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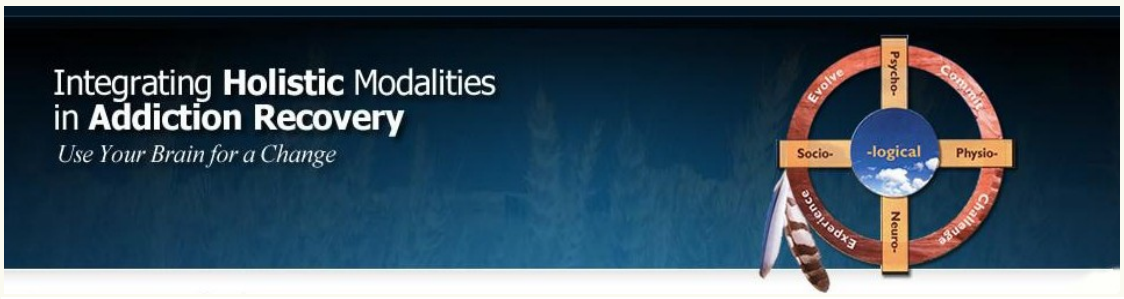
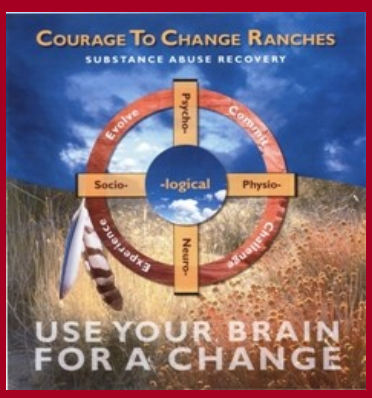


Courage to Change to Open Career Enhancement Program



Combining Science with Holistic Modalities in Addiction Recovery
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By Judith Ann Miller PhD

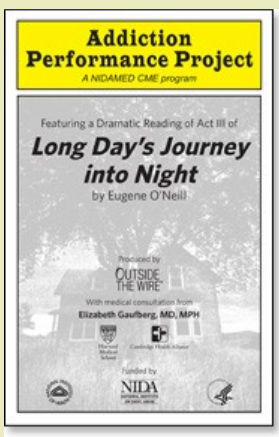
The Courage to Change Ranch Addiction Recovery Program is ready to replicate and is excited to open a counterpart – The White Eagle Ranch near Estes Park, CO, gateway to Rocky Mountain National Park.

Estes Park is an hour and a half from Denver International Airport is within two hours of all the major Front Range cities.

White Eagle is a Career Enhancement program strategically designed to serve Employee Assistance Programs and Peer Assistance Services nationwide to assist professionals with 'impaired licenses' due to addictive behaviors to regain their license to practice in their profession. A special recovery protocol has been developed to honor the disease concept of addiction to allow impaired professionals to achieve sustainable recovery and to regain their respective careers. Amidst the eagles and the elk we will present a natural addiction recovery regime within the heart of nature. **For more information contact Dr. Judith Miller at 719-541-4912.**

NIDA Raises the Curtain on Addiction

Addiction Performance Project premiers for clinicians



The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) announced the launch of its Addiction Performance Project, an innovative continued medical education program designed to help primary care providers break down the stigma associated with addiction. The program includes dramatic interpretation of a family's struggle with addiction, followed by a dialogue among participants aimed to foster compassion, cooperation, and understanding for patients living with this disease.

Of the 23.5 million patients who needed specialized treatment for a drug or alcohol problem in 2009, nearly 90 percent had not received it. Research suggests that primary care providers could significantly help reduce drug use, before it escalates to abuse or addiction. However, many express concern that they do not have the experience or tools to identify drug use in their patients.

"Primary care providers can play such a vital role in screening for drug abuse", said NIDA Director Dr. Nora D. Volkow. "Yet, for many providers, discussing drug abuse with their patients is beyond their comfort zone. NIDA's Addiction Performance Project is a creative way for doctors to earn CME credit while breaking down the stigma associated with drug addiction."

Read Full Article...

