

Disease: A Physical and Spiritual Disorder

- Since ancient times, disease has been thought of in both physical and spiritual terms.
- While science has dispelled mythical beliefs about spirits “causing” disorders, many people still discern a spiritual component to disorders of behavior.
- With this in mind, it is important to examine ways in which different faiths approach an understanding of addiction and how scientific and spiritual approaches can or cannot work together.
- Science has many different views and so do spiritual traditions.
- Not surprisingly, not all faiths agree about how to approach “wrongful” behavior – which is how addiction is to be understood historically.

What is “Spiritual”?

- The term, ‘spiritual’ has multiple and varied meanings.
- It is, perhaps, more of a combined feeling/thought than a purely abstract idea, but it not just emotion.
- It is a dimension or quality of human experience.

- Usually, the term implies an awareness of, or belief in, some essence or being that transcends the everyday, observable, historical world.
- It conveys the idea of belonging to something beyond self, - and this may include membership beyond family, social group, or place in history.
- Conversely, it may mean a special membership in a group of fellow believers.
- It can be conveyed as a belief in a god, many gods, spirits in natural objects or totems (animism and shamanism), or a vague “higher power.”

Spirituality in the Literature

- The application of science to the understanding of spirituality presents numerous problems.
- It is difficult to get people to talk about many of their deepest held beliefs, thus it is difficult to collect data on this.
- It can be difficult to have discussion because the likelihood of disagreements in theology or beliefs is very great.
- It is also difficult to differentiate spiritual beliefs from other related concepts – religious beliefs, ethical and moral principles, aesthetic preferences, etc.
- Galanter, suggests that spirituality can be classified as a latent construct much like personality or culture – that is, something that can be inferred but not directly observed (2006).

13 Conceptual Components

(Cook, 2004)

- A review of 265 books and papers on spirituality and addiction revealed considerable diversity and lack of clarity in the understanding of spirituality.
- Very significant biases were found in the literature, almost all of which was from North America.
- Almost all the literature focused on 12 Step approaches and Christianity.
- Only 12% of the papers even defined spirituality.

1. **Relatedness**: The importance of interpersonal relationships
2. **Transcendence**: The awareness of a transcendent dimension to life – something greater than can be seen in the physical world
3. **Human distinctiveness**: The belief that humans are categorically different from all other animals and everything else in creation
4. A “soul” or “inner being”
5. **Ultimate meaning or purpose** to creation and events
6. **Authenticity or truth**: That is, that there is a knowable truth that overrides other beliefs

7. **Values** – hierarchy of values – “this is good, that is bad” – a concept of evil
8. **Non-materiality**: a view that there is a spiritual dimension in distinction to the material dimension
9. **Spirituality versus “religiosity”**
10. **Holistic quality**: Wellness, wholeness
11. **Self knowledge/self actualization**
12. **Creativity** of the human
13. **Consciousness and awareness**

Cook, C.H.C. (2004). Addiction and spirituality. *Addiction*, 99,539-551

What's missing from this list?

1. Belief in the afterlife and its relation to addiction or recovery
2. Thirst for justice – i.e., that God will make things right – at least in the afterlife or at the end of time
3. Forgiveness
4. Personal relationship with a deity
5. Source of strength and support
6. The condition of awe or radical amazement (Heschel, 1965)
7. The nobody-ness of the individual before eternity – the recognition of the smallness of all human desires

Client Attitudes about Spirituality

- A study of inner-city HIV-positive methadone maintenance clients found spirituality as a source of strength (Arnold, Avants, Margolin, & Marcotte, 2002).
- Galanter (2007) suggested that addiction could be expressed in spiritual terms using these criteria:
 1. Loss of sense of purpose due to substance use;
 2. Feeling of inadequate social support because of addiction;
 3. Moral qualms about substance use in spite of persistent use; and
 4. Loss of the will to resist temptation when the substance is available.

Galanter, M. (2007). Spirituality and recovery in 12-step programs: an empirical model. *JSAT*, 33, 265-272.

From Discussion with Substance Abuse Project Staff (KRCC): Client statements about spirituality

- Most clients used to belong to a specific church community but no longer do.
- Many had bad experiences with present or former members of those church communities.
- Many no longer attend church services because they feel guilty over their bad or unacceptable behavior.
- Almost all feel that if they returned to these churches other members would judge them harshly.

Group discussion recorded by Ted Godlaski

- Some religious or spiritual thinking on the part of clients comes from past experience with treatment programs that talk about the spiritual aspects of addiction. This is true even in jail-based programs.
- There are some clients who would like to get reengaged with a religious community but they tend to be inhibited in doing so by their own guilt and the fear that others will judge them negatively.
- This is true even for those clients who have been clean and sober for significant periods of time.

- Part of the problem comes from the fact that these are very small church communities in small rural communities where everyone knows everyone else. There is no possibility of anonymity, of starting from scratch.
- In general, most clients are believers, that is, they believe in god and they believe in an afterlife in which one is rewarded or punished for one's actions. Many feel that they are destined for punishment because of the way they have lived: "For me, the worst part of dying is going to hell."
- If clients could have a kind of sponsor who would take them to church and act as their advocate, then a connection might be possible.

