

The “Dis-ease” of Addiction & Principles of Recovery



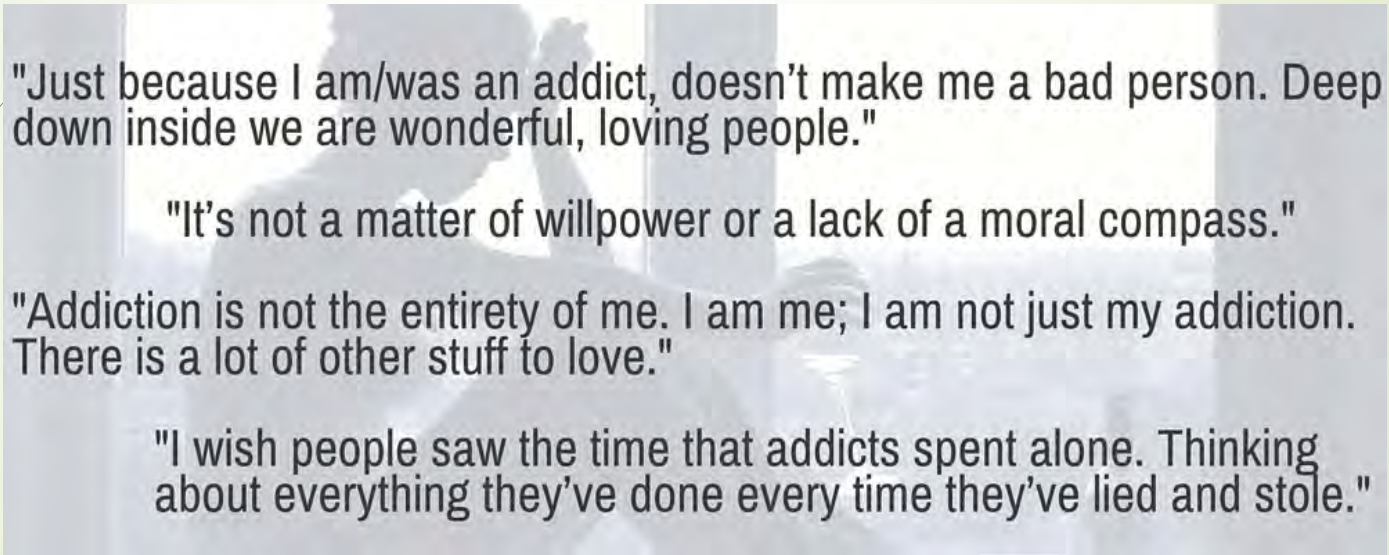
Agenda

- ▶ Background and overview
- ▶ Dis-Ease of Addiction
- ▶ Shapes of Pain
- ▶ Adolescents and Addiction
- ▶ Principles of Meaningful Recovery
- ▶ Trauma and ACE's
- ▶ The Recovery Culture
- ▶ Support, Treatment, Hope
- ▶ Closing and Q&A





Stigma of Addiction



"Just because I am/was an addict, doesn't make me a bad person. Deep down inside we are wonderful, loving people."

"It's not a matter of willpower or a lack of a moral compass."

"Addiction is not the entirety of me. I am me; I am not just my addiction. There is a lot of other stuff to love."

"I wish people saw the time that addicts spent alone. Thinking about everything they've done every time they've lied and stole."



Opening Question:

What do we use to
cover the pain in
our life?





Thoughts /
Observations

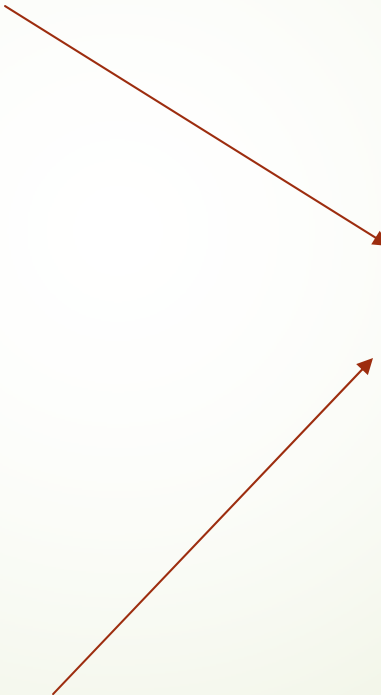
- 1) "If I can keep going fast enough, I can, for a little while at least, outrun the fear and the anxiety of the pain."
- 2) Silence is the enemy.
- 3) I can fill with endless activity.
- 4) We all have our armor....some are chosen, some are handed down through generations.

