

Integrating Neuroscience and Holistic Treatments: Implications for Practice with Clients who have Substance Use Disorders

overview

Dr. Jeannette Johnson's presentation will focus on the Native American perspective of good health that includes keeping balance in life through the four directions: physical, spiritual, mental and emotional well-being. Using the medicine wheel as a metaphor for balance, she will talk about how Native Americans utilize the holistic model of health to achieve balance in the four directions.

Dr. Robert Johnson will educate participants on the common neurobiological pathways that all addictions share, why addictive chemicals and behaviors are so “sticky,” and the process of shifting from “Fixes That Fail” to purposeful, creative action in the service of long-term recovery.

Dr. Phillip Romero will discuss the emergence of “holistic” and “alternative” medicine in treatment, especially in Substance Use Disorders. In 1998, evolutionary biologist E.O. Wilson introduced the idea of Consilience, or “the unity of knowledge” as an imperative for the survival of the human species. A consilient integration of the ideas of the Buddha, Charles Darwin, and John Bowlby offers a new platform for scientific exploration and treatment of substance use disorders.

workshops

a. Gestalt Practice and the Addictions explains the major theoretical constructs of Gestalt Therapy in relation to substance use disorders. Participants will have the opportunity to review cases in small groups from a Gestalt Therapy perspective. Experiential exercises will be included.

b. Mindfulness Meditation and Substance Abuse Treatment introduces the concept of mindfulness and its application as a behavioral intervention in the treatment of addictive disorders. Mindfulness is defined as paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and without judgment.

c. Spirituality and Substance Abuse will discuss the history of the relationship between spirituality and treatment of substance abusing clients. Treatment concepts will focus on surrendering the ego and the will, the importance of a relationship to a higher power, and the importance of step work in recovery. Discussion will also focus on personality disorder issues such as negative thinking, grandiosity, and sociopathology and their relationship to spiritual emptiness.

d. Understanding the Impact of 12-Step Group Attendance on Affect Regulation: A Perspective from the Neuroscience of Vipassana Meditation will provide information about the latest evidence on the neuroscience of meditation and affect regulation, as well as how the physiological experience of a group setting increases affect regulatory capacity.

e. Psychodrama in the Treatment of Trauma and Addiction Related Issues uses sociometry to explore issues related to trauma and addiction as well as to “warm up” a group, and connect them with each other and their personal stories. A protagonist will then be chosen to demonstrate how psychodrama can be applied in treating addiction and trauma.

agenda	
8:45-9:15 am	Registration coffee and light fare
9:15-9:30am	Welcome Address Eileen Wolkstein, PhD, New York University, Silver School of Social Work, Division of Lifelong Learning and Professional Development John Crepsac, LCSW, CASAC, Sierra Tucson
9:30-10:00am	Opening Ceremony Jeannette Johnson, PhD, National Institute on Aging
10:00-10:45am	Neuroscience and the Addictions Robert Johnson, DO, Sierra Tucson
10:45-11:00am	Break
11:00-11:45pm	Buddha, Darwin, and Bowlby: A Consilient Approach to Understanding and Helping Clients with Substance Use Disorders Phillip Romero, MD, Weill Medical College, Cornell University, New York Presbyterian Hospital
11:45-12:00pm	Questions and Answers
12:00-12:15pm	Facilitated Discussion Lala Straussner, DSW, MSW, New York University, Silver School of Social Work
12:15-1:30pm	Lunch on your own
1:30-2:15pm	Applications of Vipassana Meditation: The Dhamma Brothers Film Katherine Maurer, MSW, New York University, Silver School of Social Work
2:15-2:30pm	Discussion
2:45-4:15pm	Workshops (select one) a. Gestalt Practice and the Addictions , Evan Senreich, PhD, New York University, Silver School of Social Work; City University of New York, Lehman College, Department of Social Work b. Mindfulness Meditation and Substance Abuse Treatment , Marianne Marcus, EdD, RN, FAAN, The University of Texas at Houston Health Science Center c. Spirituality and Substance Abuse , Jeff Seinfeld, PhD, MSW, New York University, Silver School of Social Work d. Understanding the Impact of 12-Step Group Attendance on Affect Regulation: A Perspective from the Neuroscience of Vipassana Meditation , Katherine Mauer, MSW, New York University, Silver School of Social Work e. Psychodrama in the Treatment of Trauma and Addiction Related Issues , Tian Dayton, PhD, New York Psychodrama Training Institute
4:15-4:30pm	Evaluations & Wrap Up