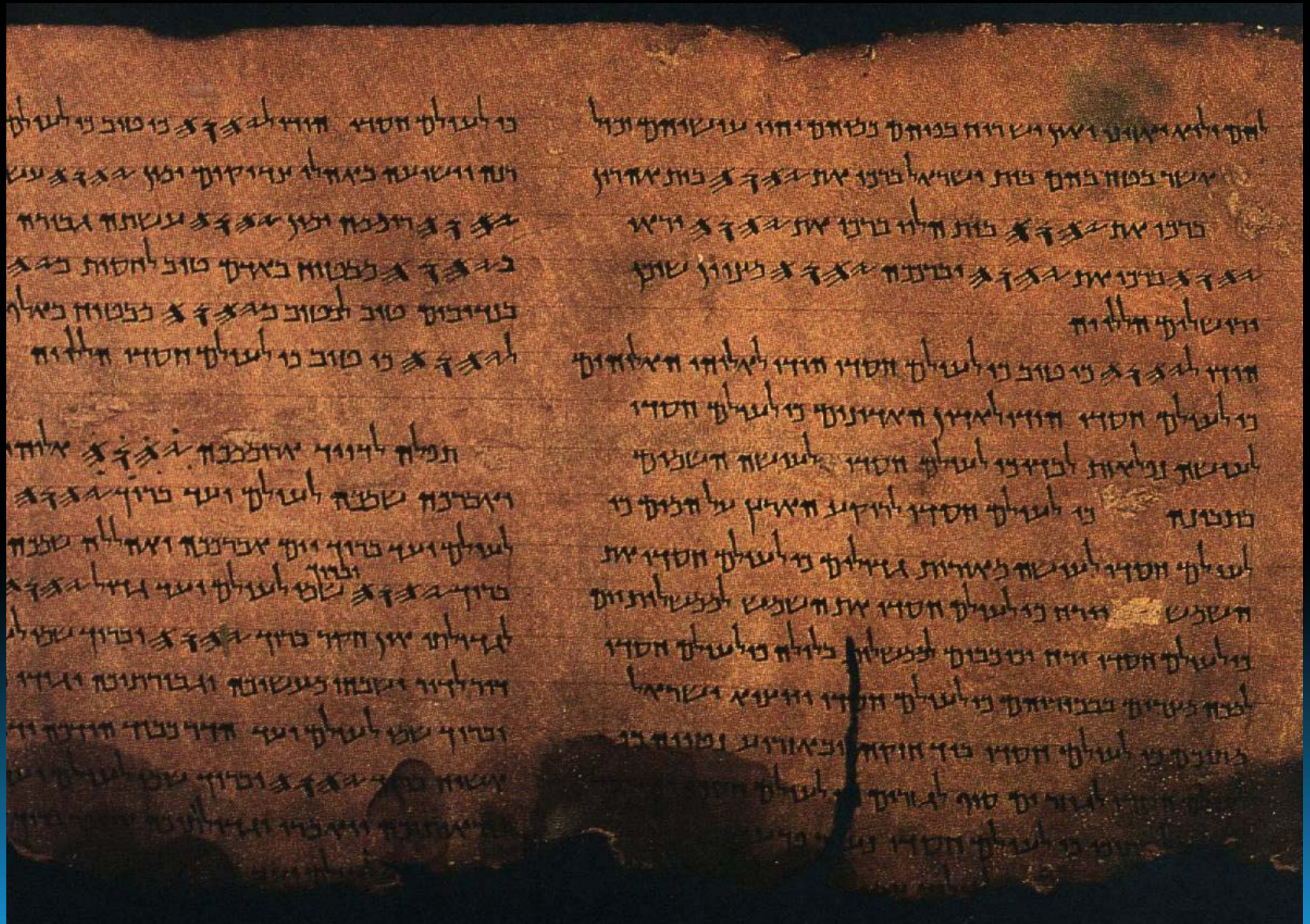
Implications for Us

- It may be important to proceed carefully and cautiously in addressing this topic with clients.
- It may be critical to be respectful of individual differences in religious and spiritual beliefs and values.
- Clinicians will need to be open and prepared to work within the value system of the individual client.

Do all religious/spiritual traditions view addictions the same way?

- Nope.
- In the U.S., the predominant religious perspective is informed by Judeo-Christian thinking.
- The 3 revealed religions share a belief that most behaviors that we now characterize as addictions would fall under the general idea of sin and a sin against God – Allah, Adonai, Theos.
- Eastern religions view sin more as a violation of moral order or as delusion where the Native American sees it as a life out of balance.

The Judaic Perspective



Sin in Judaism

- Sin in Judaism has traditionally been seen as a rebellion or defiance of an commandment by Adonai.
- Unlike Christianity, **it is an act, not a state of being** – one is not born with it and humans have the ability to make the choice to obey or not. In fact, being born a Jew is to be born in privilege as one of the chosen people.
- Addiction falls perhaps most closely under the Hebrew words 'Avon' – a sin of uncontrollable passion or 'cheit' – 'missing the target'.
- Atonement can set the person back on track and the atonement may or may not satisfy Adonai, but the general tenor of the Torah and Talmud is that repenting and amending ways will bring one back into the fold.
- Once the *actions* are again correct, one can be back in the good graces of Adonai.

Addiction in Judaism

- In recent times, many Jews have come to see compatibility of the 12-Step approaches with Judaism – with some modification.
- The injunction of the later prophets (Amos, Hosea) to “return, O Israel!” resonate with the urgency of the call to recovery embedded in the 12 steps.
- The concept of obeying the laws of the covenant are important and addiction means a failure to respond to that law.
- That same sense of bringing an individual’s behavior back in line with the commandments is applicable to addictive behavior.

- As with Islam, there is less focus on the state of the person (an addict needing recovery/salvation) and more on the behavior (following the commandments).
- However, the Jewish view of AA/NA is more as a tool to recovery rather than the recovery itself. It is an aid to closer following of the Halakhah (הלכה), the comprehensive guide to all aspects of human life, both corporeal and spiritual
- The concept of surrender to a higher power is very compatible with Judaism. Taking the twelfth step is also congruent with the humanistic message of the Halakhah and the Hasidic tradition.

The Islamic Perspective



- Sin is anything that is contrary to the will of Allah.
- Following the law of *sharia*, one avoids sin; violating these laws means punishment, while repentance can mean reprieve.
- Use of alcohol (“Khamr”), let alone abuse, is expressly forbidden in the Qur’an and in the Hadith. Substances “veil” or cloud the mind. They are *haram*.
- “Wine and games of chance are abominations devised by Satan” – Qur’an, ‘The Table’



The Islamic Perspective

- Opium and cannabis have been the most widely used drugs throughout Islamic history – not alcohol. Hashish has been widely used in Arabic/Persian Islamic culture (the word 'assassins' actually comes from hashish).
- However, the **central moral entity in Islam** is the *ummah*, the community – the individual is subsidiary to the *ummah*.
- An individual's violation of law places the *ummah* in danger; therefore the *ummah* can sanction sin. Hence, recovery of the individual is for the primary good of the *ummah* and punishment of sinful acts may be public as it was in many Christian communities until the 19th C.

Addiction in Islam

- Treatment is possible and “Allah is merciful” to the individual who repents and brings behavior into accord with the teachings.
- The 12-Step approach is basically compatible with an Islamic perspective.
- However, there is no focus on individual will as an independent deciding entity – more a matter of simply adhering to the will of Allah.
- In Islam, everything that happens – even negative events, are “inshallah”, according to Allah’s will. Human will is an illusion.
- If you recover by following the Qur’an, inshallah; if you die of your addiction, inshallah.

The Hindu Perspective



इदंशरीरंकोतेयक्षेत्रमित्यभिधीयते॥
एतद्योवेन्नितेप्राङ्क्षेत्रज्ञमितितद्विदः॥२॥क्षेत्रज्ञंचापि
सर्वविद्विसर्वक्षेत्रेषु
भारत॥क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोज्ञानंयत्रज्ञानं

The Hindu View

- Sin is an act arising from avidya, the lack of knowledge.
- It is also an act that brings negative consequences to both others and self; it is counter to the dharma, the Hindu code of conduct. Dharma is actually a value that is inherent in any tradition.
- What is considered sinful behavior varies according to circumstance and one's stage and role in life – things are not expressed as universal absolutes in Hinduism as they are in the 3 Western revealed religions.

- The trimurti of Hinduism includes Brahma, the creator, Vishnu, the preserver, and Shiva, the destroyer – so the cycle perpetuates. Brahman is the supreme being, the all encompassing.
- Perhaps one way to think of this is to see ***Brahman*** as the supreme being with *Brahma, Vishnu, and Shiva* as emanations or aspects.
- However, since all living beings are a part of Brahman, harm in the apparent world does not really cause harm in the ultimate reality because one cannot harm god.
- The atman, the individual being or self, constantly strives for union with Brahman, rather like a river flowing into the sea.
- Each self must discover his or her duty and fulfill that role.
- Also, the body is the city of Brahman

(Nikhilnananda, 1963).

