also remember that just because a traumatic experience happened a long time ago doesn't mean that you've processed the feelings surrounding it. Until you allow yourself to actually feel your painful feelings, they will stay with you in the form of dysfunction and stress.



As such, it's helpful to work with a practitioner trained in counseling techniques such as Gestalt, Object Relations, Developmental Psychology and Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP). These techniques focus on how past

issues have created emotional wounds that need to be healed in order to live a life free of these intense negative feelings.

As Joe Koelzer, co-founder and CEO of The Clearing notes:

"With dual diagnosis, you really want to address the emotional aspect of mental health We're very emotional beings, and we try to think our way out of emotional problems and wonder why that doesn't work out! A lot of the addiction problems come into play when people say, 'I can't think my way out of this problem. I don't know how to address it on the emotional level, so let me numb out to it.'"

When you experience a traumatic event - that is, something that's shocking to you - then an emotional part of you gets stuck at that age. Your growth is curtailed, and you continue to try to relate to the world emotionally with all of the experience and the skills of somebody of that age.

When similar kinds of events happen to you as an adult, then that younger, traumatized part takes over emotionally and you act out. Fortunately, you can heal your traumatized parts. When you offer yourself love and compassion, you can heal.

Likewise, when you work with your addiction aspect - the part of you that drove you to use alcohol and drugs - you discover an ally you didn't know you had.



In our Program, we help people take a new look at their addict aspects. We examine the strengths of these parts that we've judged and condemned for so long. While every person's addict aspect is different and unique to them, some common themes do arise when we discuss this topic. Addict aspects are:

Powerful, determined and persistent; able to work hard and accomplish

Spiritual; seeking to be in touch with wonder, awe, and the Divine

Protective; helping to avoid negative people and situations

Intuitive; guiding toward people and situations that feel right

As you can see, those addict aspects can have some truly admirable qualities! Healing is not about banishing those aspects; rather, it's about discerning their deeper positive purpose.

4. The Spiritual - Who You Truly Are

Examining the spiritual reality of life is the fourth and final piece of the holistic addiction treatment model. However, it doesn't mean that you need to join a particular religion or group. Instead, you can simply focus your attention on the idea that there is a level of consciousness beyond that which you can see.

In the spiritual or "Authentic Self" level, you are connected to all that is and ever was and ever will be. Here, you experience the core states of Unconditional Love, Harmony, Peace, Joy, and Oneness. When you inhabit this space, judgments and illusions lose their power. You are empowered to live into your truest, most loving potential.

Things that work at this level are psychosynthesis, meditation and core transformation.

Traditional 12 Step programs and purely spiritual programs such as Celebrate Recovery focus on the spiritual component of healing, while conventional psychology emphasizes the first three levels and excludes the spiritual level.

When a program fails to include all four levels, it is incomplete and imbalanced. But when a recovery program incorporates the spiritual level along with the physical, mental, and emotional, it completes the foundation for healing and restores true balance to the individual.





Putting the pieces together

As you can see, a real holistic addiction treatment model integrates all four levels of our existence - the physical, the mental, the emotional, and the spiritual.

Our experience has been that when rehab programs fail to address one or more of these elements, participants don't fully recover. But when addiction recovery programs do offer holistic treatment, amazing transformations take place.

High-caliber rehab programs feature a significant amount of individualized, professional counseling hours, as well as counselors who address each component of health within the therapy sessions that they provide. "We're all holistic beings. A really good program not only has a lot of hours of counseling it but it has counseling modalities that work at each one of those levels." says Joe Koelzer, co-founder of The Clearing.



Chapter 4

How Do I Know If I Have a Dual Diagnosis?



Now that you know that most people with addictions have a dual diagnosis, you may be wondering: Do I have a mental health concern in addition to my addiction? How can I accurately determine whether or not I have a dual diagnosis?

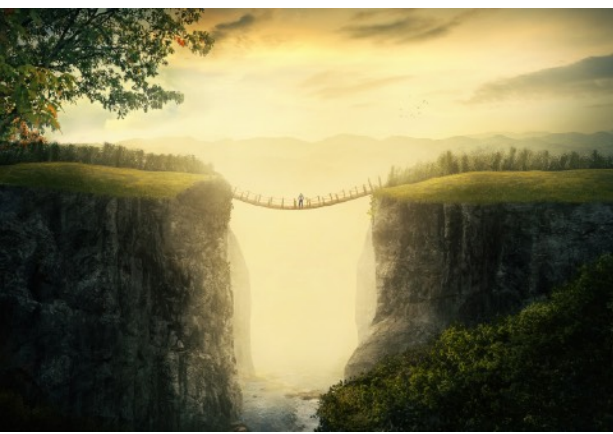
The answer to this question is simpler than you might think. Chances are, if you have a significant mental health condition, you already know it. You know that you're depressed and anxious. You know that you have feelings of despair and thoughts of suicide. You know that you have issues around a trauma or sadness about the loss of a loved one or the loss of power, prestige, or position.

You don't really need a formal label to justify those feelings. And when you combine any of those conditions with drug or alcohol use that is excessive, you've got a dual diagnosis.

"We all have some mental illness going on. It's just the severity of it that is key"

As The Clearing co-founder and CEO Joe Koelzer observed, "To me, addiction is really a symptom of a mental health issue. And generally speaking, we all have some mental illness going on. It's just the severity of it that is key. Many people are dealing with anxiety and depression, but when it gets to the extreme and we don't have the resources inside to deal with it properly, then we need to go seek out professional help to work through it."

Often you do need a formal label in order to receive the necessary supports and services. If you're struggling, you can go to a psychiatrist, psychologist, or counselor and tell them all about what you're thinking and feeling. You can receive a formal mental health diagnosis and receive a prescription for medication to help manage it. Medications can be incredibly useful as you work on your recovery. For example, if you have depression, antidepressants can help you to get through a rough patch and build a bridge back to health. That said, it's very important to actually work with the issues that are causing your depression so that you can heal fully.



Chapter 5

Why Mental Health Stigma Doesn't Make Sense

Though more than 10 million people in America have a dual diagnosis, there's still a stigma attached. Lessening the surrounding mental health stigma can help individuals struggling with addiction to seek help and receive effective dual diagnosis treatment.

The shaming nature of stigma means that most people are too afraid to question the logic behind it. But consider: does the social discomfort incurred from mental health treatment make sense? Is it logical?

Most of us don't hide the fact that we visit doctors to treat physical concerns. If we have a sore throat or an infection, our cultural norms tell us to see a medical professional. Yet when we have a mental or emotional illness, the stigma says, "Don't tell anybody."

The pain from mental and emotional issues can be just as intense as the pain of physical ailments. Yet if an illness doesn't manifest in physical symptoms, we tend to discount and minimize it.