Addiction Pulling at the Neural Threads of Social Behaviors

NeuroView

Neuron, Volume 69, Issue 4, 599-602, 24 February 2011
Nora D. Volkow[1], Ruben D. Baler[1] and Rita Z. Goldstein[2]

Addiction co-opts the brain's neuronal circuits necessary for insight, reward, motivation, and social behaviors. This functional overlap results in addicted individuals making poor choices despite awareness of the negative consequences; it explains why previously rewarding life situations and the threat of judicial punishment cannot stop drug taking and why a medical rather than a criminal approach is more effective in curtailing addiction.

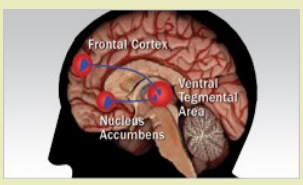
Substance use disorders (SUD) profoundly affect our society. Though the costs are usually translated in economic terms—approximately half a trillion dollars a year in the USA (ONDCP, 2004)—their impact is much more insidious, eroding the foundation of human relationships and the established social contract. Thus, it is not surprising that a significant portion of costs associated with SUD stems from costs associated with antisocial or criminal behavior and family services. The following letter excerpt (bold added for emphasis) painfully illustrates the devastation that SUD can bring upon individuals, their families, and society. As I sit to compose this plea I can't say with any amount of certainty that my son is alive. My son discovered narcotics at the age of 13. He experienced a severe orthopedic sports injury. **There seems to be nothing that can induce him to stop for any appreciable length of time. I had him arrested May of 2006 for heroin possession and identity fraud, he stole 900 dollars from our checking account while I was in Connecticut burying my dad and his sister** … tells me he cannot stop…. **Our family is being destroyed** … we have exhausted our savings and retirement. Everything seems so hopeless…

Research on the neuroscience of SUD has started to shed light on the ways in which chronic drug abuse changes the brain to cause the profound disruption we see in the behavior of an addicted person. This is because drugs of abuse impact many neuronal circuits that are crucial for proper functioning in social environments. These changes are long-lasting, persisting even after years of drug discontinuation, which has led to the recognition of addiction as a chronic and relapsing disease, as illustrated by another letter excerpt. I am a 42 year old male who has struggled with addiction to alcohol/drugs for almost two decades but I have also struggled with trying to find a way out of active addiction. My attempts have included about 15 stays at rehabilitation centers, numerous detoxification units, a stay at a long-term rehabilitation center, religion, philosophy, behavior modification and finally a 12 step program…. **My life can be summed-up as a life of many failed attempts.** Failed attempts in a lot of areas and I believe it is because I have not been able to stop abusing alcohol.

Read Full Study...

Brain Damage Caused by Neuroleptic Psychiatric Drugs

Mind Freedom — win human rights in the mental health system



In the past two decades, countless medical studies have shown that use of neuroleptic psychiatric drugs (also known as antipsychotics) is associated with structural brain changes, especially when taking high dosages for a long time. These brain changes can include actual shrinkage of the higher level parts of the brain. The shrinkage can be seen in brain scans and autopsy studies. In response to industry defenders who claim that this shrinkage is from the "mental illness," studies show neuroleptics lead to similar brain changes in animals. While the medical side of large libraries has this information, the public media side of the library does not. In other words, the public, patients and their families are not being informed about what medicine has long known.

Ron Unger: Latest News on Brain Tissue Shrinkage from Antipsychotic Drugs

Ron Unger, chair of MindFreedom Lane County affiliate, is a full time mental health counselor, who has raised concerns about the way the neuroleptic or "antipsychotic" psychiatric drugs have been linked to shrinkage of brain tissue.

Neuroleptics shrink brains in monkeys

In this study, both an older neuroleptic (Haldol or "haloperidol") and a newer atypical neuroleptic (Zyprexa or "olanzapine") caused significant shrinkage in the higher level parts of the brains in monkeys. Source: Neuropsychopharmacology 9 March 2005

Medical articles on neuroleptic brain damage

These are a few of the many mainstream medical articles indicating that using neuroleptic psychiatric drugs (also known as antipsychotics) can lead to significant structural brain damage.

Read More….