- Also, there is considerable emphasis in Hinduism on freeing the mind from dualities – the constant fragmenting of reality into opposites.
 - This is delusion and it creates problems for human consciousness.
- Humans are “ruled by aversion and craving” (Bhagavad Gita, 7.27) – the primal duality that keeps them in bondage.
- It is easy to see the link between a condition of constant aversion/craving and the addictive process.
- To be awakened to the ultimate reality, to be aware of this false duality, and thus to be liberated to gain “moksha.”
- To know the true self is to know oneself as an integral part of the universal Brahman. Tat tvam asi.

Hinduism does not posit a central moral law over addictive behaviors. In the Rig Veda, the gods, too, drank 'soma', an intoxicating substance. However, drug use or alcohol use that leads to a failure to do one's duty is viewed as an act of ignorance to be corrected by following the dharma. This can be found by meditation, yoga, and increased awareness of the self and others.



"From passion comes confusion of mind, then loss of remembrance, the forgetting of duty. From this loss comes the ruin of reason and the ruin of reason leads man to destruction." - Bhagavad Gita 2:63

"Action is greater than inaction: perform your task in life." - Bhagavad Gita 3:7



The Buddhist View

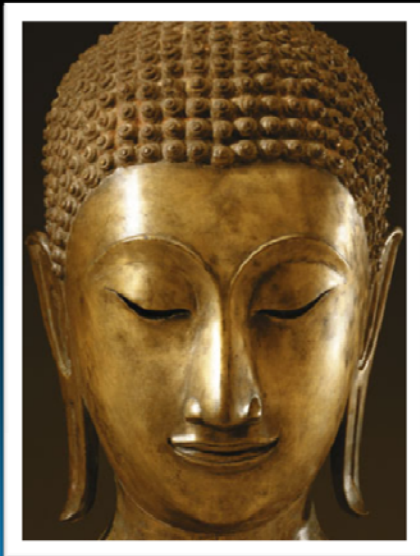
It is included here, but while it may be classified as a spiritual way, it is more of a psychology than a religion

Buddhist View of “Sin”

- Buddhism has no real clear presentation of sin. Some schools have incorporated a list of “don’t do’s” but these are loosely tied to any central moral construct.
- Whatever we mean by “sin” is, in Buddhism, delusion – avidya – the deluded attachment to illusory objects (even mental objects) in the world.
- Attachment to anything is wrongful and deluded and addiction, is by definition, the ultimate attachment. Even attachment to being pure is delusion.
- Attachment is the cause of all sorrow, anger, grief, and a host of negative outcomes.
- Harm to consciousness passes on through time as does all consciousness– one of the most powerful ideas in Buddhism. (Has close affinity with Richard Dawkins idea of *memes*).

Buddhism and Addiction

- Recovery in Buddhist thinking is to be found in understanding the 4 noble truths and practicing the 8-fold path of right thinking, right feeling, right intentions, right actions, etc.



1. Living entails suffering.
2. The origin of suffering is attachment.
3. The cessation of suffering is attainable.
4. The path to the cessation of suffering is to follow the eight-fold path.

Noble Eightfold Path

- Right View
- Right Intention
- Right Speech
- Right Action
- Right Work
- Right Effort
- Right Mindfulness
- Right Concentration

Not Redemption from Sin

- Buddhism is interested in relieving the suffering of all sentient beings – not in saving them or making them morally better persons.
- The Bodhisattva vow is:
 - I will be a bridge, a boat, a ship, for all who would cross over.
 - I am the nurse, the doctor, the medicine, for all who would be well.
- However, the 12-step approach is likely seen as another attachment, not a path to recovery, though community is stressed (the buddha, the dharma, the sangha).

- Seeing the essential emptiness of the self that craves is at the heart of Buddhist understanding of what we call recovery.
- Enlightenment dispels the claim of any drug on the self.
- Buddhism would eschew the 12-Step approaches as creating yet another attachment which in itself will lead to more sorrow, grief, and negative feelings.
 - Even the Buddha eschewed doctrines and told everyone to simply test ideas against their own experience – not to rely on any given path.
 - There are some Americans who have jerry-rigged 12 step approaches into a Buddhist framework, but the fit is far from close.

- There is an approach evolved from Buddhism called Naikan Therapy that is widely used in Japan in treating substance abuse focusing on helping the person identify:
 - what has been received from others,
 - what one has given to others, and
 - what harm has been done to others.
- Morita Therapy is another Buddhist-derived approach that teaches attending to the demands of reality and letting emotions and ideas float through the mind like leaves on a river. Dr. Shoma Morita lived at the same time as Freud.
- Mindfulness meditation has spun off of Ch'an or Zen Buddhism and has made major contributions to the treatment of mental health problems and addictive disease.
- Mindfulness has been shown to have some success even among low income HMO populations who were considered poor candidates for psychological treatments.



Confucian and Taoist Views

- These two Chinese views of the world still influence Asians – particularly in the non-communist countries. Confucian values have significant impact on Asian Americans.
- Great emphasis is placed on respectful behavior and maintenance of familial order. Addiction that disturbs the harmony of the family – particularly the elders - is wrongful and should be corrected.
- The central moral entity in Confucianism is the family.
- And the major ethical emphasis is on performing the rites, which refer to correct behavior that conveys proper rank and respect.

