

Sample research paper on drew barrymore: battle with drugs and alcohol

[Health & Medicine](#), [Alcoholism](#)



Ethical Disclaimer:

This paper discusses the psychological aspects of Drew Barrymore in light of etiology of her drug addiction and alcoholism. The contents of this paper are gathered from various resources available online and on print about the life of Drew Barrymore. This paper is a product of research from other first-hand sources already available for public reading. Facts are merely collected and selected to come up with the final output. Thoughts and opinions embedded in this article do not represent the subject, any website or any medical institution. This paper is intended for academic purposes only. Several works are quoted and cited, from various biographies, journals and periodical articles on the subject.

Drew Barrymore : Star at Birth

Drew Barrymore is a name already familiar to more than half of the world's population. She is an actress, model, and iconic persona that the public has followed through the years. She was born on February 22, 17975 at Los Angeles. She is a product of a family where showbiz has run for generations after generations. She is the beloved daughter of actor John Barrymore Jr. and Ildiko Jaid. Her grandparents, John Barrymore and Dolores Costello and even grandparents Georgina Drew and Maurice Barrymore are all from the world of showbiz also (Drew). Her uncles and aunts have also made a name in showbiz such as Lionel and Ethel (Gold). Drew Barrymore is in fact, a certified good actress, with genuine talents running in her veins gained by virtue of birth right.

The exposure of Drew Barrymore to showbiz world started even before she

reached 1 year old. She appeared in a television commercial of Puppy Choice dog food when she was still a baby. At four, she was part of Ken Russell's *Altered States*. She reached stardom at the age of 7 when she played the little girl Gertie of Steven Spielberg's *E. T: The Extraterrestrial* at the year 1982. Following the spotlight, she grew more famous appearing on *The Tonight Show* with Johnny Carson and even became the youngest host at *Saturday Night Live's* (Drew). She was Hollywood's pet moppet in movies such as *Cat's Eye*, *Firestarter*, *Irreconcilable Differences*, *See You in the Morning* and many more (Gold).

The Rise of an Alcoholic-Addict

Drew Barrymore inherited two major legacies from her family lineage: her natural talent and charm in showbiz and addiction to drugs and alcoholism. It is a shock to millions of people around the world that her instant stardom in showbiz onscreen is twinned with frightening offscreen vices.

Drew had a premature appetite for alcohol drinking and drugs. She took her first drink at nine and started drug intake at age of 10. Her first take of cocaine was when she was 12. However, her first time didn't become the last. In fact, she made it as a habit to drink and take drugs which gradually grew worse as she grew older. She gained a reputation of being violent and a wild child which made her movie career deteriorate.

Drew in an Alcohol-Addict World

Little girl Drew was the earliest who gained the dark side Barrymore destiny. She lacked the foundation of a home as her parents broke up while her mother was pregnant with her. She didn't experience a life with a father

figure to guide her. Her relationship with her mom is also not founded as Ildiko was busy in her work in order to raise her. When she entered the showbiz life, Drew felt that her mom was more like her manager than a mother.

The genetic inclination of Drew to drugs and alcohol was further enhanced by her life style. Drew was exposed to night clubs in the early years of her teenage life. Her fame made her into circle of friends who were also alcoholics and drug addicts. She was recognized anywhere she went. People around her admired her and tolerated her getting drunk and stoned from drugs. Though her mom was in the gray about her whereabouts and doings, she managed to sneak out away from her to do her wishes. Her drugs and alcohol intoxication grew worse as she drinks to get drunk and do drugs going from marijuana to cocaine.

Treatment Process of Drew

Drew at 13 has been sent to extensive rehabilitation treatment. Not once, not twice, but over and over again. She was sent to rehabilitation centers by her mom in hope that she could cope with her alcoholism and drug addiction. She went into therapy at ASAP Family Treatment Center in Van Nuys, California. She was described as “ very sick” when she first came into the treatment center.

The treatment program at ASAP is structured. There are group sessions, therapies, counseling, dinner together, and close encounters with the patient together with the family. Drew was subject into various group therapies together with other kids and adults having the same problem with her.

However, she was released every now and then to do some movies and other shows. When she get back to work, she gets back to her world filled up with action and thrill, getting back to her party habit where the spirit of alcoholism and drug addiction engulfed her wholly once again (Gold). This bias for her popularity made her treatment took longer than it should as there she gets back to her old self every now and then.

Sure enough, she gets back to the hospital. Her days of sobriety are only good when she is at the hospital. However, she can't stay sober outside the walls of the treatment facility as she can't say no to them. It took a long time for Drew to follow a life of sobriety and finally graduated from various treatments from time to time.

