

Treatment of an alcoholic essay



Introduction Alcoholics will always enjoy drinking, they get all the pleasure they want, but do they think of the effects of alcohol? Most people always take alcohol without thinking of the consequences or just ignoring them. Alcohol has been shown to claim most of people's lives with about 15000 students dying of alcohol related diseases or disorders (Sschukit, 2005). Death is not something to be accepted easily in a society, people fear death. If one dies, he/she leaves behind some dependents who need to be taken care of. Apart from this, those who take alcohol get addicted to it and suffer the consequences of addiction. Some of the symptoms of addiction are such as loss of control, physical dependence and craving. Alcoholism is a disease of its own kind with progressive breakdown characteristics (Cook et al., 1985). These characteristics make the addict have the above mentioned symptoms. When an addict shows these symptoms, it means he/she needs some treatment. Treatment of alcoholism has to have a framework that guides the physician, or the physician has to know the necessary steps based on the knowledge he/she has about alcohol treatment, to help the alcoholic out of the problem.

Different people have different reactions and therefore will show different characteristics of grieving. According to Kuebler-Ross, grieving by an addict or any other affected person has five stages (1974). The five stages are; acceptance, denial, bargaining, anger and depression.

There are other stages of grieving as described by other researchers which can as well be used. In treatment of alcoholic addicts in the grieving stage in order to recover, counselors or the physicians dealing with the addicts have

to know the processes involved in every stage of grieving and the appropriate solutions (Cook et al., 1985). This paper will discuss how to treat alcoholic addiction for the recovery of the addict using the death and dying stages as a personality theory of identifying the problems of the addict and offering solutions.

The paper will first describe alcoholic addiction characteristics then the grieving steps and how grieving can be treated in relation to alcoholism. Symptoms of alcohol addiction For one to be considered or described as alcohol dependent, he/she has to have these symptoms. Lack of control of the much he/she drinks in any occasion or over time, craving to take alcohol most of the time, tolerance, which is the desire to take a lot of alcohol always to feel high and lastly the physical symptoms, which are seen if the person stops drinking. These physical symptoms are such as sweating, anxiety, nausea and trembling (Klingemann et al., 1992). There are so many signs of alcohol addiction as will be mentioned below. When a relative or a friend exhibits the four mentioned above symptoms, then be sure the person needs treatment of addiction to alcohol. The evident signs of addiction are classified as psychological symptoms and physical symptoms.

Physical symptoms are those such as selling one's belongings to get the cash for buying the alcohol, nausea, shaking when an addict stops drinking, some pain in the abdomen, change of sleeping habits and so many other characteristics (Klingemann et al., 1992). Psychological symptoms are those such as loss of interest in the activities that used to be his/her favorite, keeping secrets to himself or herself, concentration on how to get alcohol always, inability to quit drinking, depression, anger and anxiety, putting

blames on other people on his/her problems and change of moods

(Klingemann et al.

, 1992). There are though so many others that have not been mentioned.

These symptoms as have been indicated, affect someones life so much. If a person tries to quit drinking, it is necessary to seek some assistance since it is so hard for most alcohol addicts to quit drinking without going back to it.

The importance of an alcohol addiction treatment center now comes in at this stage. There are so many therapies that the centers offer which depend on the kind of situation an addict is in. Alcohol addiction treatment is offered to persons who desire to quit drinking and are not able to do so.

This treatment offers assistance to the addict to help stop drinking (Klingemann et al., 1992). Stages of GrievingAn alcoholic if stops drinking, undergoes a stage or a period of grieving. Grieving is the confused and conflicting feelings that an alcoholic addict experiences due to a stop to the usual behavior of drinking (Howarth and Leaman, 2001). Under this period the person shows some characteristics that indicate grief.

For one to be in this state, it means he/she feels the pain of not being able to quit drinking earlier and realizes his/her state. This makes the person react to the realization differently. It is this grieving process that Kuebler-Ross describes to be expressed in five stages (1974). The process of grievingThis five stage model was developed by Elizabeth when she interviewed people that had terminal illnesses and formulated this model out of these people's psychological reactions.