"Untreated mental and emotional issues actually lead to physical issues."

However, modern scientific studies (such as Moral Emotions and Moral Behavior, published in 2007's Annual Review of Psychology) tell us that untreated mental and emotional issues actually lead to physical illness!

Shame and guilt are the most toxic of emotions, the very first to manifest as physical ailments. As such, seeking treatment for these "invisible" issues is a powerful form of preventive medicine.

How Society Contributes To Mental Health Stigma

Our hyper-competitive society contributes to the stigma surrounding mental health conditions. In this stressful, “dog eat dog” world, admitting any form of weakness puts you at a disadvantage.

It’s also common in our culture to compare ourselves to others, which discourages us from acknowledging our internal issues with the threat of social judgment.

But hiding the truth causes even more stress and fear ... which contribute to more physical and mental ailments.

We all ask ourselves, “What do other people think about me?” Yet what other people think about you has nothing to do with you. It's entirely about them!

Getting your self-worth from what everybody else thinks of you is a game that you will never win, because everybody wants you to be somebody different.

Instead of playing this no-win game, you can take the radical step of figuring out who you are and being true to yourself.



Social Media: Help or Hindrance?

Social media and Internet access is a double-edged sword when it comes to fighting mental health stigma.

On one hand, the Internet has lessened the shame of mental health issues by debunking the “I’m the only one dealing with this” myth.

Nowadays, you can Google any mental health issue and find a community.

On the other hand, social media also offers you more opportunities to think less of yourself. Looking at other people’s glamorized photos and witty status updates invites you to play the comparison game. It's the rare friend or colleague who posts the challenges and failures in addition to the good times. So pay attention to how your social media use affects your internal state.

If you notice that it's doing more harm than good, summon your courage and take a step back.

"Don't compare your insides to other people's outsides."

In the words of recovering alcoholic and bulimic Glennon Doyle Melton: "Don't compare your insides to other people's outsides."

Practical Ways to Lessen Mental Health Stigma

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Multicultural Action Center Fact Sheet includes myriad helpful tips for lessening stigma, such as ...

- Don't use outdated or offensive terminology related to mental health; terms such as retarded or crazy are not appropriate or helpful.
- Employ person-first language and do your best to avoid conflating the person with their mental health condition. For example, you might say, "She is dealing with depression" rather than, "She is depressed." The former separates the person from the depression, while the latter implies that depression equals identity. It's a subtle distinction, but since language shapes our thoughts and beliefs, why not speak in terms of personal empowerment?
- Know your rights. The Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) requires employers to provide protected leave for specific health conditions, including addiction treatment.
- Recognize that addiction isn't about moral weakness or lack of willpower. There's a common misconception that addiction means people are flawed, bad, and less-than. The truth is that addictions are coping mechanisms, and once people address the underlying core issues driving those behaviors, they can begin anew.

Part II:

The Connection Between Addiction and Mental/Emotional Issues



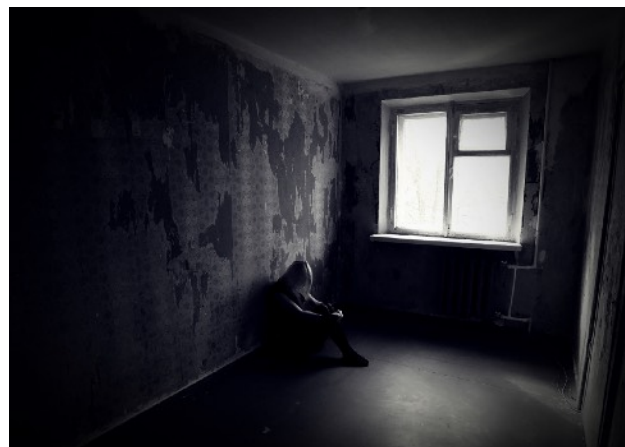
Chapter 6

Addiction and Depression

Depression is debilitating ... completely, utterly, excruciatingly debilitating. When you're depressed, you find yourself dealing with fear, hopelessness, and despondency on a daily basis. You're paralyzed by the most basic undertakings; getting dressed for the day may seem overwhelming.

While depression is symptomatically complex, its origins are actually fairly straightforward. How did this happen to us? Unconsciously, we conditioned ourselves to engage in unhealthy thought patterns ... and over time, these thought patterns have destroyed our quality of life.

Our loved ones may urge us to shake off the depression, to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps, to think happy thoughts. And we think, if only it were that simple. From our perspective, the world seems hostile and entirely negative. Given this internal state, is it any wonder that we turn to drinking and drugging for escape?



“Depression is really just anger turned inward.”

Alcohol and Depression: Common Companions in Dual Diagnosis

Depression is one of the most common mental health issues that gives rise to addiction. In many cases, alcoholism is a direct result of a mood disorder such as depression. In turn, the depression itself is caused by a deeper underlying emotional issue.

According to Joe Koelzer, co-founder of The Clearing, “Depression is really just anger turned inward. Say I really have anger, and I just don't know how to express it. Or I've decided that it's not okay to be angry. When I shut that anger down, I turn it inside and it becomes depression.”

The bad news is that depression increases your risk of alcoholism and substance abuse. The good news is that when your dual diagnosis recovery program addresses depression effectively, you are empowered to break free from the addictive cycle of alcoholism.



How Habit Loops Work, And How They Play Into Addictive Behaviors

In *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do In Life and Business*, author and researcher Charles Duhigg discusses the power of habit loops to shape behavior.

He outlines the habit loop: a cue triggers a habituated routine leading to a reward, and in turn the reward reinforces the previous behaviors and starts the cycle over again.

For example, perhaps you've had a tough day at your stressful job. Maybe you swallowed your mounting anger as you received some unfair criticism or covered for a co-worker's laziness.

You've been trying so hard at work, but secretly you wish you could quit and do something else.

By evening, you feel stressed, trapped, and angry. That feeling is your cue. It arises from some familiar, depressing, and disempowering trains of thought such as, "I hate this job, but I have to keep it," and, "I don't want to do that, but I can't say no."

Driven by these thoughts, you move into your usual drinking routine, be it going to the bar or buying liquor at the store. Most likely, you have a preferred ritual, be it your usual seat at the bar, or your usual glassware for wine at home.

Once you've set the routine in motion, the reward - that is, the alcohol - comes into play. At first, drinking lifts you out of your body and above your anger. For a little while, you might feel less trapped. But then comes the hangover, the remorse, and the realization that you haven't actually escaped your anger after all.

