



Treatments available for addiction recovery

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Reports appear in the media daily of the consequences of addiction in our area. Methamphetamine, alcohol, marijuana, prescription drugs, cocaine ... all are substances leading to devastating problems for the individual, the family and the community.

Managed care and financial pressures continue to limit the availability of addiction treatment in our community. However, one must not assume that help is not available.

The foundation of addiction recovery continues to be 12-step recovery groups which are readily available in the Evansville area. Effective treatment aims to help addicted individuals integrate effectively into these recovery groups. Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Narcotics Anonymous (NA) and Alanon schedules are available at all treatment providers and online. Individuals may attend these groups without prior scheduling and participation is free of charge.

Professional treatment can be very beneficial in swinging the pendulum from active addiction to addiction recovery. But when professional resources are limited, help is always available for willing individuals.

For those who experience significant distress when abruptly stopping use, a professional can assist in determining whether medical treatment is warranted.

One fundamental concept of recovery is dealing with life as it is, rather than as we believe it should be. Both patients and providers agree that more treatment options and programs are needed. However, addicted

individuals need to recover now, not when and if treatment programs expand.

The best advice is to seek help from a professional provider. If a waiting list or a financial hurdle becomes an obstacle, get started immediately by attending community recovery meetings. Many individuals in long-term recovery will be present to aid the process of achieving sobriety.

Commonly the family of the addicted individual also suffers greatly from the addiction and often sees the problem clearly long before the person with the problem does.

A popular new reality show suggests that staging an intervention may be a good idea. While this approach can yield a miraculous outcome, a few details need to be recognized. Typically after the emotionally charged confrontation, the individual is sent immediately to a long-term residential facility, often in a city far from home. These high-level treatments are not readily available for all and can be very expensive. A disappointingly high number of patients then lose the momentum of their recovery upon return to their homes. Also, addiction facilities are not locked and always are voluntary. Ambivalent addicts commonly change their minds after the initial emotional start.

An alternative approach may be equally effective.

Distressed family members can start attending Alanon meetings in their local community. These groups

are designed for recovery support for family members. There the family can learn ways to detach, to communicate more effectively and to build more effective boundaries with their family member.

Paradoxically, this often can facilitate the alcoholic or addict finally "hitting bottom" and becoming ready to participate willingly in the recovery process.

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