
Substances to Avoid in Recovery*

**If you want to stay in Recovery*

OHIO PRO CONFERENCE APRIL
28, 2024

MAKOY CENTER HILIARD, OH

Don't give your advice before you are called upon.

*DESIDERIUS
ERASMUS- DUTCH
THEOLOGIAN*

This presentation is for use at this conference only. No other use is authorized.

- ❖ I'm retired and don't wish this to be taken as any official document. It's a guideline based on years of observations and problems in monitoring of those in Recovery.
- ❖ I hope it will be a reminder of the minefield Recovering folks walk in our world and the need for care in what goes into their bodies and brains.

If you are a person in Recovery from substances

- ❖ Don't take anything said in this presentation as cause to alter prescribed medication.
- ❖ Talk with your prescriber if you have a concern. That should be done before any alteration of a regimen.
- ❖ If you are working with an individual on a medication of concern, encourage them to talk openly with their prescriber. Especially if they are not doing well or having relapsing episodes and behaviors.

Willingway Four Truths

- The total Cause of Alcoholism and Drug Addiction is Unknown.
- Alcoholism is at least in part a Chemical illness.
- There is a relationship between Alcoholism and Addiction to other drugs.
- Alcoholism is an illness of the total person (physical, mental and spiritual).

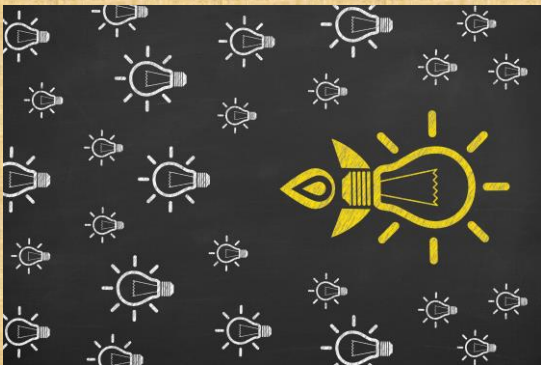
www.willingway.com

Better forewarned than just leap and hope.



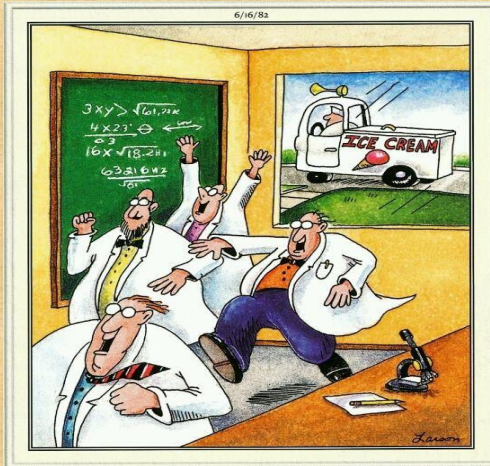
“Addiction isn’t like other illnesses and it’s ugly.”

*ANONYMOUS EXPERT WHO KNOWS
WHAT THEY ARE TALKING ABOUT*



It’s not Rocket science, but here are some ideas that might help. I am sure I have missed some substances.

But even Rocket Scientist can be distracted by the right substance!



Gary Larson is a true genius and I hope he doesn't mind me proving it.