Real Recovery From Alcohol and Depression

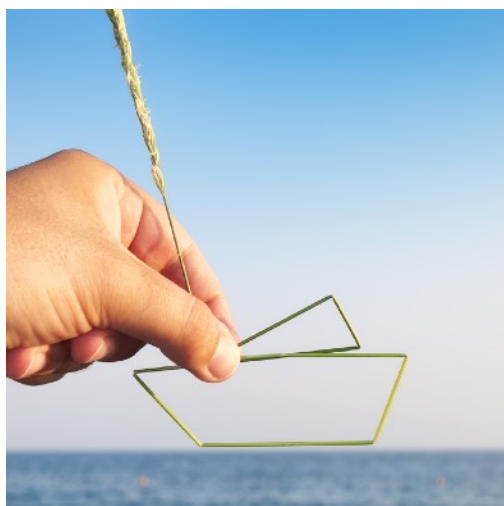
Part of effective recovery and relapse prevention entails creating new rituals to replace the ones driven by drinking. What will you do and who will you call when you find yourself upset and tempted to drink again?

That said, all the planning in the world won't help you if



you keep trying to bury your feelings and gloss over deeper issues. Once you've worked to heal the emotional wounds that drove you toward alcoholism in the first place, you have a real chance at making healthier behavioral choices. While routines and rewards are an important part of the addictive cycle, the cue -- sometimes called a trigger -- comes first. Without the cue, the rest of the habit loop doesn't happen. When you do the mental and emotional work of confronting your core issues, you remove the cue, thus stopping the habit loop before it starts.

Overcoming Depression Isn't About Willpower



Recovery from depression does involve effort on your part. However, it's not about white-knuckling your way to happiness or using willpower to push yourself back to "normal". (After all, chances are that you've already tried that by now!)

As bestselling author and illustrator Allie Brosh wrote of her own depression in *Hyperbole and a Half*, "Trying to use willpower to overcome the apathetic sort of sadness that accompanies depression is like a person with no arms trying to punch themselves until their hands grow back. A fundamental component of the plan is missing and it isn't going to work."

By contrast, lasting recovery from depression involves accessing your true feelings and allowing yourself to experience those emotions you've pushed down and away from your consciousness. Both depression and anxiety are about blocked feeling states, and as such, accessing your hurt and anger can actually begin to give you your life back. We'll share a simple, effective model for healing from depression and anxiety in the next section.



Chapter 7

Addiction and Anxiety

If you're suffering from addiction or dependency, chances are you hold a belief that it's not okay for you to express your anger. As you now know, cutting yourself off from anger leads to depression. Depression is nothing more than anger turned inward. But where does anxiety come into play?



Anxiety arises after you decide that you don't want to feel what hurts inside. Most likely, you have a really good reason for not wanting to feel your emotional hurt. Perhaps it seems too vast and overwhelming, and you're worried that if you start to feel it then you'll never be able to stop.

Or perhaps you experienced deep hurt at a time when you didn't have the physical, mental, and emotional resources to cope with it. (Young children in particular do not have the capacity to process and conceptualize emotional trauma on their own.) Whatever the circumstances, you buried that hurt feeling in order to cope with the challenges of your life.

Hiding your hurt away is understandable, even wise in certain cases! However, if you don't address your emotional pain, it will lead to some negative consequences. When you refuse to feel both your hurt and your anger, you'll find that you feel unsettled within yourself because your emotions are bouncing up and down. And this emotional bouncing up and down is what we call anxiety.

Addiction and Dependency to Cope with Stress and Panic

Then when life adds new sources of stress -- a breakup, a move, a new job -- the anxiety compounds and you move into panic mode. (Panic is simply an acceleration of anxiety's emotional bouncing.) So what happens next? Well, chances are you'll say to yourself, this is awful! I really don't want to feel this way. It's like I'm coming out of my skin. I need something to take the edge off. That's when you use. The result is predictable. To avoid this emotional cycle and hurtfulness, you numb out by using alcohol and drugs ... or perhaps by making yourself really busy so that you don't have time to feel what you're feeling. Or maybe

you'll engage in some kind of dysfunctional relationship so that you can focus your energy on someone else's issues instead.

The good news is that there is a way out of this cycle. We help Participants to address their depression and anxiety using the Anger, Hurt, Loving model.

Anger Hurt Loving Model

The way out of depression and anxiety is to learn constructive ways to express your anger, to give yourself permission to feel the hurtful episodes and other emotional hurts of your past. When you do that, you are able to apply love to the parts inside that hurt. And when you apply love to hurt, you heal.

With the [Anger Hurt Loving model](#), you give your anger and hurt a voice. You listen as your emotions tell you what they want you to know. You recognize their original positive purpose and acknowledge their strengths. You stop trying to ignore them, and instead you welcome them and learn from them. Then you offer love to the parts of yourself that have been hurting for so long. You care for them and help them re-integrate themselves into your psyche in healthier, more constructive ways.

This process may sound simple and maybe a bit corny, but it works. Most people with chemical dependencies have deep, deep hurts that they've never fully dealt with ... often because they haven't been in a secure place to apply real love and healing to their underlying core issues.



Chapter 8

Addiction and Trauma

What comes to mind when you hear the word trauma? Chances are, your mind supplies violent, frightening images: a car wreck, perhaps, or bombs dropping in wartime. But did you know that trauma isn't defined by a catastrophic event, but by an individual's reaction to that event?

While the medical definition of traumatic injury does involve bodily harm, the American Psychological Association (APA) defines trauma as "an emotional response to a terrible event like an accident, rape or natural disaster." Thus it's the emotional response that defines trauma, rather than the physical occurrence.

Sudden loss of a family member can be traumatic, but so can something like verbal abuse. It's all about the meaning you take from the incident. If you interpret ongoing verbal abuse to mean that you're worthless and unlovable, the result is a significant psychological trauma.

Very often trauma is the catalyst for substance abuse and addiction. Addiction is a compulsive drive to use one's drug of choice, be it alcohol, drugs, sex, or food. One hallmark of addiction is a sense of dependency and loss of personal control.



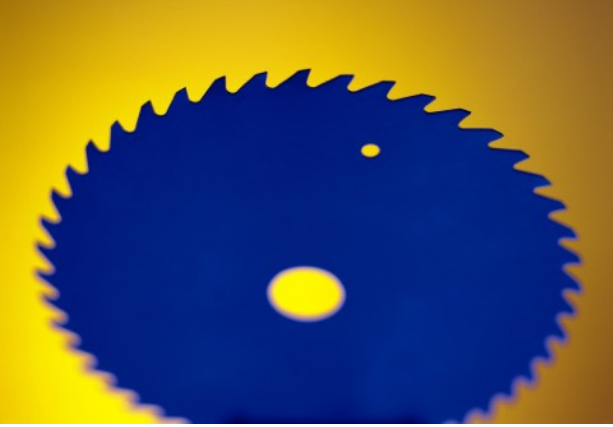
How Trauma And Addiction Are Linked

Remember that trauma occurs based on how we process events, so it doesn't always look the way we think it should. Trauma can come from a major disaster, but it can also come from a series of put-downs, threats, or rejections.