Shauna Niequist author of 'Bread and Wine and Savor'



What ties in with Addiction?

- Social
- Behavioral
- Emotional
- Relational
- Financial
- Spiritual
- Biological
- Psychological
- Physiological
- Mental




*Some number of things
are not 'at ease' within.*



What is not at Ease?

- Often times, addiction is the SOLUTION, not the PROBLEM.
- A solution to a DEEPER underlying issue that is unresolved.
- Perhaps the individual does not have the tools or was never taught the right way to handle.
- Therefore, unresolved PAIN is a central area of focus



What is Pain?

It serves a purpose to tell us something is wrong.

“Pain is the Megaphone to rouse a deaf world.” (C.S.Lewis)

Inner pain may lead one to seek to escape, dissociate, or isolate from others.

Addiction stems from the pain and the drug of choice becomes the SOLUTION for living in a hijacked brain...



Shapes of Pain

Scarcity – The concept of never having enough; always wanting more. No peace / no rest

Abuse – Nobody is safe (physical, emotional, verbal, violence, trauma.

Loss / Grief – The feeling that you have always been alone and always will be alone.

People seek to soothe and ease the pain first.

How does Pain tie in?

Deep Pain



No
Mechanism to
Deal with it



Escape (Drugs, Alcohol, Gambling, etc.)

Observations

- ▶ Life will do what life does and when it does, it will HURT and bring PAIN.
- ▶ We all go through 'Pain Points'
- ▶ Don't simply ask 'why the addiction' yet also seek to understand 'why the pain?'



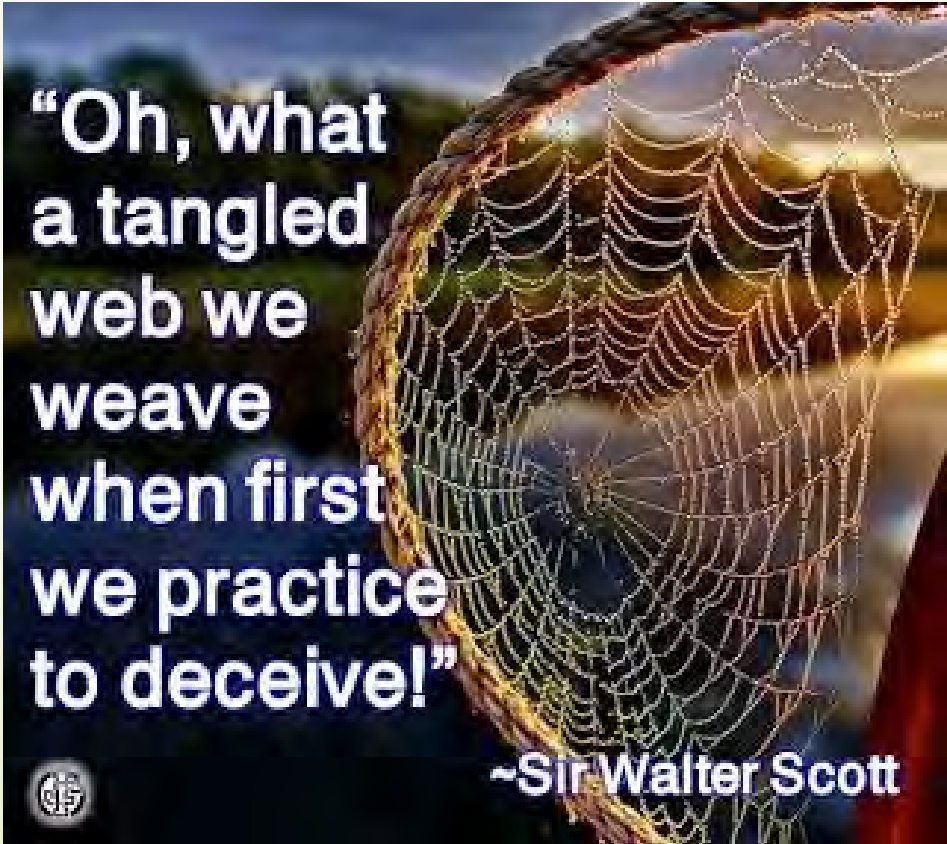
Observations

- ▶ We are hardwired for pleasure buzz from risky events.
- ▶ What is 'risky' to one may not be 'risky' to another.
- ▶ The uncertain nature of a 'payoff' and the 'near miss' are both hooks.