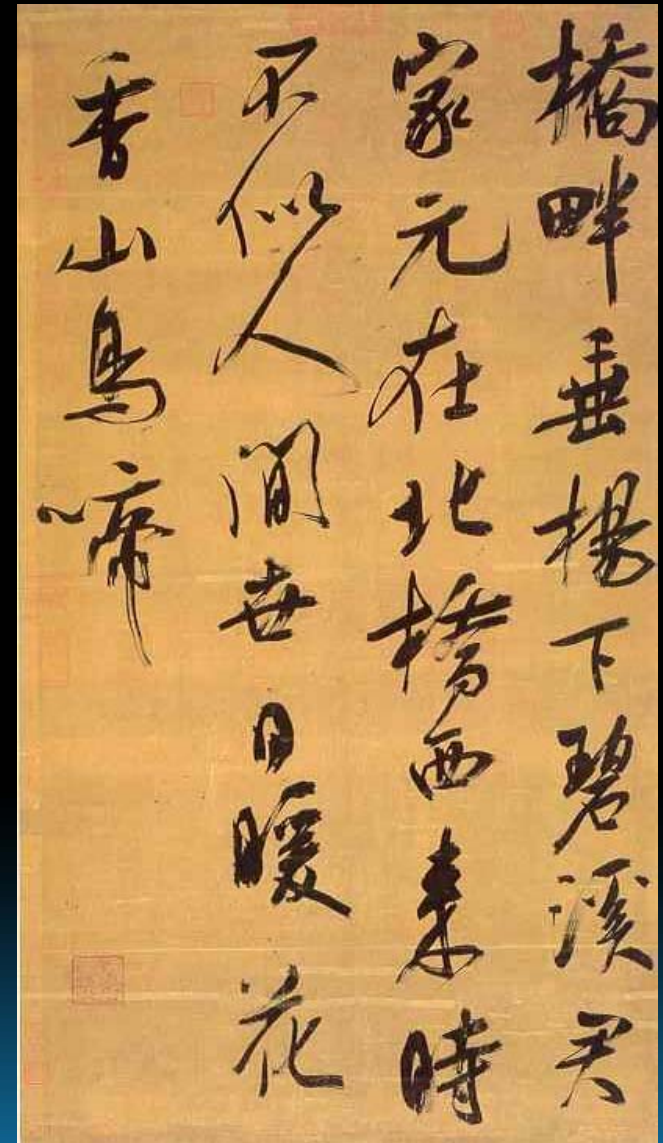
- Confucianism has a very vague afterlife and moral action does not in any way guarantee reward in this life or the next.
- Moral action must be pursued solely because it is the right thing to do.
- Benevolence (jen) is the most critical quality – in so far as addiction destroys this, the behavior is wrongful.
- “Benevolence consists in overcoming the self” (Lau, 1992).
- “Do not impose on others what you yourself do not desire.” (Analects XII.2)
- Obeying ritual and the social rites with sincerity makes them the most powerful way to cultivate oneself.



道

Tao = the way, the path

- Includes the yin and yang, the fundamental dualisms (light/dark, warm/cold, strong/weak) throughout all creation.
- For human conduct – emphasis on 'wu-wei' – non action or non-interference. Human intervention or interference often imposes disturbance of the natural harmony of the way.
- In application to addiction, the behavior would be seen as diverging from the way.
- To correct the behavior, a change in awareness and practice is called for. Settle for the emptiness of things, taking comfort in the natural way of things and the feelings they generate.



Tao te Ching 道

We shape clay into a pot,
But it is the emptiness inside
That holds whatever we want.

We hammer wood for a house,
But it is the inner space
That makes it livable.

We work with being,
But non-being is what we use.

11

Success is as dangerous as failure.
Hope is as hollow as fear.

13

Just stay at the center of the circle
And let all things take their course.

19

It is easy to make the association of addiction as an interference – a clinging to falseness that will bring on disaster. Letting things take their course is not unlike “let go, let God” from the self-help perspective.

Native American



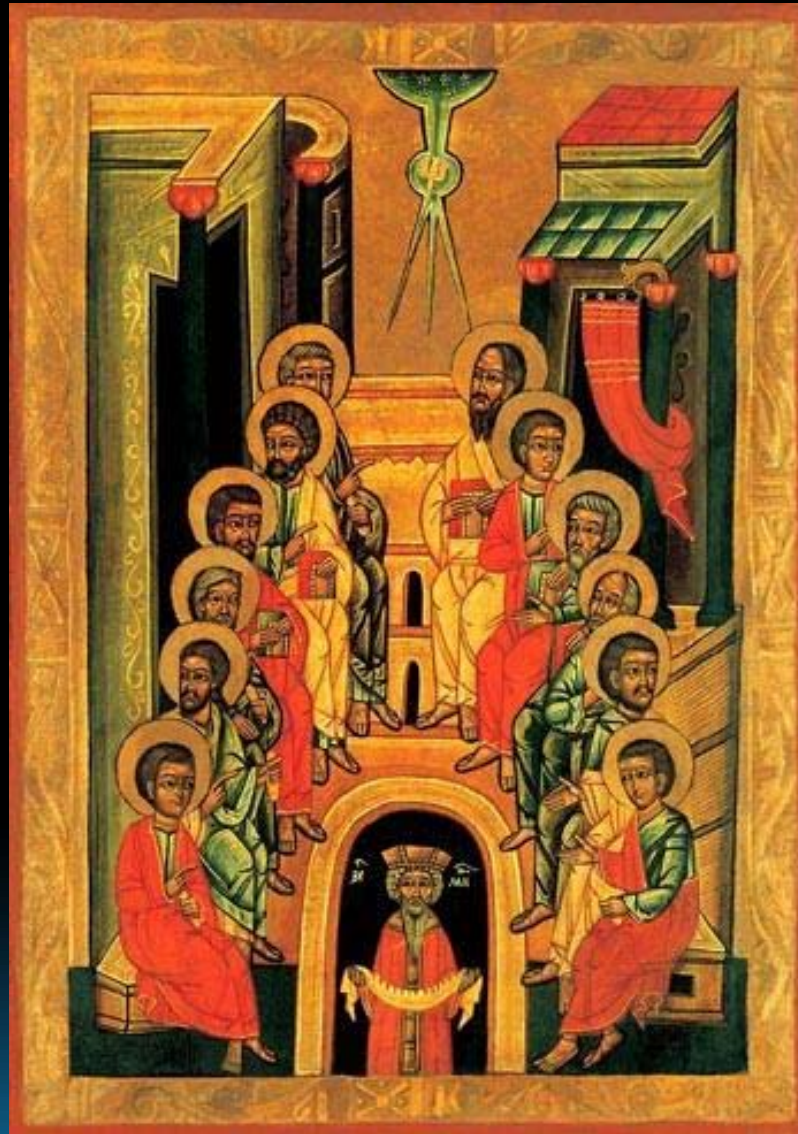
Native American

- There are 562 Native American Tribes and nations with at least 8 major linguistic groups in the U.S.
- Very great diversity in beliefs – shamanism very prominent, totemism and animism as well.
- A reverence for natural harmonies, being one with the earth, with humankind, being but one among the many beings.

- The ideal state of acting in accordance with the natural balance would mean that addiction lies outside acceptable behavior and was brought to “the people” by the wasichu.
- A life of addiction means life out of balance (koyaanisqatsi)
 - AND it means falling prey to the White man’s power over the People.
 - This belief that the wasichu used alcohol to destroy the people re-surfaced in LA when the urban legend circulated that the CIA was using crack to devastate African American populations.
- Addiction, as opposed to drug use, is an important distinction in Native American culture because drug induced mental states are not seen as bad, but may lead to greater perception of one’s totem and identity with earth forces.