Regardless of people's life circumstances, everyone has their own unique traumatic experiences. Whether people realize it or not, addiction is almost always rooted in unresolved mental and emotional issues ... and that includes past traumas.

What If There's No Clear Traumatic Event?

Some people struggling with drug and alcohol abuse don't understand the motivations behind their addictive behaviors. They come to rehab and say, "I don't know why I do what I do. I mean, I've had a pretty good life, and a relatively happy childhood. There was no physical abuse or anything, so why did I end up addicted to drugs?"

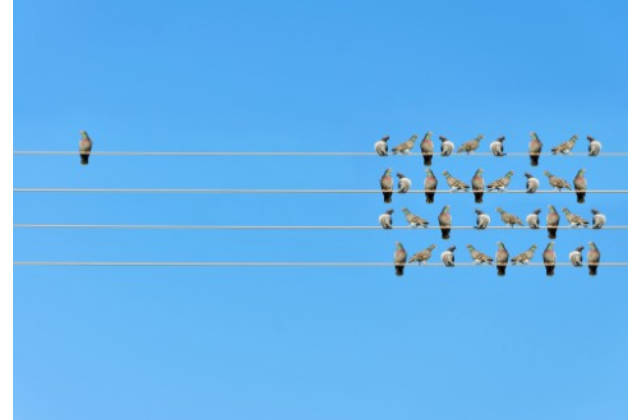


If a person doesn't have a "good reason" for their addiction, they may carry around an extra sense of shame. As bestselling author and recovering alcoholic Glennon Doyle Melton writes on Momastery, "I had a relatively magical childhood, which added an extra layer of guilt to my pain and confusion. Glennon – why are you all jacked up when you have no excuse to be all jacked up?"

When people are "all jacked up" for no apparent reason, it's because they have experienced trauma and are attempting to cope with it. One doesn't have to have had a so-called "bad" childhood to hold trauma within.

Even People With "Great Lives" Have Trauma

A traumatic event is one that is shocking to you personally. It's something that shakes your sense of safety and emotional stability in the world. According to [HelpGuide.org](https://www.helpguide.org/) " ... Any situation that leaves you feeling overwhelmed and alone can be traumatic The more frightened and helpless you feel, the more likely you are to be traumatized."



So while physical abuse can certainly be traumatic, so can being locked in a closet by a sibling or a neglectful babysitter. Experiences that involve elements of powerlessness and loss of personal agency are prime candidates for trauma. Since every person is different, the ways in which events register within each individual psyche varies. For example, one person who is ostracized by his peers may take it in stride, shake it off, and find a new friend group. Another person rejected by his core group of friends may register that event as traumatic and feel deeply scarred by it. The first person may not remember that rejection a few years later, while the second is still working to overcome it.

Healing From Trauma And Addiction

Healing trauma and addiction comes when a person learns to change how they hold traumatic events in their consciousness. If they hold these events as entirely bad and wrong, as something that should not have happened, then they stay stuck.



But if they are able to look deeply into the reality of their lives and see how positive purposes sprang from even the most terrible circumstances, they are empowered to move forward and let go of addictive behaviors.

Burying and pushing aside emotional trauma delays healing, but acknowledging the pain and offering yourself love speeds recovery. The Clearing co-founder Joe Koelzer adds: “When I’m able to say of my traumatic experience, ‘this is the positive purpose behind me having this experience, this is what I’ve learned, this is how I grew from it,’ then I change how I’m holding that former traumatic event in my consciousness. Now it’s just an event, instead of a traumatic event.”

Past traumas lose their power over us once we decide to hold them differently. We have the ability to transform our traumas by changing the stories we tell ourselves about them. But ... what about the idea that time heals all wounds? Can't you just wait it out? Actually, no. That's a myth - especially for those suffering from addiction.

Make no mistake, healing from trauma requires facing up to the facts of your own life ... and that can be a daunting process. Everyone has within them the desire to minimize and hide from painful truths. As Judith Lewis Herman wrote in her landmark book *Trauma and Recovery*, “The conflict between the will to deny horrible events and the will to proclaim them aloud is the central dialectic of psychological trauma.” All of us have both the urge to both bury and share our emotional hurts. But it’s only when you choose to open up and speak the truth about your own life that you are empowered to heal and move forward.



Chapter 9

Addiction and Bipolar

Did you know that a traumatic event can be a catalyst for bipolar? According to AddictionCenter.com, a traumatic environment is a risk factor for developing bipolar.

While genetics and chemical imbalances do play a significant role in bipolar, your emotional landscape also has a great deal of influence.

In fact, many mood disorders function as manifestations of underlying mental and emotional issues. Even though bipolar disorder is a neurological condition, you can alleviate symptoms significantly by working through a counseling recovery process.

What is Bipolar Disorder?

To begin, let's clarify the signs and symptoms of bipolar disorder. In layman's terms, bipolar means that you have extremes in mood.

You have depressed mood and manic mood; you're very up and then you're very down, and there's little ground in between. You're constantly bouncing back and forth between two extreme states.

That said, don't be too quick to self-diagnose, since extreme moods are part of the human experience for us all. As co-founder and CEO of The Clearing Joe Koelzer is wont to say, "We're all a little bipolar." At times we all have massive mood swings. But when the ups and downs begin to consistently interfere with your ability to function in everyday life, then you're dealing with a mental health disorder.



Why the Bipolar Diagnosis Can Be Problematic

Brain scans of individuals with "true" bipolar show that the hypothalamus - that is, the portion of our brain that controls our cycles of waking and sleeping, moving and resting - is affected. In bipolar, the hypothalamus is either wide open (causing too much adrenaline to flow) or closed shut (causing extreme fatigue).

This can be a frustrating and debilitating way to live. As such, proper medication that targets the hypothalamus can be life-changing for individuals with bipolar. However, there's a need to address the underlying mental and emotional stressors too ... especially since many people who receive the label "bipolar" don't have significant problems with their brain chemistry.

Yet we also know that untreated mental and emotional issues manifest as physical ailments. The mind/body connection is powerful, and when we heal our mental and emotional issues, we often experience healing in our bodies as well.

All of that said, here are a few common reasons why people are misdiagnosed with bipolar:

1. It's a convenient, well-known label that people tend to take at face value.

Often people in distress or people with depression hear, "You must be bipolar", and they don't question it ... even if the symptomology doesn't match. (I've seen people who say, "I'm bipolar," and I say, "Okay, tell me about your manic episodes." They say, "Oh, I don't have any." That's not bipolar!)