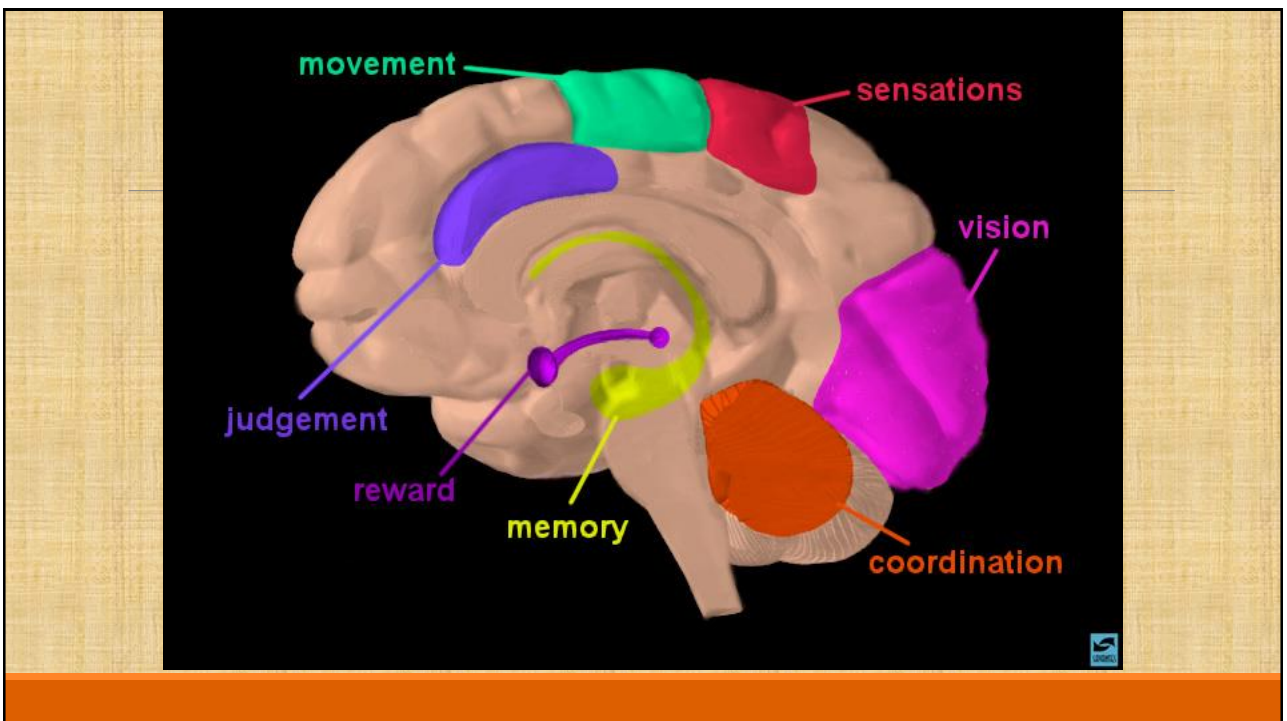
Objectives

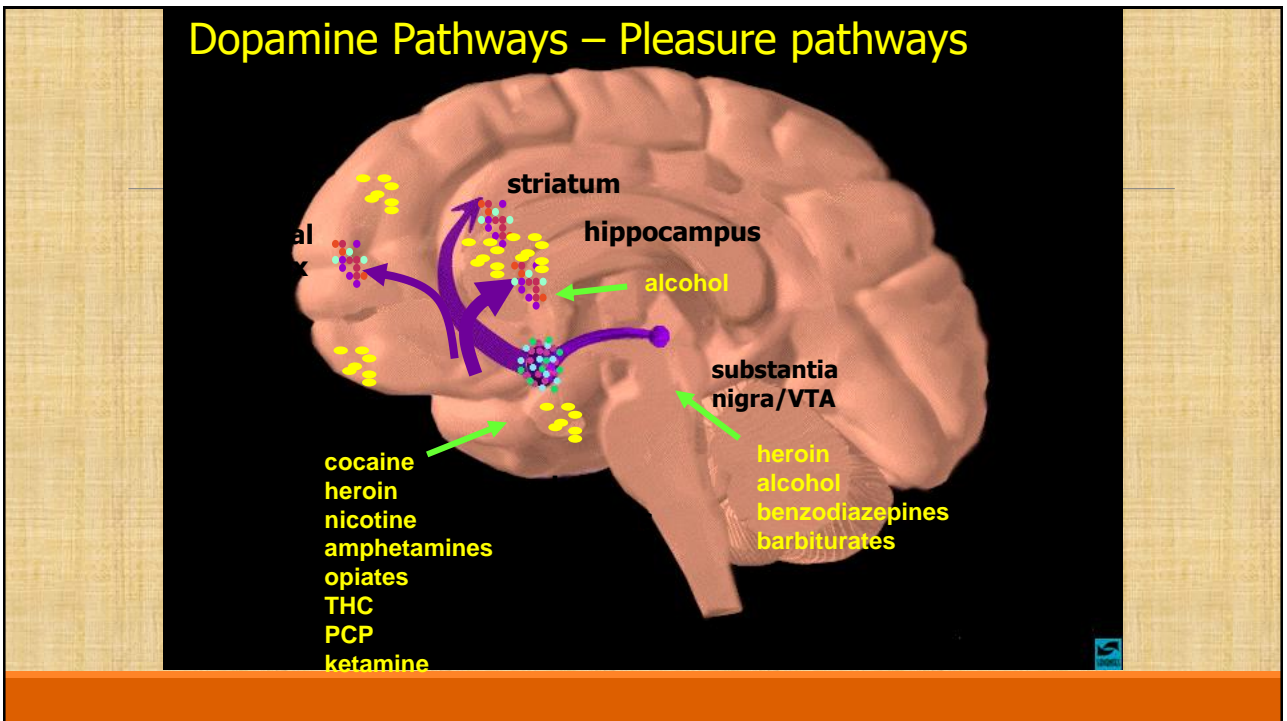
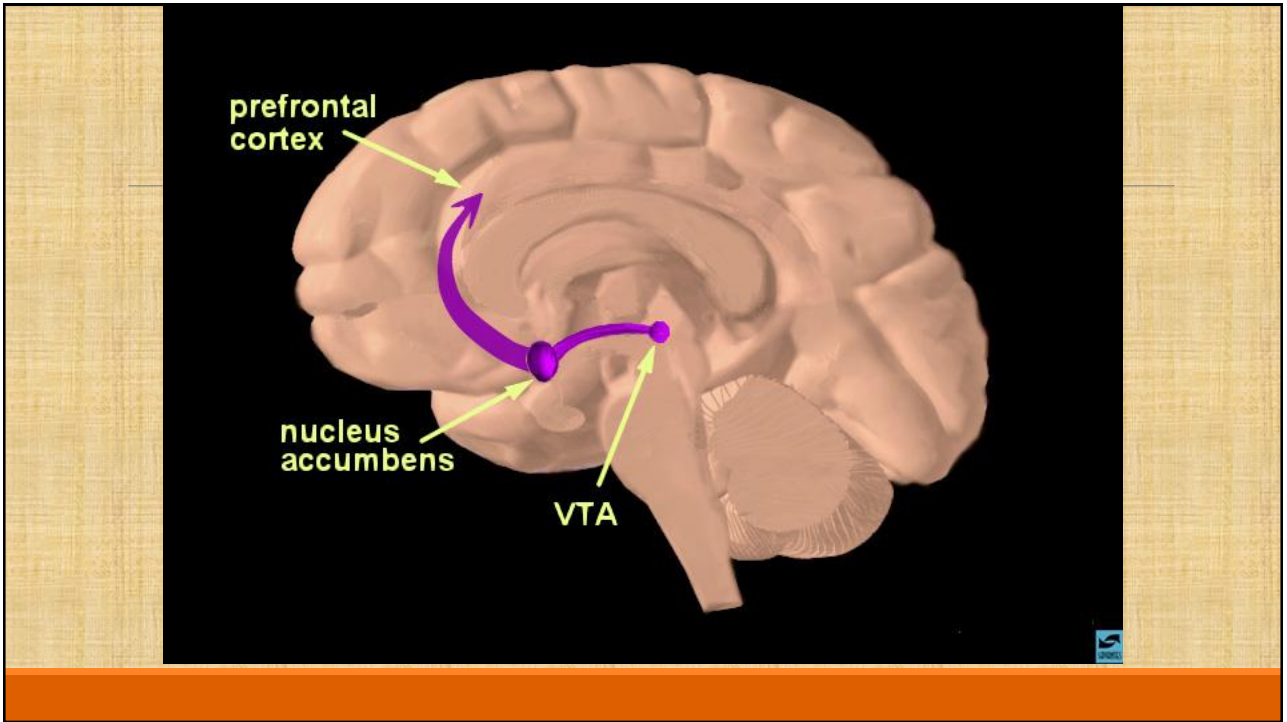
- ❖ A quick review of Addiction, a Brain Disease, but the rest of the body is attached.
- ❖ It's not like other diseases. When folks try to make it like others, they usually don't know much about it or have an agenda that's mostly business driven, in my opinion and experience.
- ❖ A partial list and review of substances to Avoid in Recovery.

