

The disease model

Psychology



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THE DISEASE MODEL s Introduction There have been massive debates on whether to include alcoholic anonymous group of people into the category of sick people. Most scientists argue that alcoholism is not a disease and therefore should not be categorized as a disease. Alcoholic Anonymous came into significant limelight during the times of the Greater Depression and many viewed the groups of alcoholic anonymous as sick people (Kurtz, 1991).

Evaluation and validity of the disease model

In order to align ourselves and come up with a solution as whether alcoholism is a disease or not it is important first that we understand the concept and definition of a disease. Many scientists and many other sources have their own definition of a disease but we can simply summarize a disease as a derangement from the normal physical functioning of the body. Diseases can be caused by several factors such as pathogens, microorganisms, lack of enough nutrients in the body, poor environmental conditions and many others. While relating this concept to alcoholism we can therefore conclude that alcoholism can be categorized as a disease simply because there is the derangement from the normal functioning of the body. There is also loss of function of certain body organs such as the brain, liver, kidney just to mention but a few. There is also loss of equilibrium in the body therefore there is a shift in the homeostasis of the body. Conditions of loss of homeostasis will mostly lead to stressful conditions, which lead to diseases. Alcoholism therefore exists as a condition and as a disease. Alcoholism is a condition if it does not lead to addiction. Alcoholic anonymous people are people addicted with alcohol. For this reason, these people's lives abnormal and will most often require alcohol in order to shift their homeostatic

conditions to a certain direction. While analyzing alcoholic anonymous groups of people we can conclude they are sick and suffering from alcoholism, which is a disease at that chronic stage. It is for this reason that psychologists and therapists find it logic to group these people together in a confined area in order to offer them with certain treatment conditions. Just like any other disease, alcoholism has signs and symptoms.

There are also diagnosis and treatment procedures that can be administered to an alcoholic and this qualify acute or chronic alcoholism to be referred as a disease. Arguments have risen in the past and will continue to rise as to whether there are drugs that can be administered to an alcoholic so that the person ceases to consume alcohol at all. This is a tricky affair but treatment of alcoholism is done in two ways. Alcoholism can be treated as a condition as well as a disease. Alcoholism is treated as a disease if the continuous use of alcohol has led to significant effects on the body organs hence the need to cure and protect the body organs from the effect of excessive alcohol consumed by the person. Alcoholism can also be treated as a condition by use of therapies and counseling programs.

References

Kurtz, E. (1991). Not-God: A History of Alcoholics Anonmous. Center City, MN: Hazelden Educational Materials, Inc.