2. Rigid, black-and-white thinking can be confused with bipolar.

If an individual is deeply entrenched in their right-wrong, all-or-nothing thinking, that can be confused with bipolar, because it has an intense, up-and-down emotional charge behind it.

3. The effects of trauma can be conflated with bipolar.

When people go through trauma and are struggling emotionally, they may appear "bipolar" from an outside perspective. When they are down they are really down. So while they may not be manic, their "normal" appears so different from their depressed state that people assume they're bipolar.

4. The influence of drugs and alcohol plays a major role in the misdiagnosis of bipolar.

The side effects of drugs can mimic the symptoms of bipolar and effectively mask an individual's baseline state.



The Connection Between Bipolar and Addiction



What's the connection between addiction and bipolar specifically? Simply put, it's a real struggle to live with bipolar, especially the depression aspect. When you're in the "down" side of your bipolar, you think, "What can I do? This is really painful. I have feelings of despair; I believe that I'm broken and flawed, that there's something wrong with me."

When you don't have tools with which to heal that pain, you use in order to help yourself feel better. But when the high wears off, you're still struggling ... so you self-medicate some more. Soon, an addiction develops.

Counseling Assistance for Bipolar Disorder

Fortunately, that's not the end of the story. When you learn the tools and processes that work to address those underlying core emotional issues, you can halt the addictive cycle. Specific strategies that work well with bipolar include:

1. On the mental level, Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) allows people to work with the judgments, the limiting beliefs and the projections in a person's life.
2. On the emotional level, Gestalt and Developmental Psychology are particularly helpful for people that went through a trauma and are reliving that over and over.
3. On the spiritual level, learning about compassionate self-forgiveness empowers people to reconnect with their Authentic Selves.



How do these processes play out? Let's take a Gestalt process as an example. In this dialogue, we're giving your emotions a voice so that we can trace them back and heal the original, past hurt that's contributing to your present-day struggles.

As The Clearing co-founder and CEO Joe Koelzer notes, "The emotional level has a language all its own, which is really interesting To deal with something on the emotional level, we give the emotion a voice."

The process begins by having a therapist ask you, "Hey, what are you feeling right now?"

You reply, "I'm feeling kind of depressed."

The therapist follows up: "Where are you feeling the depression in your body?"

You say, "Right in my solar plexus."

Then the therapist says, "Okay. If that depression could speak, what would it say?"

You might say, "I'm sad, I'm all alone, I'm invisible."

The therapist follows up by saying, "When is the first time you can remember feeling that way?"

That's when you go back in time. You might recall the deep sadness you felt when your parents divorced. You might say, "I felt so scared and alone, and I didn't know what was going to happen." That right there is the feeling you need to address. Once you've honed in on that original feeling of sadness and loss, your therapist can guide you in a Gestalt process. You'll take that younger part of yourself and actually let that hurting part of you speak. As Joe says, "The emotional work is done by tracking that feeling back in time. If we take this upset and ride it back in time ... now we're at the core of our emotional upset, and there are tools that we can use to bring healing there."



Once you've listened to what that younger you has to say, then you can ask yourself, "How can I as the adult help that younger part of me to feel safe and loved?"

Healing the Child Within

We all have this impression that at some magical age we made a dramatic transition and became adults. We like to think that we've left childhood behind completely, that whatever happened to us at a younger age doesn't matter any more. However,

the reality is that we are in a process of continuous evolution. What happened to us when we were young is as important as what happened to us today. We're always just a continuation of ourselves. There is no magical date when the hurts of our childhood don't matter any more. When you have something traumatic happen to you, there's a need to process that experience, to take care of the emotional wounds you incurred. The good news is that it's never too late to start ... and when you do address those underlying issues, you begin to heal.



Chapter 10

Addiction and Eating Disorders

Though they may appear different on the surface, eating disorders are essentially very similar to addictions. In both eating disorders and addictions, you have underlying core issues surrounding depression, anxiety, self-loathing, and trauma. The difference is the way you act out in an attempt to cope with that pain.

In substance addiction, you abuse substances and get yourself into an addictive pattern. You're using the substances to numb out. For some people, eating is another way of numbing out. It's not that eating is an addiction, necessarily; it's simply another way to work with those feelings.

For others, getting really, really busy and overworking is a preferred way to work with these feelings. These people work all the time, keeping themselves very busy or exercising a lot or getting involved in dysfunctional relationships. All of these behaviors represent attempts to deal with the same kinds of feelings.

Think of it this way: you have a core cluster of feelings, and there are multiple ways to avoid them. None of those avoidance tactics are good for us. While society considers some of these behaviors worse than other ones, none of them are really healthy for us. Some are more socially acceptable than others, but all of them are just attempts to avoid painful feelings.



Part III:

Dual Diagnosis Treatment



Chapter 11

Addressing Underlying Core Issues

The Function of Dual Diagnosis Treatment



Imagine you have a splinter deep in your leg. Your body is perfectly capable of healing over the splinter while it remains in place. In fact, your skin's healing can be so complete that the splinter is no longer visible and you forget all about it.

But let the slightest pressure hit that spot and your pain returns anew ... even worse than before! Why? Because the splinter is still there. In fact, it has festered, making it more painful than when it first went in. This is the way an underlying core issue affects our lives.

We try hard to mask the symptoms, hoping they will heal over and cause us no more pain, but that's not how it works. Our underlying issues are waiting just beneath the surface ... and when they get triggered, the pain we feel is intense.

Identifying underlying core issues is as simple as taking a current emotional reaction and riding it back in time. Call to mind the first time you remember feeling that way. What was going on? Who was there? Where do you feel it in your body? Recognizing these underlying core issues is the first step toward issue resolution. After you've honed in on the problem, you can gently remove the "splinter" so that your healing can be complete.

Sadly, many residential addiction treatment programs don't facilitate this process. Instead, their overwhelming focus is on behavioral changes and coping mechanisms, which don't address the underlying core issues causing the internal disturbances. Effective Dual Diagnosis treatment involves teaching those suffering from anxiety, depression, traumatic life events, alcohol abuse, substance abuse, gambling addiction, and eating disorders to learn self-counseling skills and heal their areas of hurt and upset.

Chapter 12

Dual Diagnosis and Detox

If you have a dual diagnosis and you're ready for detox, what are some key points to consider? First, remember that when you're dealing with dual diagnosis -- and most addictions do involve dual diagnosis! -- the problem isn't really about the substances. The substances are the byproduct of the deeper issue.

Think of your substances as medication for the feelings you want to avoid. After all, when you're feeling depressed, anxious, sad, alone, and hopeless, you're much more likely to use. By the same token, when you're having flashbacks to your trauma, you'll often reach for substances to numb out from that.

