

Addiction affects the WHOLE person

MENTALLY

- Distorted thinking
Consequences and causes get confused.
A person may begin to think that they use because all these bad things keep happening to them, not that bad things keep happening because of their use.
- Preoccupation with use
Constantly thinking of using, getting over use, or planning their next use.
- Set-ups and triggers
- Excuses and rationalizations

PHYSICALLY

- Neurochemical differences
The way the brain works is literally changed
- Craving
- Inconsistent ability to regulate one's use of alcohol and other drugs

EMOTIONALLY

- Consequences that occur as a result of a person's addiction and their inability to consistently control use lead to painful emotions

SPIRITUALLY

- A person begins to feel helpless, worthless and hopeless
Their sense of self, feeling of connectedness and meaning in life begin to deteriorate.

Characteristics of Addiction:

PRIMARY

- Does not result from another condition
- Must be addressed directly

CHRONIC

- Long-term

PROGRESSIVE

- Has a predictable course
- Gets worse the longer left unaddressed

FATAL

- People die from this disease; either as a direct result of it (ex: accidents, suicide) or through various diseases caused by it (ex: certain cancers, liver disease, heart disease)

Addiction is Highly Treatable

There are Many Pathways to Recovery

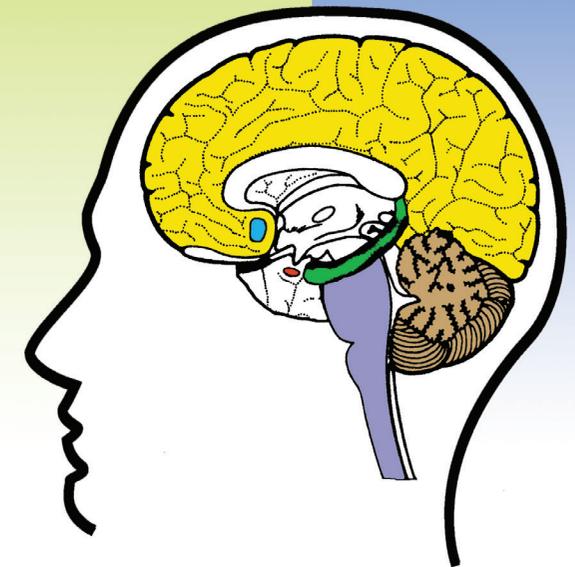
Individuals are unique; with specific needs, strengths, goals, health attitudes, behaviors, and expectations for recovery. Recovery is a process of change that permits an individual to make healthy choices and improve the quality of his/her life.

Recurrence, as with any chronic disease, is possible. Persons with addiction should develop plans to identify triggers and create solutions that will help them regain sobriety and strengthen recovery.

For more information:



ADDICTION: It's a **BRAIN** thing



NH DEPT. OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
NHB DAS
BUREAU OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL SERVICES

Promoting Prevention and Recovery

NH DHHS' Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services
105 Pleasant Street - Main Building, 3rd Floor
Concord, NH 03301

