

The Models of Addiction: Assumptions, Advantages, and Disadvantages

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Model	Assumptions	Advantages	Disadvantages
Disease or Medical	<p>Addiction is a progressive, deteriorating disease that goes through a series of stages</p> <p>Addiction is a chronic and long-term condition</p> <p>Addiction can only be treated but not cured</p> <p>Addiction is a primary disease</p> <p>Abstinence is only viable treatment option</p> <p>Ingesting of drugs leads to loss of control</p>	<p>Removes societal and moral stigma</p> <p>Individuals are more likely to get help or treatment (because shame/guilt are removed)</p> <p>Treatment is more likely to be covered by insurance</p> <p>A clear treatment goal (abstinence); straightforward</p> <p>Increased funding for research</p> <p>Language allows for commonality and communication among clients and clinicians</p>	<p>Excludes those who do not fit in the disease model concept</p> <p>Absolves individuals of personal responsibility</p> <p>Makes excuses for deviant behavior</p> <p>Ignores psychological variables</p> <p>All or nothing approach</p> <p>Lack of empirical evidence of disease concept</p> <p>Treatment may seem too simplistic</p> <p>Where do we draw the line in terms of disease concept? (shoplifting, gambling, etc.)</p>
Moral	<p>Addiction is the person's choice</p> <p>Poor choices come from flawed character or moral weakness</p> <p>Addiction is seen as sinful and religious/spiritual interventions are necessary</p> <p>Addiction is the culmination of a bankrupt spiritual life Drug represents a search for a higher power</p> <p>Addiction is a "black and white" issue</p> <p>Moral model serves as the underpinning of our legal system</p> <p>Individuals must pay for making poor choices</p>	<p>Promotes personal responsibility</p> <p>Empowers people to make good choices to change addictive behaviors</p> <p>Appeal to those whose world view is based on concepts of right and wrong</p> <p>Brings a spiritual component to counseling</p>	<p>Very judgment based</p> <p>Contributed to the stigma associated with addiction</p> <p>Can foster a sense of shame, guilt, and blame</p> <p>Tendency to minimize the complexity of addiction</p> <p>May promote stigma of addiction</p> <p>Individuals may not seek treatment out of guilt and shame</p>

<p>Psychological</p>	<p>Addiction is driven by psychological stress</p> <p>Addiction is used as a coping mechanism</p> <p>Psychological problems are the primary condition, with addiction being the secondary one</p> <p>An “addictive personality” exists</p> <p>Social learning models can be helpful in explaining addiction</p>	<p>Takes away the guilt, shame, and stigma associated with substance use</p> <p>It addresses underlying reasons for turning to substance use</p> <p>Clinicians can create and more accurately define treatment protocols and coping mechanisms</p> <p>May be less chance/risk of relapse because underlying psychological issue have been addressed</p> <p>May give hope for full recovery</p>	<p>Risk of labeling (using DSM-IV terminology)</p> <p>Use of behavioral therapy (may not be effective for some individuals)</p> <p>May allow for external blame instead of encouraging personal responsibility</p> <p>Not a holistic model, thus may be seen as too narrow a focus</p> <p>Encourage individuals to adopt a never ending cycle in finding reasons to self-medicate (i.e., creating new psychological problems)</p>
<p>Sociocultural</p>	<p>Familial, peer, and cultural influences play a large and primary role in substance use</p> <p>One must examine the individual in relation to his or her surrounding environment</p>	<p>Encourages and promotes responsibility for certain societal norms</p> <p>Systemic approach</p> <p>Prevention is a key factor in mitigating problematic substance use</p> <p>Educative in terms of learning about other cultural norms</p> <p>Helps to identify at-risk populations in which prevention is needed</p>	<p>Counseling becomes more complex with more people involved</p> <p>Blame may be displaced on the culture instead of the individual</p> <p>May promote/encourage stereotypes about different cultures</p>
<p>Biopsychosocial</p>	<p>Many factors, including biological, psychological, and sociological combine to influence or cause addiction</p> <p>A myriad of causes all leading to a common pathway of addiction</p>	<p>Model “captures everything”</p> <p>Promotes a team approach to treatment</p> <p>Individualized, holistic, and flexible treatment plans for those abusing substances</p>	<p>Treatment can be too complex; where does one start?</p> <p>Can create confusion and information overload</p>