Diagnosis of Drew Explained

Dr. Derek Miller, an expert psychiatrist explained Drew Barrymore's alcoholism and drug addiction at People. He said, " Abstinence is the key to all treatment. Although, the younger he adolescent, the harder it is for them to understand they have a problem". Barrymore's destiny for alcohol and drug addiction is genetically acquired, more like a destiny she can't escape. That is why, Miller added that " parents should be very careful to keep their children off of all alcohol if there is a history of either alcoholism or biologically based depression in the family"(Peele, Stanton).

An interview with People Magazine, Drew admitted that the main problem she dealt with her treatment process is her denial that she has a problem. Even after she had gone to rehabilitation centers again and again, she would just have a relapse and can't maintain her sobriety for long because of this

internal denial. She also had relationship issues with her parents. She never experienced having a father, and she didn't appreciate her mother nurturing her through all the years (Childhood).

Drew took her sobriety days one day at a time. When she started to confess, " I'm Drew and I'm an alcoholic addict" with seriousness and genuine acceptance, was the start of her internal treatment. She then disclosed a lot about her life to her group therapies. She shared her melancholic life, her sorrows and joys to people. She started sharing about her absent dad and her resentment against her mom. Ildiko and Drew was subjected to therapy session to patch things up between them.

At the end of her treatment, these are the words of Drew:

" I'm not a psychic. But for today I can stay sober. I never want to go back to my old ways. I know that. That is my future. One day at a time. I'm Drew, and I'm an addict-alcoholic. I've been sober for three months, two weeks and five days, and I'm really proud of that." (Gold)

Theoretical Orientations

Alcoholism is one of the most prevalent psychiatric disorders. It is mostly accompanied with anxiety and mood disorders, antisocial personality disorder and abuse of substance disorder. This is a heritable life long disease characterized with relapsing and remitting courses. The treatment for alcoholism involves diverse psychosocial methods and various pharmacotherapies.

Alcoholism is by nature familial. Drew Barrymore inherited her alcoholism from her parents, and even grandparents. Other factors, such as

environmental and interpersonal factors also added to her being deeply intoxicated with the alcohol addiction

It is important to note that in the healing process of alcoholism, identification of the problem is the first step. Drew hardly recognized her inner struggles with alcohol giving way to a delayed treatment. After this step, other steps follow that includes: Motivational enhancement therapy and counseling; Withdrawal and detoxification; Various interventions for long term abstinence; Behavioral Treatment Approaches; Cognitive behavior Therapy; Pharmacotherapy; Anti-craving medications; Aversive Pharmacotherapy. Not all of these treatments are administered to all alcoholics. Treatment programs are case to case basis. There are those who are healed through long sessions of enhancement therapies while there are some who needs medical intervention. Pharmacotherapies for example involve the intake of drugs of higher doses that requires medical supervision. Substances such as Disulfram, Fluoxetine and others are administered carefully as they involve metabolic changes when taken. This disrupts natural body metabolism just to make the body resist the desire for alcohols. This can lead to lot of side effects to the body especially when the body reacts negatively with the dosage and the drugs itself. It is much safer to go through anti craving medications such s Acamprosate, naltrexone, opioid antagonist and others. According to doctors, these substances are more tolerated with the body, and appear to be safe. (Enoch, et al).

Drug addiction is another complex disease where an uncontrollable craving for drugs and other substance is involved. This drug intoxication disrupts the natural body metabolism thereby causing changes in the body, the brain

that leads to health deterioration when not treated. No single treatment can be made appropriate to everyone.

Treatment for drug addiction has many approaches. It includes medication, behavioral therapy, detoxification, treatment and relapse prevention. Almost often, it takes a combination of these various treatments for drug addicts to be healed and become sober. Drug addicts are always subjected to drug rehabilitation centers to address their addiction completely. Treatment can take long, but it requires intensive processes, done in diverse settings with variety of behavioral approaches (Drug).

Conclusion

Drew Barrymore is just one of the many people around the world that suffered alcoholism and drug addiction at an early age. It can be said that much of her predicaments were due to lineage, there are still other contributory factors that led her to become an addict alcoholic. She lived in a paradox where she is blessed with natural talent which made her into showbiz without an effort, but she is cursed with natural inclination to alcohol and drugs. She suffered a lot, but not forever. She chose to get well. She admitted she had a problem and subjected herself to various treatment programs. What she was before, is no longer applicable to who she is right now. She had fought the good fight. She turned out as a victor against drugs and alcohol. Her story is a story of hope especially for those other people hanging with the same psychological problem. It is never too late for anyone. Drug addiction and alcoholism can be treated.

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