In this model Elizabeth describes the reactions as the stages of dying (Kuebler-Ross, 1974). In relation to alcoholism, the person may not actually die or may die due to developed diseases to alcoholism. There is a loss that the person (addict) is experiencing that is similar to that person in the final stages of life with terminal illness. Drinking as has been shown earlier, claims so many lives due to the diseases that it causes and even other violent causes of death like road accidents. Disorders such as liver cirrhosis, schizophrenia, gout, cancers and many other illnesses that do not have cures, that cause fear of death to the affected person are some of the consequences of alcoholism (Sschukit, 2005). The conflicting thoughts of the alcohol addict that has just stopped drinking make the person exhibit reactions such as denial, acceptance, depression, anger and bargaining (Zanden, 2007).

Denial is characterized by the actual realization that the person will really dying soon. He/she will not accept if it is her/him that is going to die. Accepting the reality that he/she is no longer going to do the things he/she planned to do, is an example of the thoughts that these people have. Another response as Kuebler-Ross indicated is the anger that the person feels about himself or herself (1974) (Howarth and Leaman, 2001). An example of the question that comes to the affected person's mind is, " why him or her ". Depression is another response exhibited by people in the grieving stage and is characterized by a sense loss. The person feels that so much will be lost if he or she dies, and that not much has been achieved , yet he/she is on the way without accomplishing what is important to him in life.

Acceptance is characterized by void of feelings. One feels that after all, the end too has some hope and accepts the situation as it is (Kuebler-Ross, 1974 and Howarth and Leaman, 2001). Bargaining: This, Kuebler-Ross describes as a state in which the person affected or in the last stages of dying thinks of other options that could postpone the death. The person accepts that death is on the way, but tries to argue in his mind if there is a chance to take the death further so that it could occur at a time that himself/herself would agree with. All these stages, Kuebler-Ross described as overlap each other and do not follow each other in an organized manner.

She indicated in her “ Death and Dying” book that the stages are defense mechanisms with different periods of time of occurrence that come one after the other (1974). These stages of grief as described by Kuebler-Ross, are very important in the treatment of an alcohol addict in the grieving stages. Understanding the person with reference to this theory helps the counselor know what appropriate measure to take in order to help the addict in the recovery process (Worden, 2002). Grief counseling Counseling people in this state can be done through so many ways. Counselors or qualified physicians in recovery centers can assist these people solve their problems. Alcohol addiction as has been stated before, has different stages and therefore different treatment methods. There are those addicts whose relatives are concerned about their health and persuade them to go to rehabilitation centers before a disorder forms, there are those who would just want to stop willingly and there are those who wait till the disorders attack them, that's when they realize the situation they are in is bad (Carroll, 1997).

The last group of people are the ones that experience grief in most cases. The kind of treatment these people can be offered is counseling, to make them recover from the grief. One form of treatment is group grief counseling and the other is by a counselor offering treatment based on the personality of the person being counseled. In treatment by a counselor, knowledge on the counseling methods and the characteristics of who is to be counseled is very important. According to Worden, most comments that people always give for example am sorry, I did lose my friend too, I know how you feel and so many others, do not offer any help to a grieving or mourning person. The author of the book “ Grief Counseling and Grief Therapy” recommends that, it is important to know the behavior and personality of people and especially the person under grief, to be able to help (2002). In any counseling or therapy, a counselor should know the personalities of a person including the behavior based on a solid theory of human behaviors and personality, otherwise solving the problem the person has will e very difficult (Worden, 2002). Techniques of grief counseling and how to use them on an alcohol addict One with a problem should be helped out to accept the situation he/she is in, in a manner that encourages him/her to proceed with life in the normal way, except for the mistakes that the person did or others that may occur.

The acceptance encouraged in counseling is not that of giving up in life and being on the receiving end to the problem, instead, it helps the person realize that the problem exists and he can live with it given a second chance (Carroll, 1997). Below are some counseling techniques that can be used to treat alcohol addiction under the recovery stage. It is important for a

counselor to know the behaviors of the alcohol addict (which in this situation are the symptoms of alcoholism), have a theory to base the personalities of who to counsel, of which for an addict the theory is given by Kuebler-Ross, and the counseling techniques which are given below. The use of evocative language: The main aim of this technique is to make the person develop some sense of reality and to stimulate the painful feelings that the person might have been avoiding (Worden, 2002). When dealing with an alcohol addict, the counselor can provocatively tell the person, “ Your drinking habit was so bad before”.