How do we begin to **Untangle** the
Web of Pain?



**“Oh, what
a tangled
web we
weave
when first
we practice
to deceive!”**

~Sir Walter Scott



Pain in Today's Youth

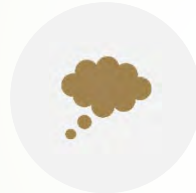
- ▶ "I am NOT enough"
- ▶ Social Media overload
- ▶ Self-Esteem and Identity Issues
- ▶ "Who Am I"
- ▶ Who are my "Friends?"
- ▶ The very things that keep us CONNECTED with others, is making us more DISCONNECTED from our inner self.



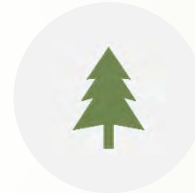
Pain in Today's Society



IT IS NOT EASY TO BE
WHO I WANT TO BE.



DO WE HAVE AN
'INNER VOICE' THAT
HOLDS US HOSTAGE
TO UNWANTED
THOUGHTS?



ARE MY INTERNAL
ATTITUDES AND
BELIEFS CONSISTENT
WITH MY OUTWARD
EXPRESSION IN HOW I
TREAT PEOPLE OR DO
I MASK?

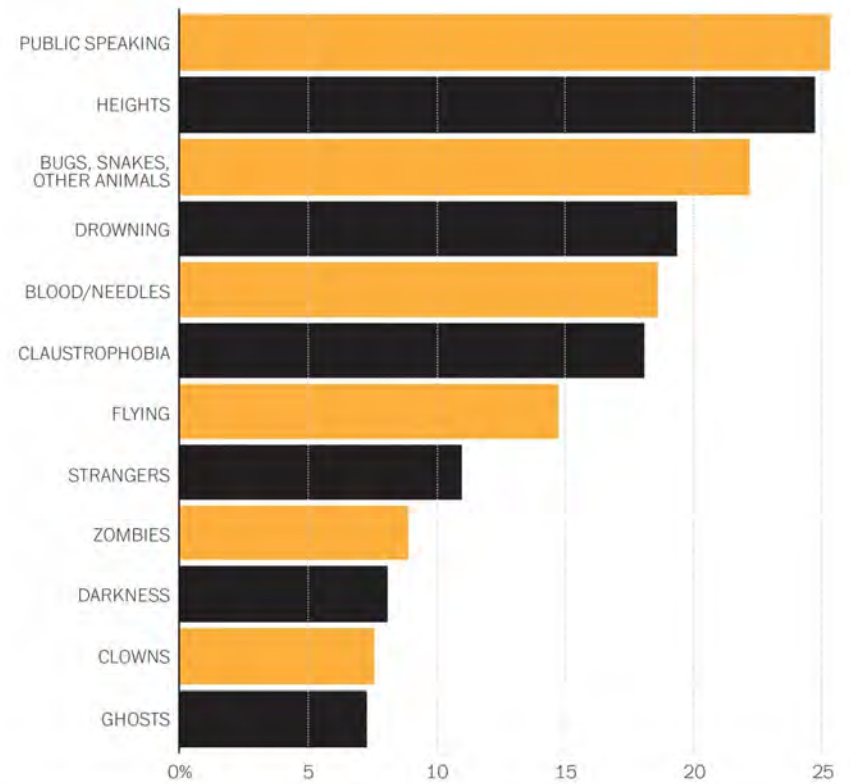


PAIN AND FEAR KEEPS
US SEPARATED FROM
RELATIONSHIPS AND
VULNERABILITY

Fear in Today's Society

What are you so afraid of?

% of Americans who say they fear...



WASHINGTONPOST.COM/WONKBLOG

Source: Chapman University Survey on American Fears



Anger



A Secondary Emotion



Used to protect / insulate from deeper vulnerability



Primary emotions will underlie the anger



Need life and coping skills to deal with the anger

Anger

What do
I feel
beneath
the
anger?





Adverse Childhood Experiences:

- ▶ **Kaiser's A.C.E (Adverse Childhood Experiences) Study**

- Childhood experiences, both positive and negative, have a tremendous impact on future violence victimization and perpetration, and lifelong health and opportunity. As such, early experiences are an important public health issue.



