Substance Abuse & Dependence
Substance Abuse

- Maladaptive use of a substance by one of the following
  - Failure to meet obligations
  - Repeated use in situations where it is physically dangerous
  - Repeated substance related legal problems
  - Continued use despite problems caused by the substance
Substance Dependence

- Tolerance
- Withdrawal
- Substance taken for longer time or greater amount than intended
- Desire or efforts to decrease or control use
- Much time spend in activities to obtain the substance
Substance Dependence

- Social, recreational or occupational activities given up or decreased
- Use continued despite learning that psychological or physical problems are worsened by it
Substance Abuse & Dependence

- Each substance has its own unique pattern of abuse and dependence
- Some substances are marked by psychological or physical dependence or both
- Treatments of different types substance abuse and dependence are specific for that substance but include common elements for all substances
Addiction in general

- Appears to have a biological basis
  - “Addiction center” has been identified as the nucleus accumbens
- Can involve a number of behavior including:
  - Drugs & alcohol
  - Love & Sex
  - Work
  - Food
  - Gambling
  - Smoking
Popular Treatments

- The Twelve-Step Model of addictions has been applied to all of the aforementioned addictive behaviors
- AA, NA, CA, SA & LAA, OA, GA
- The focus is on total abstinence and focuses on a cognitive shift in the way that the addict thinks about their addiction
- Long term outcomes suggest that this model is fairly effective but there is always the chance of relapse
- An alternative model is the “Harm Reduction Model” of addiction.
Etiology & Treatment

- Psychoanalytic
  - Caused by some repressed conflict or issue
  - May result in an oral fixation (?)
  - Treatment includes resolving the issue to allow development to proceed to the next stage
  - Psychoanalysis has little to do with addictive behaviors
Etiology & Treatment

- Behavioral Approach
  - The addiction involves maladaptive learning so the treatment involves relearning how to drink, eat, work, gamble, etc.
  - Some approaches suggest replacing the maladaptive behavior with something that is more rewarding
  - Very controversial view of addictions
Behavioral Approaches

- Some behavioral approaches use classical conditioning and aversion training.
  - Antabuse is paired with alcohol to cause vomiting
  - Satiation is another technique to reduce smoking
  - Response cost is used to punish respondents when they engage in the addictive behavior. This can be done, for example, with weight loss
  - Some approaches use shame and guilt as a negative reinforcer for not attaining target weight loss, for example. It may include placing residents' names in the newspaper when they get caught for underage drinking.
Cognitive Approach

- This approach emphasizes the confrontation and changing of maladaptive thinking.
- It may include emphasizing how an individual refocuses on ways to improve self-esteem and self-efficacy.
  - Self-efficacy is the belief that one can be in control of the outcome of a target behavior or goal, and, that thinking this way can affect the outcome.
This approach aims at unblocking the human growth potential of each individual as well as treating them with unconditional positive regard and empathy.

- This approach can be particularly useful in family and marital therapy when the addictive behavior has had a profound destructive impact on the entire family system.
Humanistic Approaches

- This approach is important because it emphasizes the human need to be accepted and forgiven for errors and our shortcomings.
- Keep in mind that the therapeutic relationship can be healing in itself.
Biological Treatments

- Often, anti-anxiety (anxiolytic medicines) are used to detoxify an individual off of alcohol and drugs
  - This is done in a controlled and safe setting in the event that there may be a medical crisis
- Antidepressants can also be prescribed to help the individual adjust to any difficulties that result or are uncovered from the cessation of drugs or alcohol
Biological Treatments

- Medical care is often given to most individuals who engage in long term drug/alcohol use because of the high likelihood that they may have neglected themselves and may be malnourished.

- Experimental drugs are used for a number of different substances
  - Methadone (heroin addiction)
  - Naltrexone (opiate withdrawal)
  - Smoking cessation (the patch, gums, etc.)
Biological Treatments

- Care is given in terms of the severity and immediacy of the problem. The most severe problems take longer, use more resources, require longer time to treat, have a higher likelihood of relapse.

- Most treatments require aftercare and ongoing support whether it is counseling or AA, etc.