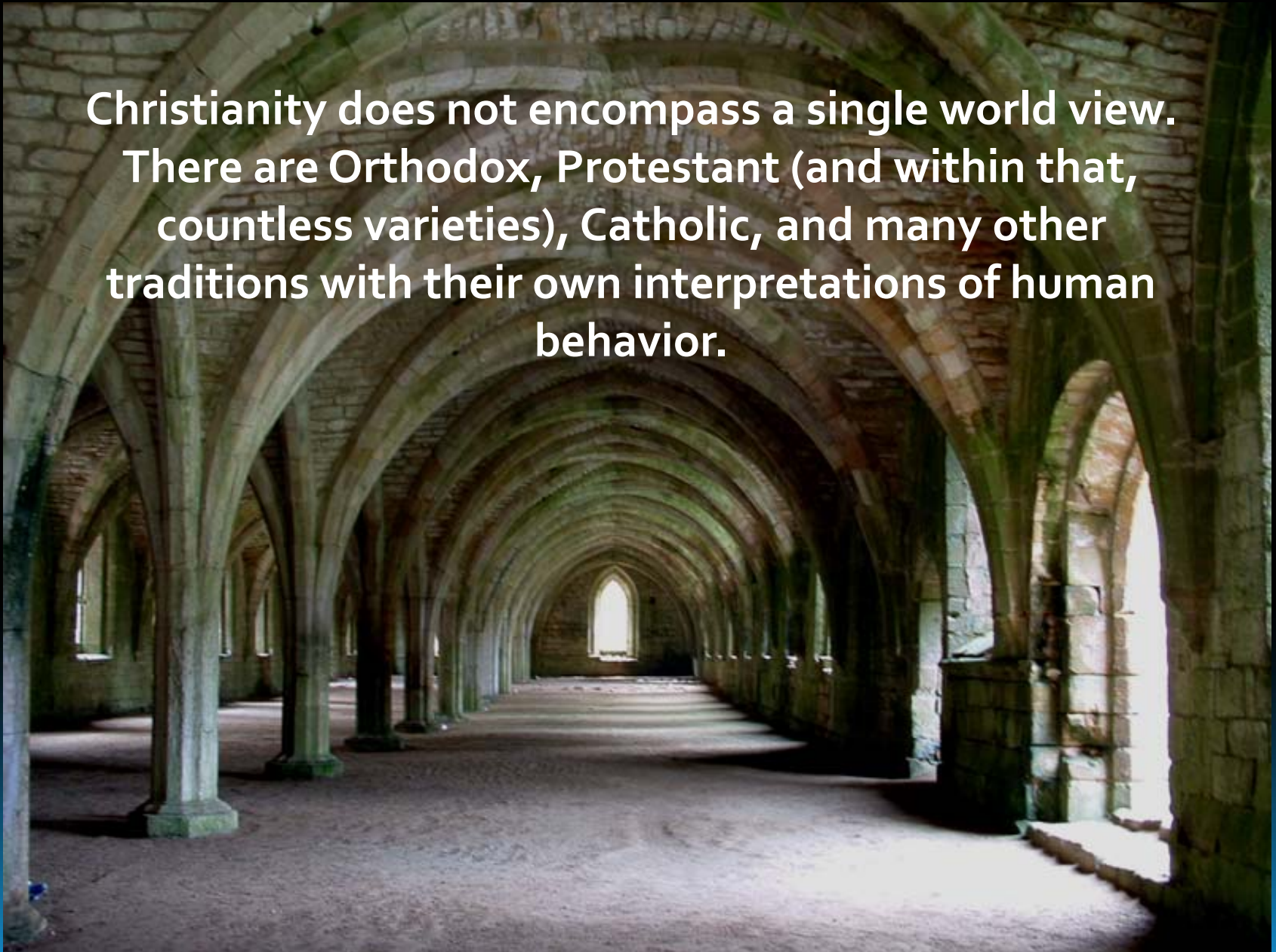
Native American

- A growing investment in recovery among Native Americans who experience very high rates of alcoholism.
- The White Bison movement, a Native American variant of 12-Step approaches, is at the forefront of these efforts. Introduces the idea of “wellbriety.” A non-profit entity formed in 1988.
- This approach calls for the Medicine Wheel of recovery. Four directions of the wheel - Prayer, Purpose, Perseverance and Passion (Coyhis, 2008).
- White Bison states that alcohol addiction is “a symbol of efforts to exploit and destroy” the people and it sees recovery as essential to the preservation of the people.
- It uses traditional native cure processes to treat alcoholism including sweating ceremonies and other practices.
- White Bison also has a mixed political/treatment agenda.



Christianity and Addiction

Christianity does not encompass a single world view. There are Orthodox, Protestant (and within that, countless varieties), Catholic, and many other traditions with their own interpretations of human behavior.

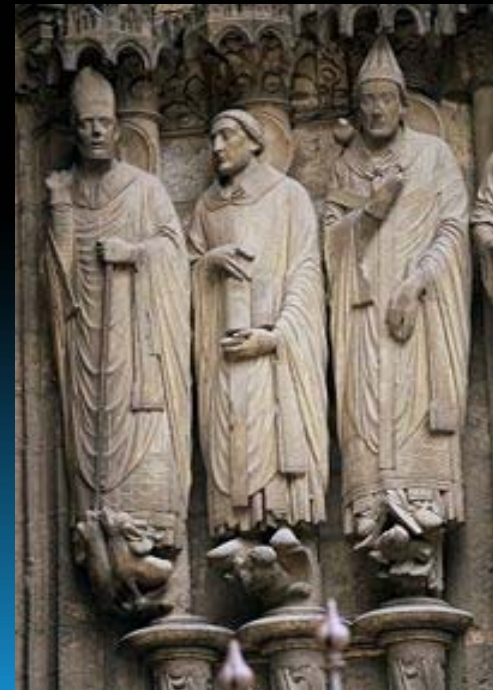


A Central Christian Tenet

- Within all that diversity, one of the major components of Christian thinking that relates to addiction is the concept of a sentient, morally capable self.
- Arising in the context of a largely Roman cultural environment where one's sense of self worth and meaning were derived from social connections, family status, and legal obligations.
 - Christianity gave people a sense of personal identity in which one's value ***completely transcended current social status or ties.***
 - A slave was still a slave on earth, but in the afterlife, the slave and the senator had the same status as children of God.
- Christianity pretty much gave birth to *individual consciousness* and *self consciousness*.
- With that, individuals were assigned responsibility over their actions, choices, and consequences.

- In addition, one was responsible for one's mental state, since *it was known by God*.
- In the Roman world view, what was in one's head stayed there.
 - Even the gods usually had to watch a person's actions to figure out intentions or even, ask the person what he was doing.

With a new emphasis on *internal mental states* and personal responsibility for sinful actions or thoughts, the ground work was laid for the Western interest in psychotherapy as part of self improvement.



- Treatment and recovery developed because with individual consciousness, one could appeal to an internal locus of control for change that led to being a better person.
- In Hellenistic philosophy, there was an extensive literature on how to control unconstructive thinking that led to poorly regulated behavior.
- The Greco-Roman world view was that “bad” behavior was simply any behavior done to excess.
- Hence improvement was a matter of curtailment of excess, not a matter of conforming one’s self to a moral imperative.

However,

- There was a rub in all this emphasis on individual consciousness.
- The Christian world view also included a very complex understanding of the nature of humankind as innately flawed – flawed in ways that went beyond any conscious choice or action by any individual.
- Therefore, while it elevated the importance of individual consciousness, *Christianity also did not trust individual consciousness to figure things out or to gain salvation.*
- This fundamental flaw of *sinful being* was expressed in *sinful actions or thoughts*, but the sin itself was deeply woven into the fabric of being human.