From a dual diagnosis perspective, the way to break the cycle is to heal the underlying core issues. The most important thing to do is to heal the issues that are causing the depression, the anxiety, and the self-loathing. When you do that, then you don't need the substances to medicate from those intense negative feelings.



In order to accomplish that, though, you have to work in reverse. The first step is to get off of the substances. In the beginning, you do detox and fully clear your system of drugs and alcohol. Then immediately afterward, your next step is to enter a real dual diagnosis treatment program. There, you can learn to use psychological tools to help you heal the underlying issues that had you using to begin with. That's the complete package you're looking for in a treatment center.

Chapter 13

Is Residential Treatment Right for You?

We often have people ask us how to choose the right residential treatment center for themselves or a loved one. It is one of life's most important and difficult decisions. It's a choice that literally can alter your life, so it's important to make as informed a decision as

possible. But how do you go about deciding whether residential treatment is right for you and your family? Our suggestion is to begin by considering the following questions:

1. Where are you in your addiction recovery process?

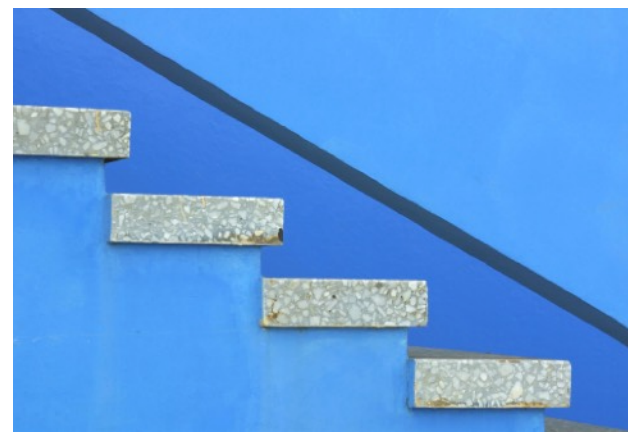
Are you just starting to consider residential treatment? Do you require clinical detox? Do you need assistance with this process? The answers to these questions help determine where to start.

As we mentioned earlier, people with chemical or substance dependencies often require a detox period in a dedicated program to transition the body physically from substances. This detox period typically lasts five to seven days, at which point the patient moves to the counseling stage of recovery. The counseling stage is the critical stage.

Our Program at The Clearing is designed to address the core issues at the root of the issue of substance abuse. For example, what is the underlying issue which fuels your desire to drink or rely on substances? That's why we welcome Participants post-detox: we want to focus in on the counseling stage and get to the root of the problem.

2. What is your timeframe?

It's important to be realistic on recovery and treatment duration. Residential treatment usually requires a minimum of one month, perhaps up to three months or more. Participants reside in a facility away from their



normal environment, offering them an uninterrupted opportunity to work their issues. Are you ready to take this step away from your usual routines and dive into an intensive healing process? Are you truly prepared to begin creating a new life for yourself?

3. Why consider residential treatment?

The benefits of residential treatment are vast. These rank at the top:

- **Being away from your usual environment:** Often people can feel trapped and hopeless in their daily life. It is easy to repeat limiting behaviors in the environment where you live and work.
- **Being away from the substance:** With the substance out of the way, what's left is your relationship with you. And when you actually cultivate a positive relationship with yourself, that's when the real healing can happen.
- **Professional help:** Trained professionals help you to learn new behaviors, new ways of thinking, and techniques to overcome emotional issues.
- **Your daily needs are cared for:** Without the need to cook, clean, and earn a paycheck, your time is free to focus on your relationship with yourself.
- **Social support:** In residential treatment centers, you realize on a visceral level that you are not alone. It can be a very healing experience to become aware that other people share your same issues and feelings.



That said, residential treatment centers vary widely in quality. An institutional facility can mean going through treatment with as many as a hundred people, limiting individualized care but providing cost savings. An intimate facility with fewer participants provides more individualized care, but is likely to be more expensive. We suggest you research and compare facilities with the following factors as your guide.

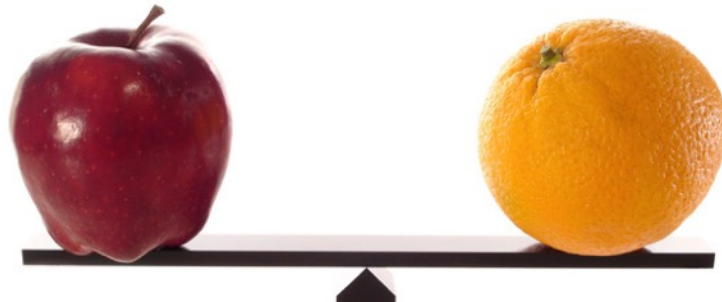
Chapter 14

How to Choose a Dual Diagnosis Residential Treatment Center

If you've come to the realization that Residential Rehab is the best way to heal from an addiction, you've come along way. Residential Treatment helps remove a person who is struggling from an environment that is usually distracting and triggering, and sometimes toxic. Now, it's time to ask yourself some important questions to help you select the right program for you.

The following are some key factors to consider when choosing a residential addiction treatment program. Each of these factors impact cost in different ways, so consider what's most important to you, and what you can afford:

- What is the Treatment Modality?
- Dual Diagnosis Treatment
- Group and Individual Counseling
- Rehab Amenities
- Treatment Modality



Treatment modality is basically the approach and tools that are used to treat a given condition. There are many different modalities in addiction treatment. At a broad categorization level, you can think about programs that employ the 12-Step approach vs. those that employ a non 12-Step method (also known as a 12-Step alternative).

It's important to clarify exactly what distinguishes excellent rehab programs. Most residential rehab providers in the United States are based around the 12 Steps modality / model. 12 Step programs do work for some people, but their overall success rates are low. In a 2014 Radio Boston interview, Harvard researcher Dr. Lance Dodes cited the AA success rate as 5-10%. There are many other addiction treatment modalities (over 40 per this study) spanning the gamut, including various psychology based approaches, medication, aversion therapy, faith-centered, and many more. Do your homework and have an understanding of what fits your beliefs and situation.



What About 12 Step Programs?

12 Step programs generally are not as effective when a dual diagnosis condition exists, since most of them don't offer much individualized professional counseling.

If you or your loved one has a dual diagnosis condition, researching and investing in a specialized dual diagnosis treatment center is crucial. Ask questions and don't assume that a treatment program offers sufficient support just because it lists dual diagnosis on its website.

By now, you know that effective dual diagnosis treatment must address the underlying core issues of addiction, help break the addictive cycle, and offer concrete, measurable professional supports.

Group and Individual Mental Health Counseling

The amount and type of counseling provided is a key driver of rehab cost. When it comes to healing from addiction, what really matters is individualized therapy. You'll have a much better chance of true recovery in a program that prioritizes one-on-one counseling.