Adverse Childhood Experience

- ◆ Childhood trauma or adverse experiences need to be addressed!
- ◆ Important to connect A.C.E with addiction
- ◆ Safe and protective early relationships are CRITICAL to reduce / prevent children from long-term or later-term issues.



What are Adverse Childhood Experiences?

- ▶ Child abuse and neglect
- ▶ Growing up in a home with
 - ▶ domestic violence
 - ▶ parental substance abuse
 - ▶ parental mental illness
 - ▶ parental discord
 - ▶ criminal behavior

What are the Questions?

Emotional Abuse

Often or very often a parent or other adult in the household swore at you, insulted you, or put you down and sometimes, often or very often acted in a way that made you think that you might be physically hurt.

Physical Abuse

Sometimes, often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at you or ever hit you so hard that you had marks or were injured.

Sexual Abuse

An adult or person at least 5 years older ever touched or fondled you in a sexual way, or had you touch their body in a sexual way, or attempted oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you or actually had oral, anal, or vaginal intercourse with you.





What are the Questions?

Household Dysfunction

Mother Treated Violently

Your mother or stepmother was sometimes, often, or very often pushed, grabbed, slapped, or had something thrown at her and/or sometimes often, or very often kicked, bitten, hit with a fist, or hit with something hard, or ever repeatedly hit over at least a few minutes or ever threatened or hurt by a knife or gun

Household Substance Abuse

Lived with anyone who was a problem drinker or alcoholic or lived with anyone who used street drugs

Household Mental Illness

A household member was depressed or mentally ill or a household member attempted suicide.



What are the Questions?

Parental Separation or Divorce

Parents were ever separated or divorced.

Incarcerated Household Member

A household member went to prison.

Emotional Neglect

Respondents were asked whether their family made them feel special, loved, and if their family was a source of strength, support, and protection.

