

Sample essay on understanding addictions

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



- In 250 words, identify three reasons why social workers learn about the Stages of Change Model in South Australia. Provide two examples to highlight your points.

The stages of change model is an integrated model of behavioral change. This model focuses on the decision making of the individual and therefore influences their behavior. It describes the factors that will influence the decision making of an individual and overall how their overall behavior will change. Because of this, it is a very important tool in health promotion. Many other approaches can be used to promote health such as biological influence and social influence on behavior. The stages of change model is all-inclusive and views these other approaches as external influences on the behavior of an individual (Lewis, 2003).

It is important for social workers to learn about the stages of change model, as it is very important in their work. It helps them to understand the factors that influence the behavior of their patients. Understanding the stages of change model can help social workers to identify and recruit people into their programs, it can be used as a measure of progress for the people in the program, and it can be used to increase retention rates for people in a program.

For example, many programs are usually not designed for the needs of the patients. Once patients are recruited into the program, they discover that it does not suit their needs and they quickly drop out. The stages of change model helps to reduce this by designing the intervention around the patient. The early stages of an intervention usually do not have visible progress. The stages of change model allows the measurement of progress due to the

change in the decision making of the patient (Lewis, 2003).

- In 100 words, identify six reasons why social workers might want to learn about addictions.

In their line of duty, a social worker will meet with all types of people including people struggling with addictions.

A social worker needs to be able to:

- Ask about substance use and the effects it has on their client and family
- Understand what a response from the client means and be able to ask for more information
- Discuss the effects of the substance use with the client focusing on the negative.
- Discuss the risks the substance abuse poses to the client and their relationships
- Offer advice and short term intervention especially on alcohol abuse
- Have a grasp of specialist help available to refer clients as needed
- In 150 words, please explain what the following statement means: Drug addiction is a primary, chronic, neurobiological disease, with genetic, psychosocial, and environmental factors influencing its development and manifestations. It is characterized by behaviors that include one or more of the following: impaired control over drug use, compulsive use, continued use despite harm, and craving.

Drug abuse is a disease that affects the nervous system and brain. Once a patient is addicted to a substance, they have no control and will do anything to satisfy their desire for the substance. Once a patient is addicted, it is very difficult to get them off the drug. An addict is influenced by social factors

such as their friends, environmental factors and even genetic factors to use drugs. This means that some individuals are pre-disposed to be addicts due to their genetic makeup. The way a person behaves after substance abuse is also influenced by these three factors. Once an addict begins using a drug, they no longer have control over their usage. Their body calls for it and the user has to oblige despite the harm it causes because of using the drug, a user may lose control over their normal functioning and ability to perform normal activities (Jones, 2012)

- In 200 words, please describe some of the social work activities and processes you might employ with people affected by hoarding and squalor. You may care to mention a dilemma associated with such work, or statements or actions that you believe would not be helpful (please reference this)

Hoarding has been recognized as a diagnosable (and treatable) behavioral and mental condition. Squalor describes bad living conditions. Hoarding can lead to squalor. There are a number of problems that an individual who lives in squalor faces and might involve areas such as personal safety, fire safety, animal protection, child protection, disability among many others. Social workers can carry out numerous activities to assist people living in these conditions (Bratitotis, Schmalisch & Steketee, 2011).

Activities that can be carried out for people affected by hoarding and squalor may include, counseling to treat the cause of the problem and classes to educate people on risks such as fire safety. Cleaning exercises can also be organized to assist such people. While dealing with people affected by squalor and hoarding, there are some actions that a social worker should not

take. The social worker should not attempt for an easy and quick fix in the home of the client. The root cause of the problem should be identified and treated to avoid a relapse. If the root cause of the problem is not identified, it can lead to more hoarding from the affected person and therefore defeat the intention of the intervention (Bratiotis, Schmalisch & Steketee, 2011).

- In 200 words, please describe some of the debates or contentious points relating to love and sex addictions relevant to social workers. Provide some practical examples of how such 'addictions' might surface in social work practice.

Love addicts are people who live in fear of rejection, pain and do not believe in their ability to inspire love. Sex addicts are people who have no control of their sexual actions. Their need for arousal usually beats the need for intimacy leading them into a compulsive behavior that destroys a person's relationships with others. The thrill seeking of a sex addict leads a person to neglect their family, personal health and personal safety (Hall, 2013).

