

What is chemical dependency?

Chemical Dependency is a primary disease characterized by the compulsive use of mood altering drugs (including alcohol) despite adverse consequences. (I continued to do something, expected different results.)

Characteristics:

1) Primary disease

The disease itself causes drinking or drug use. It is not secondary to some other disease or mental illness.

2) Progressive

The disease always gets worse, it does not get better and there is no turning back and beginning all over again as if one never drank or used.

3) Fatal

This disease is fatal if not controlled. It leads to premature death and serious health problems even if the death certificate indicates that the cause of death was due to one of the complications of the disease, e.g., heart problems, liver failure, car accident, bleeding ulcers, etc.

4) Treatable

The disease can be controlled if the drinking or drug use stops. It is much like diabetes in the sense that if the body chemistry is stabilized by not drinking or using, then the alcoholic may lead a normal life.

5) Relapse is common

6) Genetics play a part

Many studies have corroborated a genetic or familial predisposition to this disease.

7) DENIAL is a hallmark of the disease.

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