When asking about counseling, it's important to know that no one counseling strategy works for every issue. There are great counseling strategies for mental-level issues; these are issues that are caused by our judgments and limiting beliefs.

There are different counseling strategies that work at the emotional level; this is what we feel. A great mental-level strategy will not heal an issue at the emotional level. We can't think our way out of an emotional level issue.



When you are looking at a program, ask them not only how much counseling you'll receive but also what strategies they'll use for mental-level issues versus emotional-level issues.

That said, group therapy can be effective as well. Group sessions give you the opportunity to relate with others on a similar healing journey. In the best groups, participants practice healthy communication skills, share stories, set boundaries, and support one another in

recovery. In summary, group therapy is a helpful tool, but not if it's used at the exclusion of individual therapy. One-on-one therapy time is vital if there are unresolved mental health issues involved in the addiction. (And as you now know, there are almost always underlying issues!)

Inpatient Residential Rehab Amenities



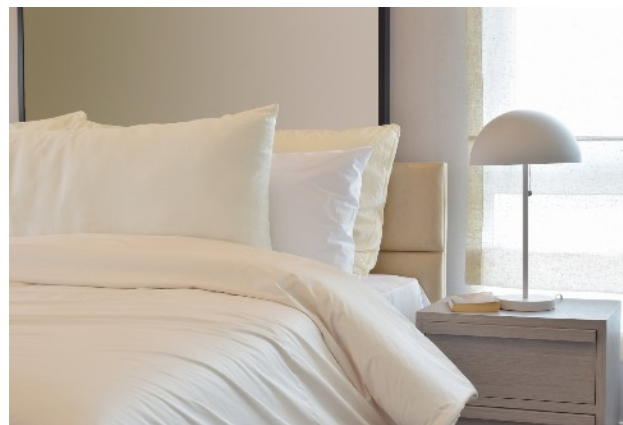
There is a large gamut of rehab amenities available. These include things like physical location, views, buildings, pools, spas, gymnasium, privacy, food, and much more.

When it comes to rehab programs, ask yourself where the money is going ... amenities or healing? True, the spa might provide relaxation, but it's not going to help you address the underlying core issues that are fueling an addiction and holding you back from recovery.

However, also be wary of low-cost programs. While you may recognize that luxury is not the top priority in recovery, you also don't want to be uncomfortable. Residential inpatient rehab generally lasts a minimum of 28 days, which is a long time to deal with a sore back, noisy roommate, or poor food options.

In our view, the most "important amenities" for residential rehab are:

- Private Rooms - you need time and space for privacy, restful sleep, and emotional processing
- Comfortable Beds - it's very hard to bring your best self forward if you haven't had sufficient sleep
- Healthy Food - diet has a dramatic effect on your energy levels, attention span, and overall health
- Peaceful, Distraction-free Environment - that's what's most conducive to personal reflection and inner work



Finally, consider visiting the facility for a tour before you enroll. If this is possible, nothing could be more informative than a personal look at the facility and meeting the staff. Look for comfortable and clean accommodations, well-prepared food, and a willingness to address your individual dietary needs. Request a full tour of the facility and grounds. Most of all, trust your intuition ... and don't be afraid to ask questions.



Chapter 14

Rehab Costs and Pricing: What You Need to Know

As you complete your research, you may be wondering, Why do some rehab programs cost so much more than others? Simply put, it's because the amenities, quality and content of rehab programs varies widely. Treatment facilities themselves fall into distinct cost categories from bare-bones basic to over-the-top lavish.

At some rehab programs, participants receive a state-mandated minimum level of individualized counseling hours. Depending on where the facility is located, that minimum may be shockingly low. At other programs, participants have over four hours of individualized therapy per day!



Assessing rehab cost ranges for providers that meet your needs

What can you expect in terms of cost for inpatient treatment?

For \$0 - \$10,000 per month, you can access government-funded public service programs, which almost always use a 12 Step model. The amenities will be basic at best, and you'll likely be moving through treatment with people who are court-referred and/or homeless.

For \$10,000 - \$20,000 per month, you can start looking at private-pay and private insurance-based programs; the vast majority will be 12 Step based. The out-of-pocket portion will vary depending upon your insurance coverage. These rehabs offer an institutional experience with little personalized programming, and they often support individuals who have chosen rehab instead of jail time.

For \$20,000 - \$45,000 per month, you have more options. You may be able to find a program that provide a significant amount of individualized attention and value, along with better amenities. You'll also see a few 12 Step Alternative programs such as The Clearing.

For \$45,000 - \$65,000+ per month, you'll have access to a wide variety of 12 Step programs and 12 Step Alternatives too. You'll likely see a great deal of luxurious amenities, but as always, you'll want to investigate the therapeutic program carefully.

Check out our post, [Rehab Prices: How Much Does Inpatient Residential Treatment Cost?](#) for a detailed overview of what you can expect from rehabs of various price points. Likewise, consider the key factors we've outlined and choose the program that's best for you. If you find that the program you need is not covered by insurance or out of your price range, check out these creative financing ideas. Remember, even a free program is no bargain if you leave the same way you came.



Conclusion

A Word of Encouragement

Even though things may feel difficult and desperate now, the journey is beginning and a fulfilling life lies ahead. And the good news is that the ball is in your court. You get to decide when your new story starts.

We've provided a lot of information in this eBook, but in our view, choosing an inpatient residential program comes down to one key question: Will it address the underlying core issues that are driving the behavior and provide you with the tools for lasting change?

Yes, a good inpatient addiction program can be a significant investment of time and money, but your healing is priceless. We don't suggest that residential treatment is for everyone, but for some, an immersive program that deals with underlying issues and teaches empowering self counseling skills is the only way to alter the course of their life.



*If you would like to learn more about treatment for yourself or a loved one, or just need some guidance, **give us a call at 425-275-8600.** We're here to help.*

Appendix

Additional Resources

Readings

[5 Tips for Choosing an Addiction Rehab that's Right For You](#)

[What's Wrong with Addiction Rehab: 5 Pitfalls to Avoid](#)

[Healing Underlying Core Issues Webcast](#)

[Treatment Modalities, Part 1: What Are My Options?](#)

[Treatment Modalities, Part 2: Which Ones Really Work?](#)

[5 Reasons *Not* to Come to The Clearing](#)

[How We Created the Most Transformative Addiction Recovery Program in the US](#)

Dual Diagnosis Online Resources

[DualDiagnosis.org](#): Run by Tennessee's *Foundations Recovery Network*, DualDiagnosis.org is a major site centered around helping people find integrated treatment for substance abuse and mental illness. The site features tons of informative articles on addiction and mental health, as well as listings of treatment centers.