Once a sex addict reaches this stage, a social worker is required to intervene as this falls within the scope of their work. When dealing with such cases, a social worker faces some contentious issues. Just like any other addiction where tolerance for a substance is built up, a sex addict also faces tolerance. This means that they have to engage in riskier sexual behavior to experience the same thrill. This may lead to the individual being exposed to sexually transmitted infections and the social worker is required to assist the individual. A social worker helping an individual with such an infection might then realize that the root cause of the problem is sexual addiction. They might then be able to offer assistance to deal with the root cause of the

problem (Hall, 2013).

- In the following article, Bond, M. E., Williams, M. J., Crammond, B. and Loff, B. (2010) make a case for taxing junk food. In 250 words, explain their argument

In the article, the authors claim that the social costs of junk food are the same as the cost of alcohol and tobacco. Tobacco and alcohol are known to have many health issues to people who use them. This leads to a huge financial cost to the health sector. In order to make them less attractive to potential users, tobacco and alcohol are taxed very highly. This works in two ways. The high tax increases the cost of these substances making them less attractive to buyers. The higher taxes also raise money that is used to meet the financial burden they cause.

Obesity is a major problem in the developed world, which has resulted in a multitude of lifestyle diseases like diabetes. These lifestyle diseases are a major cost financially to the government. By comparing the costs of obesity to the costs of tobacco and alcohol, the authors propose that junk food be taxed. Junk food is a leading cause of obesity and therefore lifestyle diseases. A tax on junk food would make it more expensive and therefore less attractive to people. If healthy foods remain untaxed, there is likelihood that they would be much cheaper than junk food. More people would therefore switch to healthier foods and this would help to reduce consumption of junk food and subsequently obesity and lifestyle diseases associated with it. The taxes on junk food would also mean that the government would have more funds to deal with lifestyle diseases caused by obesity.

- In 150 words, please describe the ethical issues and dilemmas social worker face when working with people classified as addicts. Highlight your points with a couple of specific examples.

Addicts are people who are dependent on drugs. Their bodies cannot function properly without the drugs they use. This means that they are more likely to use all their resources to get the drugs. A social worker is tasked with helping such people live a better life. When working with addicts, a social worker faces many ethical issues and dilemmas (Goodman, 2009). For example, a social worker is responsible for ensuring that the addict has food, yet any money given to them is likely to be spent on drugs. The social worker must decide what to do to help the addict without fuelling their addiction. A social worker is also supposed to help the addict to seek specialist help. Once the social worker advises the addict, it is up to the addict to decide to take up on the offer. This is a dilemma since the addict is not in the right frame of mind to make such a decision in the first place (Jones, 2012).

- In 150 words, define the trans-theoretical model and name three criticisms of it.

This model for behavior change assesses the readiness of an individual to act on a healthier behavior. It is also referred to as the stages of change model. It provides stages and a plan of action to assist the individual in changing for the better behavior and maintaining it once they have changed. There have been criticisms of this model. A continuous model proposed by Noel (1999) does away with the distinct stages of the trans-theoretical model. All the stages that a person goes through overlap and one stage reduces in

importance once a user has gone through it. Smoking cessation studies carried out in 2010 showed that the stage based intervention were neither more nor less effective than non-stage based interventions. A 2011 systematic review found little evidence to suggest that the trans-theoretical model was helpful in helping overweight people lose weight.

- In 100 words discuss how and why social workers might get involved in drug abuse issues

Social workers deal with diverse groups of people. The people targeted by social workers are usually the low in society who have fallen into problems, such as financial problems, health problems and social problems. People who have these types of problems are likely to look for a way out and the most common way is drug and substance abuse. Social workers therefore find themselves dealing with addicts, people who have become dependent on drugs. The aim of the social workers is to identify such people and help them solve the root of their problems so that they can stop looking for the drug way out (Dominelli, 2009).

- In 100 words, name three key activities or aims that are involved in Motivational Interviewing.

Motivational interviewing is aimed at making the client identify his or her own interest in making a behavioral change. The client is able to discover the benefits they will achieve if they change their behavior or certain practices. For example, an obese patient might be able to discover the benefits for their health if they eat healthy (Miller & Rollnick, 2013)

Motivational interviewing also increases the self-confidence of the patient and helps them to take action. They are able to realize that even the

smallest changes are important.

Lastly, motivational interviewing is able to make a client more committed to change. They are able to keep going with the plan after they have started.

Reference List

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