

# Addictions theory



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Addictions Theory Addictions Theory Although there are several theories that can be used to expound on the issue of relapse, the most appropriate theory that explains relapse is the Tiffany's model of drug cravings. This is because it explains the maintenance of high substance and alcohol use in addition to relapse. The model is also reliable because it expounds on the existing relationship between actual use and drug urge. According to Tiffany, drug use takes place frequently without having an individual being prompted to use the drug by an urge. In addition, a significant number of relapses were not provoked by cravings or urges. To expound on these observations, Tiffany created a cognitive model, which maintains that cognitive processing by humans incorporates both non-automated and automated processes. Tiffany's theory is the most accurate because as she puts it, the automatic process is usually characterized by performance of the task being fast, the behavior is usually elicited by specific stimuli, the behavior is very difficult to inhibit, easy to carry out, and can be conducted without significant conscious awareness (Thombs & Osborn, 2013). This is one of the best ways of explaining relapse mostly because the automated part of the theory that maintains a task being performed fast and being difficult to inhibit expounds one side of relapse, which is correct. Tiffany goes ahead to suggest an example of the automated where she maintains that an individual can drive a vehicle to a familiar destination without the requirement of much awareness. In a similar instance, the automated process can lead to a compulsive drug administration on one's self, which could be drug injection, alcohol use or smoking. This adds to Tiffany's theory and makes it stronger. Moreover, with continued acquisition and administration of the drug, the process becomes automated, as consumption becomes a behavior, which is

generated by automated cognitive processes. The drug use action-plan expounds on this issue in sequential and over time behaviors of using the drug becomes integrated within an individual in that it is efficient and effortless. This provides a clear explanation on why the administration of the drug or alcohol becomes so easy to the point that individuals are no longer keen in what they are doing. Tiffany's model becomes more effective because it expounds on the idea of urge generation. To explain urge generation, Tiffany uses the non-automated cognitive process. Since an urge does not develop abruptly, Tiffany attempts to explain how it develops by first maintaining that its occurrence is slow and is highly dependent on careful effort and attention. The non-automatic process also incorporates identification of specific strategies to employ, planning, conscious decision-making, and task performance monitoring (Thombs & Osborn, 2013). However, this process involves abstinence in the forms of abstinence avoidance and abstinence promotion. Both of these forms of abstinence are produced by the non-automated process. This is because the process involves increased attention as compared to the automated process that does not require being keen. In addition, both forms of abstinence are the result of attempting to reject the usage or administration of the drug. However, with continued reduction in abstinence capabilities, urges begin developing. When an individual is attempting to maintain abstinence, they may encounter abstinence promotion urges while the abstinence avoidance takes place when usage of the drug is affected or halted by external barriers that may include running out of supply at late night. During such an instance, cravings go up. This provides a perfect explanation on relapse.

#### References

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Thombs, D. L. & Osborn, C. J. (2013). Introduction to Addictive Behaviors.  
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