Augustine and Sin

The Augustinian view of sin has had wide influence throughout Christendom. His thinking on sin contains the following main ideas:



1. Sin cannot be alleviated by any act of will because sin is inherent in the human being – comes with birth.
2. The human will is the source of the sin.
3. Redemption and salvation can only be had by surrendering to God's grace through faith.
4. Redemption and salvation are also to be had by becoming one in the fellowship of the faithful, the Holy Catholic Church.
5. Grace is there if one is open to it – prevenient grace which can only be rejected by the individual will.

In addition...

- Christianity, somewhat uniquely among religious systems also evolved a concept of a “sinner” as *a state of being* which goes beyond the notion of a person who commits sinful acts and which can apply especially to individuals who do not repent and repeat their wrongful acts.
- This way of understanding wrongful behavior has perhaps contributed to the idea of a person being not just addicted, but of being “an addict”.
- This concept is not really embedded in the other 2 revealed religions (with the partial exception of Shia Islam).

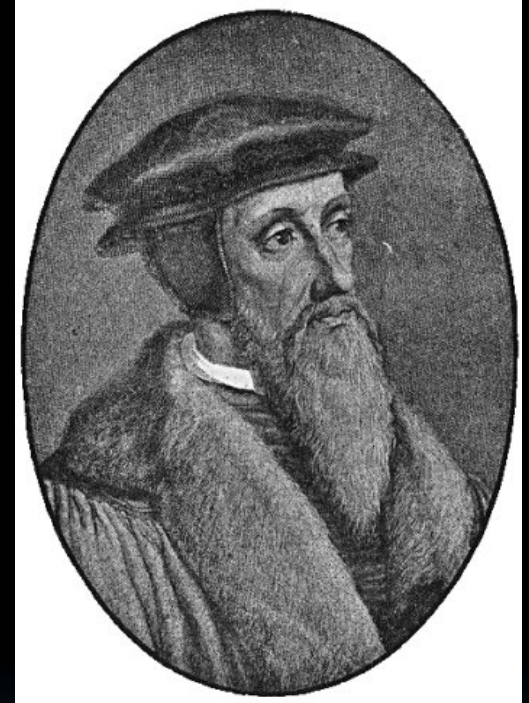
A Calvinist Addition

Humans are incapable of adding anything (not good deeds, better faithfulness, etc) to obtain salvation.

God alone is the initiator at every stage of salvation, having preordained who the elect will be and this includes even knowing who will have the true faith.

Humans can't know it and cannot undo it. Hence, those who might appear to do well in this life may be interpreted as those whom God has chosen. Those who are afflicted are likely to be those who are not chosen.

The net effect of this was that those who are addicted can be seen as those whom God has cast out and therefore they are to be shunned and cast out from society.



Christianity and “Family Values”

For the first 4 Centuries, Christianity was anti-family.

The early Christians were confronting a Roman society in which familial role was one of the most powerful forces holding Roman society together. (cf Perpetua)

The paterfamilias' hold on the culture was broken by taking people *out of their family context* and, in effect, oftentimes destroying whole family lines when the first born males became Christian.

The Christian emphasis on the family is quite recent – beginning with the Industrial Revolution when fathers were moving from the country to the towns and leaving women and children unsupported.

John Wesley and the Anabaptist tradition on the continent spearheaded a renewed commitment to the family as re-constituting or replicating the Holy Family.



Christianity and “Family Values”

- In fact, a closer reading of the Gospels shows a decidedly contra-familial approach to salvation.
- In fact, the adolescent Jesus models a rather rebellious character and has the audacity to tell his parents they should not have come looking for him when he disappeared to go to a temple (Luke 2.19; Wills, 2006).
- Transcendent relationships – i.e., brotherhood with all human kind – particularly the “least” of persons is the favored kinship bond – not membership in a family. This would have been an extremely alien idea to Romans and even to traditional Jews of Palestine in the Gospel era.

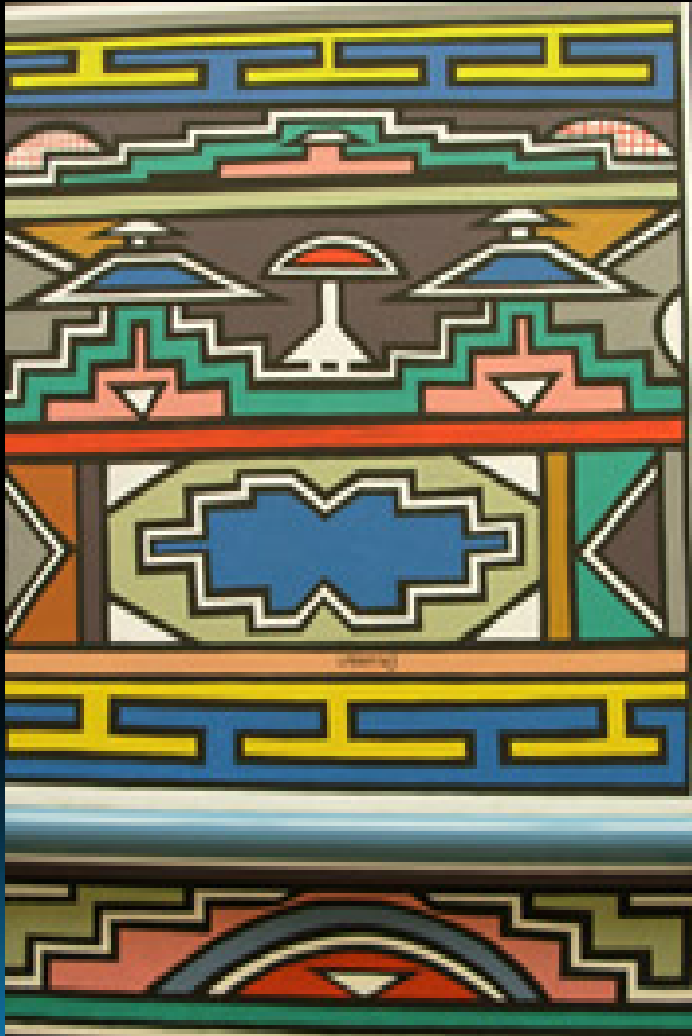
Two Christianities

- Christian counselors or recovery support service providers who wish to practice compatibly with what science offers about addiction may need to consider which voice of Christianity they must speak with.
 1. The Gospel voice, articulated through the words and actions of Jesus, consistently (with one exception) teaches by acceptance and shows appreciation for suffering. This voice is aimed at individual persons and helping them accept God's love.
 2. The Pauline voice was a message to groups, to congregations and had to do with regulating behavior and getting a shared belief system.
- Contemporary public Christianity is almost entirely of the Pauline kind.
- Effective clinical roles are almost exclusively of the gospel kind. Blurring of the two will damage any attempt at recovery assistance and will be counter to what is known from the science of recovery.

