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What's the Connection Between Substance Abuse and Mental Health?

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There is a direct connection between drug abuse and mental disorders. This is because people suffering from substance use disorder have mental disorders like depression, anxiety, and PTSD, among others. It is important to understand how these are related in order to get the right treatment. **Lantana treatment center** offers a wide variety of treatment options for anyone struggling with addiction.

Why They Are So Related

There is a strong connection between mental disorders and substance abuse because one disorder often causes the other. When a person suffers from a mental disorder, he/she starts using drugs or alcohol, and when an individual uses substances, there may arise certain mental problems. Thus, because of this two-way effect, it is difficult to identify whether mental problems have caused substance abuse or vice versa.

The term for such a phenomenon is co-occurring disorders or dual diagnosis. This condition is very widespread, and it does not bring shame to a person at all.

Self-Medication and the Cycle It Creates

People have been known to take drugs as a means of dealing with difficult emotions. An anxious individual may opt to drink alcohol as a way of calming himself or herself. Similarly, an individual with depression can be seen taking stimulants as a way of making himself or herself feel more alive. People with a history of trauma in their lives can turn to drugs to help forget their experiences.

The Effects of Substance Abuse on Mental Disorders

Drug and alcohol abuse can change the way that our brain reacts to emotions and stress.

Prolonged abuse of such substances leads to difficulties with our sleep and stress/depression levels. In some cases, drugs and alcohol may cause panic attacks, paranoia, and mood changes in people who were not previously prone to any such disorders.

Abstinence and quitting substance abuse can also bring about other difficulties in this case: insomnia, agitation, depression, and many others, which make people relapse into substance abuse.

Common Risk Factors

It is very common for substance use disorders and mental disorders to have common risk factors. Some examples may include the following:

- A family history of addiction or mental illness
- Experiencing trauma during childhood
- Constant stress such as money problems or difficult relationships
- Chronic pain or other ongoing health issues
- Exposure to substances at an early age
- Isolation or poor social support

However, being at risk for having one of these factors does not imply that the individual will struggle with an addiction or mental disorder. It just increases the probability of developing such disorders and makes prevention important.

Importance of Dual Treatment

The treatment of either condition without addressing the other is likely to result in failure. The presence of an untreated mental disorder increases the risk of going back to substance abuse. Abuse leads to increased difficulty in managing disorders.

Integrated treatment involves consideration of all aspects of the client's life. It usually consists of therapy, medications, and preventive approaches. All these types of therapy should be customized according to the needs of the patients.

Conclusion

The connection between addiction and psychological problems is such that it causes complications in the process. Understanding this correlation is necessary in order to achieve sustainable recovery from them. The best ways to cure both are those involving joint treatment of the two problems, with empathy and a non-critical attitude being the key. If you need help for yourself or your relative, seeking help of a specialist will give you an opportunity to learn more about treatment options.

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