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Psyc 470 – Introduction to Chemical Addictions

# Family Systems

- · Will focus on alcoholism
- Contends that alcoholism is caused by dysfunctional family systems
- Generally uses the "traditional" family as a system.



# Background

- Generally, people tend to marry people similar to themselves
  - Same SES, Education, racial groups, racial groups, etc.

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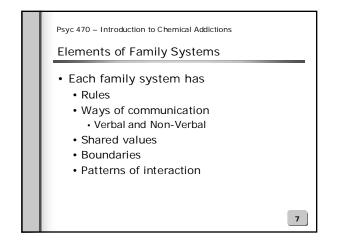
Also engage in similar social groups

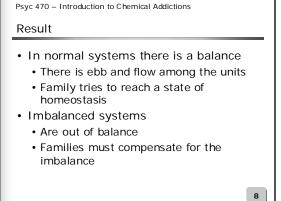
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### Families

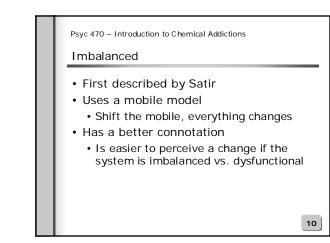
- Are similar to other groups
- Undergo a variety of transitions
  - Marriage
  - Fiscal pressures in early marital years
  - Early childhood years
  - Job and location changes
  - Adolescent years
  - Children leaving home
  - Others

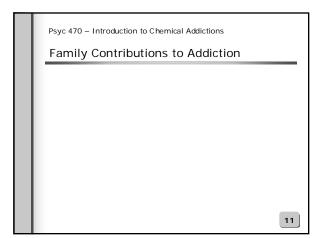
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Many Aspects of Being in a Family
Have a variety of different psychological and sociological systems that occur
Parental Modeling and Parental styles
Triangulation
Communication issues
Fiscal pressures
Emotional stability

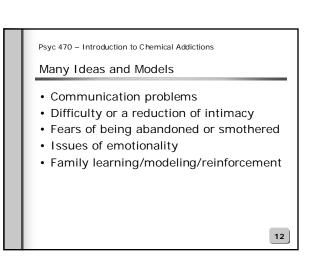


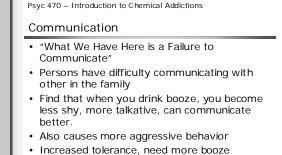


# Psyc 470 – Introduction to Chemical Addictions Dysfunctional vs. Imbalanced Dysfunctional First described by Ackerman Used to describe relationships, parenting, behavior, individuals, other Is often shame-based and used in a negative connotation Often used in a labeling context You have a codependent, enabling, dysfunctional relationship with your spouse Does not help the person May make the person feel hopeless, ashamed, etc.









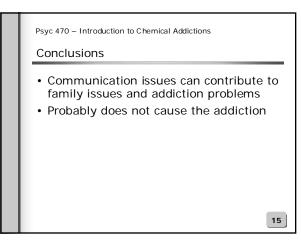
- Results in more problems
- Communication cannot occur unless you are drinking

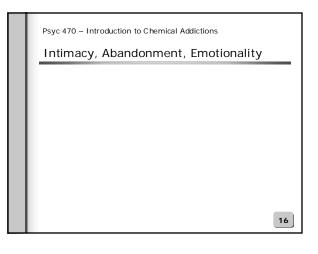
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Problem

- Communication problems also occur when you are drinking
- Cannot conduct a rational conversation with a person who has been drinking
- Cannot do therapy with a person who is drinking
  - At high levels, person does not even recall what you said.

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### Initially

- Alcohol/Drug use is used to facilitate to the interpersonal relationship
- Can be seen in dating rituals
- Can be seen for discussions within the relationship.
  - Need a drink so we can "open up"
- Problem
  - Increased tolerance

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Later

- Need more substances to "communicate"
- Need more substances to "dull the pain" in the relationship
- Result
  - Increased consumption
  - Decrease or problems in communication
  - Creates balance problems within the family

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## Result

- Family stresses increase
- Family dysfunction increases
- Develops into a cycle.
  - Problems increase
  - More consumption of compounds
  - More problems

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# Family Members

- Initially assist with the development of the use and dependence
- Help maintain the dependence
- Can hinder the recovery of the individual

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# Analysis

- No doubt families have an impact on addiction and recovery
- · Is correlated with addiction
- Does not mean families cause the addiction.

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# Other Problems

- How do you explain adolescent addiction Family modeling
  - Adolescent observes use among parents
  - Engages in those behaviors
  - Does not explain use/addiction when parents do not drink.
  - Can explain how drinking in some societies remains low

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