Another factor to consider...

- In the U.S., there have been 4 periods that have gotten the label “Great Awakenings.”
- In these periods, Christianity underwent a populist phase – the most notable one for us in Kentucky occurred from 1730s -1740s among the middle colonies and the Scots-Irish (McCauley, 1995). Others were from 1800s – 1830s, 1880 – 1900s, and 1960s – 1970s. Some say we have been in one for the last decade.
- The tenor of the Great Awakening was to extol a religion from among the people - a grass roots movement – not from the institutional church down to the faithful.
- The emphasis was on a revivalist approach which has greatly affected Christianity in all of the U.S.
- “God-instituted emotion or religious experience unmediated by direct human manipulation” (McCauley, 1995; 15).

African American Christianity



African American Christianity..

- Is very different from traditional white Christianity as it has been an imposed religion on a slave culture.
- There are multiple overlays to the Christianity of African Americans – the carry-overs from Africa, the horror of slavery experiences, poverty, and racism – all of which have left a stamp on spirituality.
- From earliest days, a greater identification with the Old Testament Exodus experience and the “minor” prophets (Amos, Hosea).
- Salvation, unlike in white Calvinist culture, is NOT purely individual, but is contingent upon saving “my people.” Salvation was aligned with the statement “let my people go.”

- Great emphasis on my sister, my brother
- Spiritual themes are best discovered in song and sermons, which often use an incantatory style. Thus, meaning is conveyed with great emotional vigor.
- It has been closely affiliated with abolitionist beliefs and liberation theology.
- Here, freedom is liberation from oppression in this world and into the idea of spiritual freedom as well.

The use of the prophetic tradition

- The language and traditions of the lesser prophets also shaped African American preaching.
 - The primary examples are Amos and Hosea.
 - “And the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste; and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword.” Amos, 6: 9
- Both of these prophets lived in the 750’s BCE and both castigated Israel for its departure from the ways of the Lord.
- Hosea likened Israel to a whore. Amos wrote of HaShem laying down severe punishments upon the people of Israel – a people and nation seen as vile.

Jeremiah

- Wright, that is.
- Wright sermonizes quite precisely in the tradition of Amos and Hosea and also draws from the Exodus episode.
- **“And the United States of America government, when it came to treating her citizens of Indian descent fairly, she failed. She put them on reservations. When it came to treating her citizens of Japanese descent fairly, she failed. She put them in internment prison camps. When it came to treating her citizens of African descent fairly, America failed. She put them in chains, the government put them on slave quarters, put them on auction blocks, put them in cotton field, put them in inferior schools, put them in substandard housing, put them in scientific experiments, put them in the lowest paying jobs, put them outside the equal protection of the law, kept them out of their racist bastions of higher education and locked them into positions of hopelessness and helplessness.” (J. Wright)**
(http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeremiah_Wright_controversyents)

Context is everything

- The government gives them the drugs, builds bigger prisons, passes a three-strike law and then wants us to sing 'God Bless America.' No, no, no, not God Bless America. God damn America — that's in the Bible — for killing innocent people. God damn America, for treating our citizens as less than human. God damn America, as long as she tries to act like she is God, and she is supreme. The United States government has failed the vast majority of her citizens of African descent.” (J. Wright)
- The U.S. “government lied about their belief that all men were created equal. The truth is they believed that all white men were created equal. The truth is they did not even believe that white women were created equal, in creation nor civilization.” (J. Wright)

Substance abuse

- Much like Native American recovery concepts, substance abuse in African American spiritual traditions is viewed as part of the oppression of the white majority.
- It is another feature of slavery.
- Recovery means liberation from the bonds of chemical slavery and gaining self-respect.
- There is perhaps wider empathy with substance abuse within this culture as all have experienced various forms of oppression.

Another African American spiritual tradition

- The Nation of Islam, founded in 1930 promoted ideas of freedom as well with God bringing about universal peace.
- This faith has had a very mixed history in the U.S., and it is often labeled as a hate group.
- Its teachings vary considerably from traditional Islam.
- However, it has gained acceptance among many substance abusing populations of African Americans.

AA/NA and Augustine (via Arminius)

Augustinian Christianity

AA/NA

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Sin cannot be alleviated by any act of will because sin is inherent in the human being – comes with birth and it is a disease.</p> | <p>You are born with the disease of alcoholism and cannot will yourself to not be an alcoholic.</p> |
| <p>The human will is the source of the disease of sin.</p> | <p>The will that decides <u>against</u> a drink is the same will that decides <u>to</u> drink <u>because the will has the disease</u>.</p> |
| <p>Salvation can only be had by surrendering to God's grace through faith. And grace is automatic to those who seek it.</p> | <p>Recovery can only be had by surrender to a higher power. One declares one's powerlessness in the very first step and if one is open to recovery, it will happen.</p> |
| <p>Salvation is also to be had by becoming one in the fellowship of the faithful, the Holy Catholic Church.</p> | <p>Recovery is also sustained by working the 12 steps through lifelong attendance and "belonging" to AA/NA.</p> |
| <p>There is freedom of the will – but the essential freedom is to will toward good or toward evil – if toward good then grace takes effect.</p> | <p>To be in recovery one must commit to the recovery – i.e., "want to be in recovery" - if one commits, the process will work.</p> |

Celebrate Recovery: A Christian Variant of 12-Step Process

1. **Realize I'm not God;** I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and my life is unmanageable.
2. **Earnestly believe that God exists,** that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me recover.
3. **Consciously choose to commit** all my life and will to Christ's care and control.
4. **Openly examine and confess** my faults to God, to myself and to another person whom I trust.
5. **Voluntarily submit** to any and all changes God wants to make in my life.
6. **Evaluate all my relationships,** offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I've done to others when possible, except when doing so would harm them or others.
7. **Reserve a daily time with God** for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and His work for my life and gain the power to follow His will.
8. **Yield myself to be used by God** to bring this good news to others, both by my example and by my words.

Change takes more than communicating the good news of recovery.

However, it is possible for a faith-based approach to live peaceably and compatibly with a scientific understanding of addiction.



To build a bridge between the scientific and religious perspectives, it is critical to disengage from the idea of addiction as sin in the accusatory or judgmental sense.

Individuals with substance abuse do exhibit what appears to be acts of will to continue their dependence.

However, one must remember that even the will-forming parts of the brain are severely affected by substance use.

Thus, even when “dried out” addicted individuals are not restored to a truly drug-free brain. They have residues of many neurochemical and even anatomical problems to overcome.



Science and the Religious Views of Addiction: How They Differ

- A scientific understanding of addictive disease assigns a very different role to individual will in causing the disorder and in recovery.
- In the evidence-based approaches, it is viewed as *readiness for treatment or motivation for treatment*.
- Religious systems have traditionally looked at addictive behaviors through a moral lens – something that has but rarely been applied to other diseases in the past 200 years. (Exceptions, AIDS/HIV, STIs).