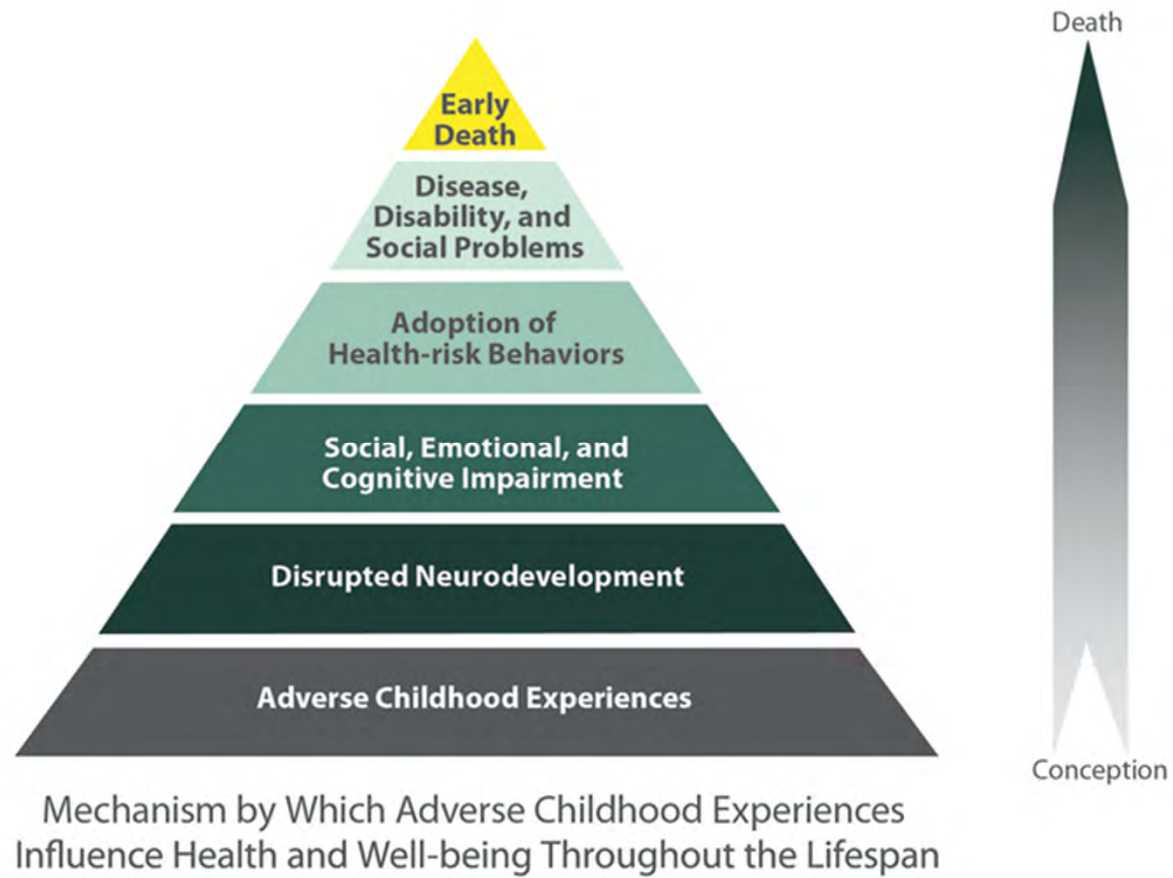
Physical Neglect

Respondents were asked whether there was enough to eat, if their parents drinking interfered with their care, if they ever wore dirty clothes, and if there was someone to take them to the doctor.



Adverse Childhood Experiences Findings:


- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are common.
- Almost two-thirds of study participants in a study done in the late 90's reported at least one ACE.
- More than one in five reported 3+ ACEs.
- The ACE score, a total sum of the different categories of ACEs reported by participants, is used to assess cumulative childhood stress.
- Study findings repeatedly reveal a relationship between number of ACEs and negative health and well-being outcomes across the life course.





As the number of ACEs increases so does the risk for the following:

- Alcohol Misuse
- Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- Depression
- Fetal death
- Health-related quality of life
- Illicit drug use
- Ischemic heart disease
- Liver disease
- Poor work performance
- Financial stress
- Risk for intimate partner violence
- Gambling Problems
- Sexually transmitted diseases
- Smoking
- Suicide ideation
- Unintended pregnancies
- Early initiation of smoking
- Early initiation of sexual activity
- Adolescent pregnancy
- Risk for sexual violence
- Poor academic achievement
- Poor Decision Making



Recovery from Trauma: Healing the Self



Trauma steals the feeling from being in control of one's self



Goal is to re-establish ownership over self in terms of feelings and emotions without becoming overwhelmed, ashamed, or threatened



In order to regain control over the trauma, one needs to re-visit in a safe and therapeutic manner.



More on
Trauma:

Can lead to the concept of
'emotional numbness'

Can change people's perceptions
and imaginations

Did not simply happen in the past
rather it also leaves an imprint on the
day to day mind, body, and brain.

The individual needs to know that the
danger has passed and to live in the
reality of the present.

Principles of a Meaningful Recovery





Treatment and Recovery

“The end goal of treatment is working toward a sustained and meaningful long-term recovery.”

Dr. Robert DuPont, founding president
of Institute for Behavioral Health



Treatment and Recovery

Negative thoughts keep us trapped

Positive Intentions set us free

Awareness is NOT enough

Motivation is needed

Awareness WITHOUT equipping does NOT work



Attitude of Recovery

- ◆ Humility vs. Pride
- ◆ Gratitude vs Blame
- ◆ Mindfulness vs. Denial
- ◆ Determination vs. Incompetence
- ◆ Respect vs. Ignorance
- ◆ Relation vs. Isolation
- ◆ Love vs. Hate
- ◆ Attention vs. Neglect
- ◆ Being Present vs. Being Absent



Sobriety

- What is true sobriety / recovery?
 1. Dealing with pain vs. escaping or switching.
 2. Being properly 'attached.'
 3. Recognizing what forces try to disrupt those attachments.

Principles of a Meaningful Recovery





More on Relations and Connection...

- Rules without Relationships leads to Rebellion.



More on Relations and Connection...

- ▶ We are made to be connected
- ▶ Shame is the fear of disconnection
- ▶ Shame says "I am Bad"
- ▶ Guilt says "I did something Bad"
- ▶ "I am not _____ enough"
- ▶ Shame needs Secrecy, Silence, and Struggle

More on Relations and Connection...

- ▶ Courage to be Imperfect and own your story
- ▶ Compassion to be kind to self first and then for others
- ▶ Connection as a result of being who you are (imperfections and all), not who you want to be (constant pursuit of perfection).
- ▶ Vulnerability is at the core of all 3.
- ▶ In order for connection to happen, we need to become vulnerable so we can truly be seen.