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Nutrition and Addiction/ Secondhand Drinking/Drugging Recovery

Breaking the Cycles—Changing the Conversation - Lisa Frederiksen

Using 21st century brain and addiction-related research to change how we talk about, treat and/or prevent alcohol and drug abuse, underage drinking, alcoholism, drug addiction, dual diagnosis, DUIs and secondhand drinking/drugging (SHDD).

This NPR news piece, *Food For Thought: Meat-Based Diet Made Us Smarter*, by Christopher Joyce, appearing on KQED's August 1, 2010, program/website, brings to mind the importance a healthy diet plays in a person's recovery from an addiction or the impacts of secondhand drinking/drugging (SHDD). Both (addiction and SHDD) cause brain changes, and its the rewiring of these brain changes (changing them back, if you will) that helps a person recover from an addiction or the impacts of SHDD (living with a loved one who misuses substances – alcohol or drugs). 21st century brain research now shows the importance of nutrition in that change process.

The following is an excerpt from my newly published book, *Loved One In Treatment? Now What!*. The other keys to brain health/changes are: exercise, sleep and mindfulness activities.

Unlike other body organs, the brain is incapable of making and storing glucose, which is its sole fuel source. No fuel, no brain activity. The brain requires a daily dose of about twenty percent of the body's glucose supply – a staggering amount given the brain is only two percent of the body's total weight. (1)

The brain gets its glucose supply from the carbohydrates in the foods we eat, which are broken down and transported to the brain via the bloodstream. For optimum brain health, however, it can't be any old carbohydrates, like those in candy or sugar-packed soft drinks. The brain needs the complex carbohydrate variety, such as that found in whole grains, fruits and vegetables.

And while glucose is essential, so is protein (like that found in lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, milk products). Protein serves as "the basic building block of the brain's tissue," AND it helps in the production of neurotransmitters(2) and neurotrophins.

Healthy fats, like omega-3 fatty acids found in tuna and salmon, are important for building the neuron's cell membrane and nerve fiber insulation,(3) as well as "synaptic plasticity" and functions related to memory and learning.(4)

Healthy nutrition is astoundingly important to brain health – something only known and understood as a result of the new brain research.

Think of nutrition as 'food' for 'thought.'
The more nutrient-rich the food, the "better" the thought.

The Benefits of Meditation

MIT and Harvard neuroscientists explain why the practice helps tune out distractions and relieve pain.

MIT NEWS May 5, 2011

Studies have shown that meditating regularly can help relieve symptoms in people who suffer from chronic pain, but the neural mechanisms underlying the relief were unclear. Now, MIT and Harvard researchers have found a possible explanation for this phenomenon.

In a study published online April 21 in the journal *Brain Research Bulletin*, the researchers found that people trained to meditate over an eight-week period were better able to control a specific type of brain waves called alpha rhythms.

"These activity patterns are thought to minimize distractions, to diminish the likelihood stimuli will grab your attention," says Christopher Moore, an MIT neuroscientist and senior author of the paper. "Our data indicate that meditation training makes you better at focusing, in part by allowing you to better regulate how things that arise will impact you."

There are several different types of brain waves that help regulate the flow of information between brain cells, similar to the way that radio stations broadcast at specific frequencies. Alpha waves, the focus of this study, flow through cells in the brain's cortex, where sensory information is processed. The alpha waves help suppress irrelevant or distracting sensory information.

The study is a "beautiful demonstration" of the effects of meditation training, and of the ability to cultivate an internal awareness of one's own bodily sensations, says Clifford Saron, associate research scientist at the Center for Mind and Brain at the University of California at Davis, who was not involved in the research.

Subjects in this study did not suffer from chronic pain, but the findings suggest that in pain sufferers who meditate, the beneficial effects may come from an ability to essentially turn down the volume on pain signals. "They learn to be aware of where their attention is focused and not get stuck on the painful area," Kerr says.

The subjects trained in meditation also reported that they felt less stress than the non-meditators. "Their objective condition might not have changed, but they're not as reactive to their situation," Kerr says. "They're more able to handle stress."

The researchers are now planning follow-up studies in patients who suffer from chronic pain as well as cancer patients, who have also been shown to benefit from meditation.

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