This will make the person realize that in deed he/she used to take too much alcohol that has caused him/her his/her life. The person will feel the pain of not being responsible enough to avoid too much drinking and that of what situation he/she is in at the time. It is not advisable though to use this technique on a person that feels angry at that time about the situation since more anger will be experienced (Kirschenbaum and Jourdan, 2005). Using symbols: In grief counseling, a mourner is advised to bring the photographs or any other important things that make him/her think of the lost one in order to make the counselor learn about the lost one as well as to focus on the lost one rather than the affected. In an addicts case, there is no mourner in the actual sense. There is no one who is dead, but the alcohol addict to the counselor, in his situation, views himself or herself as someone who is in the last stages of death. A counselor therefore has to find a way of dealing with this situation based on this technique.

It is advisable for a counselor to instruct the alcohol addict to bring his photographs of during the times of healthiness, and other symbolic things

indicating what he/she did when he/she was still healthy with no alcoholic problems. The person being focused on here, is the alcohol addict and the counselor needs to know more about him before the alcoholic disorder or disease struck. This gives the counselor a base on helping the addict accept the reality (Worden, 2002). Writing (Taking care of the unfinished business): Grief counseling requires a counselor to instruct the mourner to write letters about his/her feelings and thoughts to the deceased. This helps the mourner overcome the grief of not completing their businesses with the deceased before death (Worden, 2002). To the addict, the appropriate instruction would be to write about his/her own unachieved targets in life and referring the letter to the ones he/she loves (Worden, 2002). The person should write a letter of being sorry to the people he/she loves indicating what he /she feels about it, but should not give it to them. The counselor should make to alcoholic ease the tension inside, for not completing the missions he/she intended to in life (Kirschenbaum and Jourdan, 2005).

Drawing serves the same purpose as making a client write about his/her feelings. These feelings when expressed on paper, will help the addict ease the anger inside, encourage him or her to realize the role he/she could still play. It also encourages him to view life in another way of making use of the time available to correct the mistakes before the time comes (Kirschenbaum and Jourdan, 2005). It changes the acceptance stage of viewing the end of life as promising, to an encouraging life of providing what he/she has to the people he/she loves for the time he/she will be available. Accepting it in the right way. Identification of thoughts and reality: In this technique, a counselor is suppose to help the client realize his/her importance still in the

society and that the loss is not the end of everything. In the case of a mourner, it is indicated that the counselor is suppose to remove the thought of “ Deceased is gone and no one will ever be like the deceased” (Worden, 2002). This is very true, no one can ever be like the other in life, but has life to stop because of that? No.

The counselor has to make the client realize that there are other alternatives in life that still suit and will be as good as the previous (Kirschenbaum and Jourdan, 2005). This kind of technique is suitable for an addict client being treated for alcohol addiction in the bargaining stage so as to make the person know that an alternative to death may not be it, but a change in thought and action can do it. It enhances the recovery. Other techniques that could be used though may have similar aims, are for example the use of directive imagery that requires a client to visualize the deceased.

This plays the role of making the client bring out the feeling he/she had about the deceased hence helping in the acceptance of the reality. In case of an addict, visualizing will be about his/her past life and speaking out what he/she should have done or should be doing in life. The other can be the use of metaphors which plays the role same as the first described technique in this discussion (Worden, 2002). Conclusion Personality and behavior are the core issues in counseling based on a solid theory. The solid theory referred to in terms of knowing the personality of a person is the grief theory which has been explained on how an affected person, who knows death is on the way, reacts. The behaviors of such persons are therefore known since the behaviors show what the person feels or thinks. Behaviors come from what caused the situation the addict is in at the time as well.

From the techniques of grief counseling and based on the fact that a grieving addict needs counseling, combining these two as have been done in the discussion makes a counselor provide the treatment needed by the addict. The counselor relates the grieving response shown by the alcoholic person and offers a relevant instruction to solve the problem. This research paper has shown the alcoholism symptoms that a counselor should know, the theories that act as a base to knowing the personality of an addict and the techniques of grief counseling. References Carroll, K. (1997).

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