Tel: 800-804-0909 or 603-271-6110

www.drugfreeNH.org/bdas

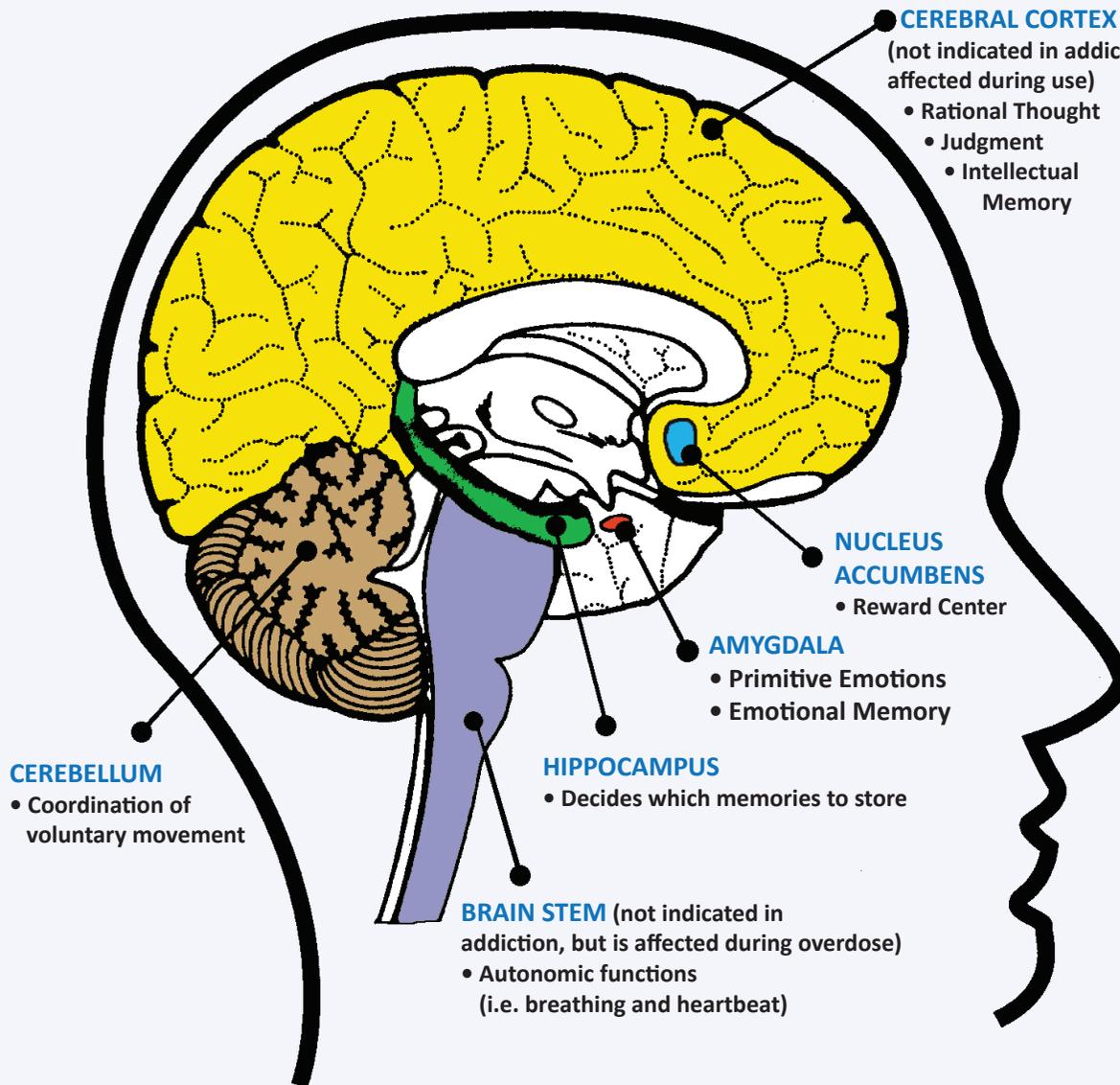
March 2017

RECOVERY IS POSSIBLE
HOPE IS ESSENTIAL

Addiction, Defined:

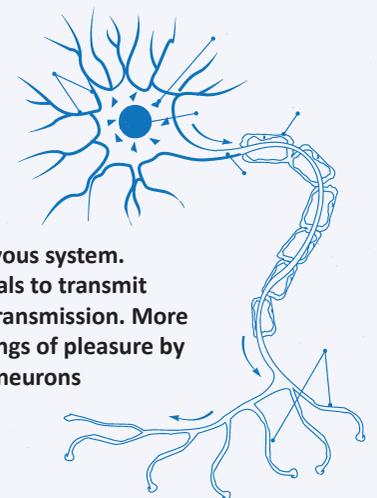
“...a disease of the brain...in the vulnerable brain, if you use drugs at a high enough dose, frequently enough and for long enough, you literally change the way the brain works, you change the way nerve cells communicate in such a way that you develop this compulsive, out of control use despite knowing that all kinds of terrible things can happen to you and despite even experiencing many of those things.”

-Dr. Steven Hyman



Addiction is a disease that resides in the “old brain”, the meso-**limbic system**; including the nucleus accumbens, the amygdala, and the hippocampus. This is the part of the brain that has to do with survival instincts (fight/ flight) and is also where the seat of motivation lies. People with addiction feel that they “need” the drug in order to survive. It is no longer a question of liking the drug or wanting the drug. Addiction is “needing” the drug.

Neurons are cells in the nervous system. They use electrical and chemical signals to transmit information. Drugs interfere with neurotransmission. More specifically, drugs of abuse produce feelings of pleasure by altering neurotransmission by neurons in the reward system.



It is essential to convey hope and the possibility of recovery to people with addiction.