- Contemporary faith-based interests in addiction have embraced much of the scientific perspective, reserving a role for the spiritual dimension of the disorder.
- The 12-Step approaches form a possible link between science and faith-based approaches.
- Science has only minimally studied 12-Step approaches but some research suggests positive outcomes for those who use self-help approaches.
- In Kentucky, the clients who report using AA/NA at intake and at follow-up (12 months later) have more positive outcomes (Walker, Cole, & Logan, 2008).

Another Difference: Recovery and the Family

- The widely used substance abuse treatment approaches are centered on the individual and may be guarded about family involvement.
- One reason for this is that many individuals with addiction have family members who also use drugs and alcohol and their continued use threatens recovery.
- Also, damaged relationships pose a threat to recovery.

- Contemporary Christian values place a very high premium on restoring the family.
 - The emphasis on recovery within an intact family may be a risk factor for some and a protective factor for others.
 - Careful assessment should be done on this before taking a treatment position.
 - If there are other forms of abuse in the family, this approach can be very dangerous and can actually increase client risk for harm and for relapse.

- The scientific view would take each on a case-by-case basis rather than having a general principal in favor of keeping the family intact.

Recovery? Treatment? Faith? Science?

- **Treatment** – something done by clinicians – (based in science) *may* be compatible with faith-based orientations.
- **Recovery** – something done by clients - with its emphasis on the spiritual dimensions, is clearly affiliated with faith-based approaches.
 - The science on recovery support services is still very weak.
 - However, if clients voluntarily seek or accept this approach then.....

The Fundamental Issue

- Human disorders are very complex.
- Looking for the power of instant conversion as a way to secure recovery is a pipe dream for most.
- Likewise, there is no one scientific treatment for addiction and all good science emphasizes the importance of building interventions around the individual, not around a single program model (although many programs do this).
- A faith-based approach can be helpful to those who share the value base of that faith.
- The scientific and faith-based approaches run into trouble when:
 - **The biology of addiction is ignored;**
 - **There are moral judgments leaking into the approach; and,**
 - **When there is a one answer-fits-all.**

Compatibility

- The scientific and faith-based approaches can work compatibly when:
 - The faith-based approach takes brain and physiology differences into account when assessing the person who is addicted;
 - When the faith-based approach relies more on the pastoral than the preaching mission;
 - The faith-based approach listens to the individual's stage of change and readiness for help and change; and,
 - The faith-based approach can accept or accommodate other interventions along with the faith-based approach (such as using medications along with the faith-based approach).

How They Can Work in Tandem

- IF the religious perspective can embrace science on how addicted brains are different from others
- ...and use this information to moderate moral judgment about the addictive behavior,
 - then there is no reason why faith-based approaches cannot be compatible with science-based approaches.
- Exclusive reliance on a born again approach to recovery is unlikely to be effective and is clearly in contradiction to the science on addiction.

Is it using one's own beliefs or following the client's?

- A significant ethical issue resides in these practices.
 - If we only teach clients **to grow in our own spiritual or religious tradition**, we may well violate professional ethics, which, for most MH and SA professionals call for respect of each client's value system.
 - Perhaps we should become conversant in multiple spiritual traditions (even within Christianity) in order to meet the spiritual needs of our clients at their level.
 - If a client voluntarily enters a program or practice that labels itself as, say, a Buddhist recovery center, then the use of Buddhist approaches seems defensible.
 - If a client enters a totally non-denominational center and is presented with a Buddhist approach, that would likely be unethical.

- Most importantly, addictive disease is a very complex condition and NO ONE WAY has been found to be uniformly effective for all people.
- BOTH evidence-based practices and recovery support services can become dogmas with one-size-fits-all approaches!!!!!!!
- Keeping an open mind with every client – very important and perhaps very spiritual as well -
- Recognizing that the paths of recovery are as diverse as the number of substance-dependent individuals is perhaps the key for everyone to remember.

Another Spiritual Quality

- Many (not all by any means) of the outstandingly great spiritual leaders have possessed two qualities that are deeply infused in their spirituality:
 - Profound self examination – Augustine, Pascal, 12-Step
 - Intense awareness of temptation – Gandhi, Augustine, Paul
- For us, this might mean that being uncertain with others could keep us from falling into judgmentalism without even knowing it.
- The spiritual quality of doubt might hedge against egotism – a doubt which actually might open the door to a scientific perspective as well.
- Is it possible that one of the most intense spiritual qualities was parallel to authentic science?

On the other side

- Science does not have all the answers about addiction.
- What government passes on as a requirement - to use “evidence-based practices” - has become dogma. A critical reading of the “evidence” will demonstrate how fragile a bridge is being built.
- Also, most studies fail to examine the single most important variable – the character and empathic qualities of the helper/clinician – which, to some extent may point to a spiritual quality in the helper.
- The new governmental interest in translational science means a greater concern not only for evidence-based practices getting implemented, but of real world experience being conveyed back to science.

- Science must remain open to all the many unknowns and the possibilities of hope offered by the faith-based approaches.
- Dogmatism on either side is, in the Buddhist description, avidya, an ignorance and delusion.
- Life is complicated,
 - so, too, is addiction,
 - so, too, is recovery.

A letter from Dun Huang, written between 1-3PM on October 13, 856 AD apologizing for drunkenness last night at a dinner party.

四海雜相迎書語

酒熟相迎書

家臨清春祇始新熟添恩

已知仰慕固定不恥其逢門幸去過訪一否

解閣使請速來即當幸也謹奉此不宣謹狀

久不相見迎書

春仰多時無由披叙合具空酒報敢

謹越寺願同歡請垂降頌

專侍假

不宣謹狀

醉後失禮謝書

昨日多飲醉甚更蒙厚誅言詞都不暇

覺朝來見諸人託方如其由無地容身慙愧尤積本務小累到次滿盈

深及之快望

仁願不貽罪責錢當面謝先狀

謹申伏惟監察

不宣謹狀

歲暮相迎書

敬歲初開元正居祿人新改故万物同宜其

似芳年成茂履重聊陳薄酌用應標情便請此來下情所望謹奉

此不宣謹狀

替相迎書

春秋八節唯社最尊略置小會共賞標情

謹令

諸君請使降臨是所望也謹奉此不宣謹狀

寒食相迎書

時限花新春陽滿路節令寒食冷飯三度為

古人之然煙除盛夏之過氣空費課階野外散煩此惟同饗

先靈秋至垂降赴謹狀

端午相迎書

嘉逢嘉節端午良辰獻饋同歡借自荆

楚但期稱泊何可由懷空倫國版幸請

先臨謹奉此不宣謹狀

重陽相迎書

重陽之前親菊傾恩懸珠一杯倍加錫慕

不可傳斯恩情仰

謹令奉呈幸速降臨不宣謹狀

冬至日相迎書

長至初開三冬正中佳節膺期堪展

恩竟無形異短符

明公堂酒餽飲幸去

鈔及謹狀