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Newsletter - April 2022 - Alcohol Awareness Month

The Clinician's Point of View

Identifying Alcohol Use Disorder

by Katherine Phillips, LPATA, LCADC, ATR
Art Therapist

Did you know that roughly one in ten Americans is diagnosed with alcohol use disorder (AUD)? To receive a diagnosis of AUD, a person must meet two (2) or more criteria out of eleven (11) outlined in the DSM-5. Furthermore, this diagnosis applies if a person has met a minimum of 2 criteria any time over the last 12 months. Increasing awareness around alcohol use disorders can open up discussions about moderation, healthy boundaries and harmful behaviors, and what to do if you might have a problem. In substance use treatment, a common question that comes up in discussions of alcohol use is, "How much is too much?"



The answer to that question isn't simple, but there are guidelines for reference. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) defines binge drinking as consuming 5 or more drinks on an occasion (4 for women). A "drink" is defined as one serving of alcohol – approximately 12 oz. of beer, 5 oz. of wine, or 1.5 oz. of 80-proof spirits/liquor (a "shot"). Therefore, a person consuming a six-pack at a party would have binged on that occasion. The CDC also reports that roughly 1 in 6 adults in the U.S. binge drinks, and 25% of that number binges weekly.

Conversely, not everyone who binges has a use disorder, and not everyone who struggles with alcohol binges. Sometimes it's consistent use over a longer period that qualifies a person for AUD. The limits for "how much is too much" is harder to define outside of binge drinking – the numbers vary depending on which organization you ask and other variables including gender, body composition, and the type of alcohol consumed. The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism defines drinking in moderation as limiting intake to 2 drinks or less in a day for men, and 1 drink a day for women.

So how do we know for sure if someone has a problem with alcohol? Here are key features to look out for if you suspect that you or someone you love is struggling with alcohol:

- drinking in large amounts (bingeing) or over long periods of time
- unable to control or moderate drinking after the first one
- unsuccessful attempts to cut down or quit
- drinking or recovering from alcohol use takes up a significant amount of time
- cravings or strong urges to drink
- missing work, school, or important events due to being intoxicated or hung over
- giving up important hobbies or interests because of drinking or recovering from alcohol use
- loved ones have commented on expressed concern about drinking or its impact
- a history of DUIs or legal issues relating to alcohol/intoxication
- being in hazardous situations relating to alcohol use (drinking and driving, negligence of self or others, becoming abusive or hostile when intoxicated)
- continuing to drink regularly despite physical or mental health problems (high blood pressure, depression, etc.)
- drinking greater amounts or drinking more often to reach the same level of effect
- experiencing withdrawal symptoms when you stop (shakiness, headaches, nausea, blurred vision, etc.)

If you have noticed any of the above, the surest way of determining if there is a substance use disorder is to seek out an assessment with a licensed substance use counselor. While an assessment with a professional is a great step toward addressing problems with alcohol, generally addressing issues with alcohol often starts much closer to home. Simply starting a dialogue about alcohol can increase awareness to issues caused by excessive consumption. The Morton Center provides support and services to family members and loved ones, not only to help navigate these tough conversations, but also to support the loved one in their own journey of recovery.



Staff Spotlight

Amberly Burns, TCADC
Counselor

Amberly Burns has been an employee of The Morton Center since September 2021. She achieved her Bachelor of Arts degree in Psychology from Indiana University Southeast in 2020 and is currently pursuing a master's degree at the University of Louisville in Couple and Family Therapy, specializing in Alcohol and Drug Counseling. Amberly has over 3 years of experience working with adolescents and adults in substance use recovery, mental health treatment, and crisis stabilization.

Amberly's role at The Morton Center consists of offering support and resources to family members affected by substance use through facilitating the Concerned Person's group, provides individual and group processing, educational presentations on topics relevant to substance use, and evokes an atmosphere of change through unconditional positive regard. Amberly is goal-oriented, passionate about substance use recovery, and utilizes a strengths-based, person-centered, and collaborative approach with clients. It is her belief that every person deserves the opportunity for change!

In her free time, Amberly enjoys running, hiking, playing with her dog, and developing meaningful relationships within her community.

In The News

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

by Dawn Gee & Michael Rose
www.WAVE3.com
April 5, 2022

April is Alcohol Awareness Month. Clinical Manager, Michael Rose sat down with WAVE Country Host Dawn Gee to discuss Substance Use Disorder, the Disease Model of Addiction, and the first steps one should take to begin their journey to recovery.



The Blog

Addiction Counseling - Unlock These Five Reversals In Your Life

Published on TheMortonCenter.org
February 23, 2022

Since you are researching addiction counseling, then you have decided it's time for a change in your life. For that reason, today, we will discuss 5 reversals or changes you can expect. Ultimately, it is our hope you make the choice to reach out and reverse the patterns of addiction in your life. Understand Your [...]

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Reading List

Being Sober: A Step-by-Step Guide to Getting to, Getting Through, and Living in Recovery

by Harry Haroutunian, MD

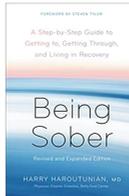
Conquer substance abuse and addiction with this proven plan from the former physician director of professional and residential programs at the Betty Ford Center, now revised and expanded.

The disease of addiction affects 1 out of 10 people in the United States and is a devastating and often fatal illness. Dr. Harry Haroutunian—or Dr. Harry as he is affectionately known by his patients—offers a step-by-step plan with a realistic, one-day-at-a-time approach to a disease that so often seems insurmountable. With a focus on reclaiming the power that comes from a life free from dependency, *Being Sober* guides you through the many phases of addiction and recovery with a warm sense of humor and compassion, not judgment or overly "cutish" language. This revised edition shares a new chapter on emotional sobriety and advanced recovery topics, along with more information on the opioid crisis and prescription drug abuse in the United States.

This groundbreaking book also addresses the growing face of substance abuse: the high-functioning addict or someone who is still able to achieve personal and professional success even as he or she battles a drug or alcohol problem. Dr. Harry tackles this provocative issue head-on, offering new insight into why you don't have to "bottom out" to get help. He is a recovering alcoholic himself and knows firsthand the challenges of sobriety. His background and expertise in the field of alcohol and drug treatment give him a powerful edge and perspective that is unparalleled.

Using clear, straightforward language, *Being Sober* offers a proven path toward emotional sobriety and a rewarding new life based on gratitude, dignity, and self-respect.

Order on Amazon



Adult Services

Our Adult services range from education, intensive outpatient, recovery groups, individual, couples, and family.

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Children's Services

Our children's services are designed for children who have been affected by a family member's substance abuse.

Schedule Now



Family Services

Our family services are designed for persons who have been affected by another person's substance abuse.

Schedule Now



TMC is an intensive outpatient drug and alcohol rehabilitation center

We believe that effective treatment involves treating the person as a whole — not just their addiction. To do so, our professional alcoholism treatment and substance abuse counseling staff of therapists and counselors provide evidence-based treatment that helps improve mental health and overall wellbeing.



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