

## 女性濫藥者的特性及心理需要

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## Gender Differences in Drug Addiction

- patterns of drug use, psychosocial characteristics, and physiological consequences of drug use
- women are more likely to describe the onset of their drug use as sudden and heavy, and men more often describe a gradual, progressive pattern of use
- addicted women frequently come from families in which one or more family members are also addicted

## ONSET OF DRUG ABUSE

- using drugs after a specific traumatic event in their lives
- incest and rape are commonly cited precipitating events for drug use among women
- rates of sexual and physical abuse reported by women in treatment run as high as 75%.

- sudden physical illness, accident, and disruptions in family life
- women who may have forgotten or repressed such events experience significant increases in drug use on the emergence of memories and flashbacks associated with these events, and relapse is highly correlated with symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder

## PSYCHOSOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

- primary coping strategy by one or more family member
- addicted women are more likely than men to be in relationships with drug-using partners or spouses
- addicted women often have a history of over-responsibility in their families of origin

- they have experienced greater disruption in their families than their male
- they tend to carry primary responsibility for child care and the care of others in their families
- interpersonal stressors: experience affective disorder

- substance-abusing women also experience higher levels of guilt, shame, depression, and anxiety about their addiction than men
- more negative feelings about their bodies
- at higher risk for eating disorders

- lower expectations for their lives, they express greater preoccupation with simply surviving and minimizing discomfort than getting ahead in life
- less education, fewer marketable skills, fewer work experiences, and fewer financial resources

- enter treatment are unemployed and have not been employed within the preceding year
- be dependent on a family member or on public assistance for survival

### Similarities between addicted and non-addicted women

- share similar life experiences including physical and sexual abuse, effects of socioeconomic disadvantage, and problems with interpersonal relationships
- exhibit lower levels of self-esteem and higher levels of anxiety and depression than men
- feeling helpless and unable to change their life circumstances

- placed in positions of dependence on others for survival experience low self-esteem, lack confidence in their ability to make decisions, and feel hopeless about the future
- experiences a disproportionate amount of trauma in her life without the resources necessary to alter these unfavourable conditions

### Understanding Gender Differences in Adolescent Drug Abuse

- once adolescent females use drugs they are likely to be at higher risk for developing drug dependence than their male counterparts
- produces a number of serious consequences

- important differences between genders in patterns of comorbidity and family relationships

## COMORBIDITY

- during adolescence, gender differences in psychopathology reveal higher rates of depression among girls and high rates of conduct disorder among boys
- increase in depressive disorders among females during early adolescence

- after age 14, girls' rates of overall emotional disturbance were 2.5 times higher than boys' rates
- gender differences in comorbidity lead to speculation that adolescent girls reveal a pattern of symptomatology

- more internalizing problems among girls and more externalizing disorders among boys
- more comorbidity among drug-using girls in comparison to drug using boys

## MEASURES: Externalizing and Internalizing Symptomatology

- the externalizing dimension includes the delinquent behavior and aggressive behavior syndromes
- the internalizing grouping includes the withdrawn, somatic complaints and anxious / depressed syndromes

## FAMILY FUNCTIONING

- family functioning: family relationship and the family's role

- families of drug-using and delinquent females are more dysfunctional than families of drug-using and delinquent males
- disengagement and parental rejection, sexual and physical abuse, parent-adolescent conflict, and parental substance use and psychopathology

- girls from dysfunctional families tend to affiliate with older males who introduce them to drug use and criminality

## Implications

- higher levels of internalizing symptoms and family dysfunction
- reveal that families of substance-abusing girls show more conflicts and less cohesion than families of substance-abusing boys

- this particular combination of problems (more family and internalizing problems than their male counterparts) is reason for heightened concern given evidence indicating that poor family functioning and comorbidity are each strong negative forces on the developmental trajectory of adolescents, female as well as male.

- in order to address the concerns of both the youth and her parents, the clinician should focus on the family conflict as well as the internalizing symptoms

- intervene at both the family and individual symptom level
- intervention with adolescent girls should be relationship-focused

## Alternative Drug Treatment for Women

- Traditional treatment: focuses on the strengths of each individual and uses her experience, both past and present, as learning tools rather than as sources of grief and shame

- alternative models understanding drug use as a coping mechanism are central to understanding the root cause of drug use for women

- having identified these sources of struggle and stress, women can then be helped to develop and use effective, safe, and nondestructive alternative coping strategies
- alternative treatment uses a team approach that incorporates the contributions of a variety of disciplines

- all-female groups in alternative treatment programs provide positive role modeling and help normalize feelings, develop interpersonal skills, and build support networks and, through shared experiences, help women recognize societal patterns of female oppression

- creating an emotionally safe and supportive environment allows women in treatment to address issues of sexual, physical, and emotional abuse at a rate and intensity appropriate for each individual
- recognition of women's ability to move beyond the abuse and create environments in which they are not revictimized

## SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

### OUTREACH

- women are likely to experience financial hardship, low self-esteem, isolation, and lack of family support for treatment
- social workers can link such clients with resources to address these and other environmental and psychological barriers to treatment

## SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

### TREATMENT

- acknowledging that their drug use is a coping strategy
- recognize the full range of coping behaviors and the need to replace unsuccessful methods of coping with more successful strategies

## SOCIAL WORK INTERVENTION

### TREATMENT

- Social work's emphasis on clients empowerment also recognizes the need to help clients learn new ways of addressing environmental obstacles to self-actualization