More on Relations and Connection...


- ▶ Vulnerability is not WEAKNESS but the birthplace of:
 1. Innovation
 2. Creativity
 3. Change

- ▶ Vulnerability is Emotional Risk

- ▶ Do we have a Drug / Alcohol / Gambling Epidemic or is it a Deeper Shame and Fear Epidemic?.....

More on
Hope,
Perception,
and
Imagination....

“ Imagination is absolutely critical to the quality of our lives. Our imagination enables us to leave our routine, everyday existence....it gives us the opportunity to envision new possibilities – it is an essential launch pad to make our hopes come true. It fires our creativity, relieves our boredom, alleviates our pain, enhances our pleasure, and enriches our most intimate relationships...



More on
Hope,
Perception,
and
Imagination....

...When people are compulsively and constantly pulled back into the past...they suffer from a failure of imagination, a loss of the mental flexibility. Without imagination there is no hope, no chance to envision a better future, no place to go, no goal to reach." (Bessel Van Der Kolk)



Cultivate a Recovery Culture

- Mindfulness
- Laughter / Levity
- Identity
- Life Skills
- Multiple "Tools in the Toolbelt"
- Resiliency
- Self-Empowerment
- Respond vs. React
- Accountability
- Emotional Awareness
- Others First
- Language
- Presence
- Balance
- "Feeling Safe"
- Care and Connection



Barriers to Treatment

Lack of availability

Attitudinal – Don't see the issue

Uncertainty – Pre-contemplation vs. Action

Transportation

Shame

Embarrassment

Stigma

Privacy

Denial

Why Don't People Seek Treatment?

Challenge to Identity and Resistance to Change:

- ❑ Changes are related to gambler's thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.
- ❑ Intermittent rewarding outcomes are difficult to abandon.
- ❑ It is their sense of purpose and identity providing fun and excitement.
- ❑ Realization of wasted time, energy, money, and personal losses (relational, emotional)
- ❑ How does a person re-define themselves?



Commonly Cited Barriers to Recovery

- Housing (eviction, problems, debt)
- Transportation
- Substance Use (Tobacco common)
- Risk Taking (Addiction switch)
- Don't have the right "life tools"



Commonly
Cited
Barriers to
Recovery

Offense (Police involvement,
probation or parole violation)



Lack of meaningful activities
(includes employment)



Lack of meaningful relationships
/ community / connection

Best, David et al. "Measuring and Individual's Recovery Barriers and Strengths." *Addiction Professional*, Fall 2016



Commonly Cited Strengths for Recovery

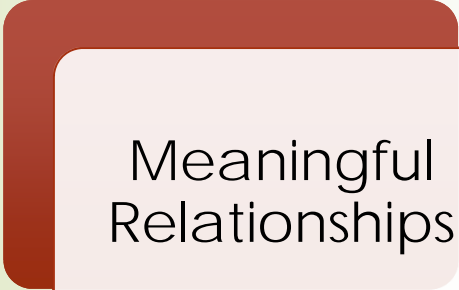
Recovery Group
Participation
(Attendance alone is
not enough.)

Social Support

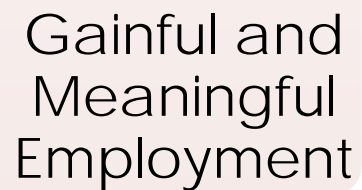
Don't focus on keep
the addiction OUT,
focus on creating a
new life where the
addiction no longer
fits IN!



Commonly Cited Strengths for Recovery




Meaningful Relationships



Gainful and Meaningful Employment



Commitment to Change / Transformation



Importance of Language

- 1) Using the proper language can impact one's recovery
- 2) Language can be stigmatizing
- 3) Can influence how a person is viewed outside
- 4) Can influence self-identity
- 5) Labels and perception (Abuse vs Use Disorder)

Summary of Recovery Principles

- ▶ Don't think less of yourself....think of yourself less
- ▶ Rules without Relationships lead to Rebellion
- ▶ "The greatest sources of suffering are the lies we continue to tell ourselves" (Elvin Semrad, Boston U.)
- ▶ For people trapped in a mental prison, they battle between enjoying the pain of pleasure while suffering from the pleasure of the pain
- ▶ Pleasure is Joy's Assassin (Seth Haines, author)



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