

Counselling For Alcoholism

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Abstract

Alcohol counselling aims to tackle the emotional causes of alcoholism. Addiction is classified as a 'disease of the brain' and alcohol counselling is thus an essential element of addiction recovery. . This person will provide the essential support and guidance that's needed to achieve and then sustain your recovery

Keywords: Counselling, Alcoholism, Therapy.

Introduction

Alcoholism, also known as alcohol addiction or alcohol dependence, describes the repeated use of and dependence upon alcoholic substances. It is a progressive illness, where sufferers are unable to control their compulsion to drink in excess. They will be preoccupied with alcohol and will continue drinking even when it starts to cause problems. Alcoholism is thought to be caused by cognitive and physiological dependence. It can lead to extensive tissue damage and disease across the body. Common side effects of alcohol abuse include mental health and social problems, liver disease and risk of accident/crime.

Alcohol abuse

Alcoholism is a form of alcohol abuse. This refers to a pattern of drinking that is considered to have an increased or high risk - meaning it is very likely to cause harm to health. Current guidelines say that men and women should not exceed more than 14 units of alcohol a week on a regular basis.

Effect of alcohol on mental health

The link between alcohol and our mental health is twofold. Mental health problems can not only result from drinking too much alcohol but, often, mental ill-health can be the cause of drinking too much in the first instance. This is often referred to as self-medicating; using alcohol to change our mood, to help us sleep, to help us forget about our problems, or to temporarily alleviate feelings of [anxiety](#) and depression

Counselling in Alcoholism

Although alcohol related problems often don't occur in isolation, it is appropriate to deal with it as the main problem when it causes clinically significant impairment or distress to the individual. The

treatment for alcohol will depend on how much the person is drinking, whether their drinking is harmful, hazardous or dependent and whether the person wants to give up drinking altogether or cut down.

The role of an alcohol counsellor

An alcohol counsellor will meet to provide the following:

- Listening to issues and help to identify the reason for abusing alcohol
- Help to develop a structured recovery process that's personalised to needs
- Uncover emotional triggers that are causing alcoholism
- Educate on techniques that help sustain recovery
- Assess progress in following this agreed process

Types of therapies are used by alcohol counsellors

Today there exist many diverse types of therapies for treating alcoholism. Each alcohol counsellor will tend to favour certain therapies over others.

Cognitive behavioural therapy

One of the most common forms of addiction therapies is cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). CBT seeks to eliminate destructive thought patterns and help to realise that emotions are linked to thoughts. CBT helps to alter thoughts so that negative emotions are not allowed to arise in the first place. CBT takes time to implement, and patience in the process is key.

Holistic Therapies

Holistic therapies have gain popularity amongst alcohol counsellors over the last decade. Holistic therapies help promote a balanced and healthy lifestyle. Some common forms of holistic therapies include mindfulness, reflexology, acupuncture and yoga. It is thought that living a healthier and balanced life is conducive to addiction recovery.

Dual-diagnosis therapy

Dual-diagnosis therapy aims to treat mental illnesses that commonly co-occur with alcoholism. These illnesses commonly include anxiety, depression and post-traumatic-stress-disorder. People affected with alcoholism are known to abuse alcohol as a means of self-medicating the symptoms of mental health problems.

Dialectical behavioural therapy

Dialectical behavioural therapy, a form of CBT, is a dynamic therapy that has been proved to be quite effective for the treatment of alcoholism. Regular alcohol abuse may lead to severe dependence as well as mood swings and difficult emotions, including anxiety and depression.

Multidimensional family therapy

Alcohol addiction doesn't just affect the individual but has far-reaching impacts on families as a whole. In multidimensional family therapy, family members and friends can participate in the treatment program. Their involvement in the treatment of alcoholism can significantly boost up the recovery of their loved one by repairing and improving relationships between them.

Motivational Interviewing

Motivational interviewing aims at assisting individuals to develop the strength and desire to change their drinking behaviours through structured feedback and planning. It is usually conducted over a short period of time, where individuals can design a plan to maintain abstinence from alcohol as well as develop the skills to sustain sobriety.

Goal setting and achievement

During the treatment, your counsellor will help you set goals and benchmarks and achieve them. Some goals that you need to accomplish could be as simple as fighting the urge to drink for a few days or a week or participating in a self-help meeting.

Identifying and managing triggers

Alcohol counselling offers you the strength to overcome the desires and impulses to drink. They can also teach individuals to cope in situations that bring high stress and anxiety to prevent triggers from arising.

Developing new hobbies

This is one of the best parts of alcohol counselling, where people discover new things about themselves. There are certain activities that people usually enjoyed doing before their addiction. Probably, there was something that they always wanted to do but never got the opportunity. Counselling helps them think outside the box and involve them in these activities. They also get the opportunity to try out new activities like yoga or team sports.

Induces Acceptance:

It allows the individual to accept the fact that he is addicted because in most of the cases the person is in complete denial of addiction, which is the first step towards leading an alcohol-free life. [Cognitive Behavior Therapy](#) (CBT) is a valuable therapy while treating alcoholism and [drug addiction](#).

Relapse Prevention:

Relapse prevention is why most people seek alcohol treatment. By the time most individuals seek help, they have already tried to quit on their own and they are looking for a better solution.

Motivational Enhancement Therapy

Motivational enhancement therapy is a type of [motivational interviewing for substance abuse](#) that involves structured feedback and future planning. Conducted over a short period of time, this therapy approach aims to build and strengthen the desire to alter drinking behaviors.

Marital and Family Counseling

Alcohol addiction affects more than just the individual. The [effects of alcoholism on families](#) can be just as intense. Marital and family counseling allows spouses and other family members to participate in the treatment process. These individuals play a crucial role in repairing and improving relationships throughout their loved one's [alcohol recovery](#).

Brief Interventions

Brief interventions are small, time-limited counseling sessions. Meetings can be held in individual or small group settings. During a session, a counselor provides information about a person's drinking patterns and the potential consequences. The counselor will then assist the individual in setting goals and coming up with ideas for behavioral changes.

Conclusion

There are a lot of organisations available worldwide that help people with their addictions. With alcohol, there are well known organisations like the AA (Alcoholics Anonymous). A first step for anyone who is suffering from alcohol related problems is to contact their general practitioner or doctor. They can give help and advice and also recommend specialist addiction services

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