[NAMI.org](#): The *National Alliance on Mental Illness* is a great place to start when seeking information about mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and bipolar. They have an extensive library of resources as well as service locators, support groups, and more.

The Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance has a focus on co-occurring disorders and provides hope, help, support, and education to those with mood disorders.



[Psychology Today](#): The Treatment Center Search at Psychology Today allows you to conduct specialized searches for recovery programs; use the dual diagnosis filter to explore residential treatment programs and therapists near you.

[Rehab.com](#): Likewise, the Inpatient Dual Diagnosis Search function at Rehab.com allows you to find rehabs by location, and also read participant reviews.

The Clearing's very own [Residential and Addiction Treatment Resource Center](#) allows you free access to a variety of articles on topics such as rehab cost and pricing, rehab reviews, spirituality and wellness, and more.

Key Questions to Ask When Selecting a Treatment Center

As you seek out a dual diagnosis treatment center, make an informed choice by keeping these four questions in mind.

1. Does the dual diagnosis treatment center treat addiction and mental health issues separately or holistically?

Many recovery programs don't produce lasting change because they fail to address the mental and emotional conditions that contribute to addiction. They focus on treating substance abuse without digging deep enough into the root causes of the why someone is using. And what happens when you pull up weeds but leave the roots? That's right: They grow back.

"People with dual diagnosis are not abusing substances just because it's fun," said Joe Koelzer, co-founder and CEO of The Clearing. "They're abusing substances to medicate themselves away from the intense negative feelings that they've got. They're using the substances to get away from the depression and anxiety and self-loathing and hopelessness." In other words, the mental health diagnosis and the substance addiction aren't separate, but intertwined. When both issues are addressed concurrently, real recovery is possible.

Make sure the dual diagnosis treatment center doesn't judge the roots of a person's addiction. Judgment only



adds to the shame and self-condemnation a person already feels and makes their recovery more difficult. Instead, seek out those places that see those roots as a set of circumstances that make healing and personal development possible.

2. Does the dual diagnosis treatment center address the underlying core issues of addiction effectively?

Ever wonder why an addicted person can't "just stop" drinking or drugging? If so, it may help you to remember that addictive behaviors are often related to untreated mental health issues such as mood disorders.

According to the Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA) article A Comprehensive Nationwide Study of the Incidence Rate and Lifetime Risk for Treated Mental Disorders, approximately 50% of individuals will face a mental health issue in their lifetimes.

As such, it's likely that people exhibiting addictive behaviors have another underlying issue. For example, people with depression tend to turn their anger inward because they've been taught that it's not safe to express it. As a result, they carry an ever-growing emotional burden.

Eventually the weight of those unexpressed emotions feels unbearable, and so they turn to substances or behaviors that allow them to temporarily numb out and forget the emotional pain that they are experiencing. The depression fuels the addiction.

3. Does the dual diagnosis treatment center recognize, teach, and help to break the addictive cycle?

The addictive cycle works this way: A person has some intense negative feelings inside. They don't know what to do about those feelings; the experience is so painful as to seem unmanageable. So the person seeks out a way to escape from the pain by self-medicating with their favorite substance.

However, that self-medication brings physical, emotional, and spiritual side effects. The person feels bad about the ways in which they've messed up their life with their drug of choice, thus adding that to their pile of original negative feelings. A vicious cycle sets in: the negative feelings



trigger the limiting behavior, and the limiting behavior catalyzes more negative feelings. Fortunately, there is a way out. When an individual works to heal those negative feelings, they're empowered to break free from the addictive cycle.

4. Does the dual diagnosis treatment center have concrete, measurable and professional supports in place?

Unfortunately, not all treatment programs that claim or tout dual diagnosis really have a true dual diagnosis treatment approach.

For example, The Clearing offers over 120 hours of evidence-based individual and small group therapy led by licensed mental health professionals. This allows our Participants to tackle the central issues driving their addictions. This is an example of measurable supports.

Finally, remember that choosing the right dual diagnosis treatment center is an important step on the road to recovery. If your loved one goes through a program that doesn't provide sufficient assistance, they risk discouragement and additional negative emotions, which can lead to a slip back into drugs and alcohol.



A lack of progress also decreases motivation; frequent reversals can trigger thoughts such as, “What’s the use?” or “Why bother trying?” In this way, a negative rehab experience makes mustering the motivation to get clean more difficult. But with the right help, transformation is possible. So choose a treatment center that delivers professional therapy and measurable supports for dual diagnosis.

About The Clearing

Have you ever experienced something so great and profound that you just had to share it with others?

Well, if you have, then you'll understand what motivated us to tell our story, do our work, and to start The Clearing, all in an effort to help others still struggling. This ebook and our work at The Clearing is a labor of love.

Speaking From Experience

Plain and simple, everything you read here is real. We have first-hand experience with detox, Malibu treatment centers, Twelve Steps, and many, many individual cases of trouble with alcohol, drugs, depression, anxiety, and other disorders. We have witnessed a spiritual approach to healing and its transformational effects in both our own lives and the lives of countless others. So if you read it here, you can rest assured that these approaches have been tried and shown to work with authentic commitment.

We teach counseling skills, strategies and concepts based on the Principles of Spiritual Psychology. Using these simple but effective tools, our Participants are able to identify and heal the deep mental and emotional issues that have been driving them to their limiting behavior (drugs, alcohol, self harm, etc).



Our Story

In December 2011, the two Founders began working together to create the program that has now become The Clearing.

We were all too familiar, from personal experience, with the rehab industry and its weaknesses. We observed that the success rates were very low. More

troubling, we knew of many stories of people going to rehab and not experiencing a substantive program, in some cases coming out of treatment worse than they went in. Our research showed that many programs solely provide behavior modification and coping skills



as their solution, which doesn't address the core mental and emotional issues present for people struggling with their personal situation.

We all have backgrounds in Spiritual Psychology, and together we said with absolute clarity, "we can do better." Each of us have the experience of healing profound issues which limited our lives through the Principles of Spiritual Psychology and we have been tremendously blessed to have worked with others and watched them do the same. Without a doubt, we knew it was the time in our lives to create and manifest this Program.

In designing our Program, we started with a blank piece of paper. We didn't look at what insurance would pay for and we didn't look at what other programs were doing. We focused on creating a program that would provide the best opportunity for our Participants to heal the underlying core issues that were limiting their lives. We had all been through an excellent program at the University of Santa Monica and we drew heavily on our experience there. And we found this tranquil and beautiful location on San Juan Island, Washington, that is dramatically more conducive to healing than the typical luxury rehab.

The result is a Program unlike any other in the country—loving, safe, and transformative. Our graduates leave with a set of life altering tools they will use both in their present circumstance, and also in their unfolding life going forward.

Give us a call at 425-275-8600.
We're here to help.

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