Willingway Drug Rule

When old drugs become addictive, they are replaced with new non-addictive drugs. When the new drugs become old drugs they become addictive and are replaced by new non-addictive drugs.

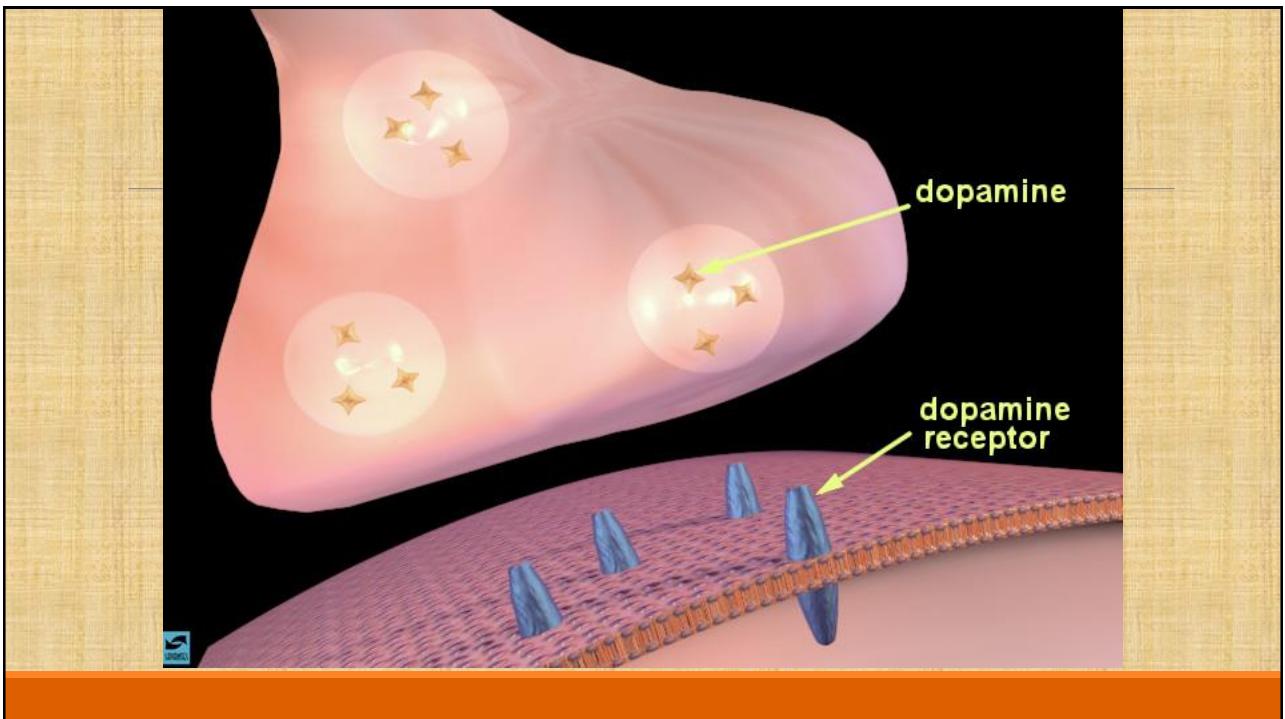
Adapted from the *Recovery Book*

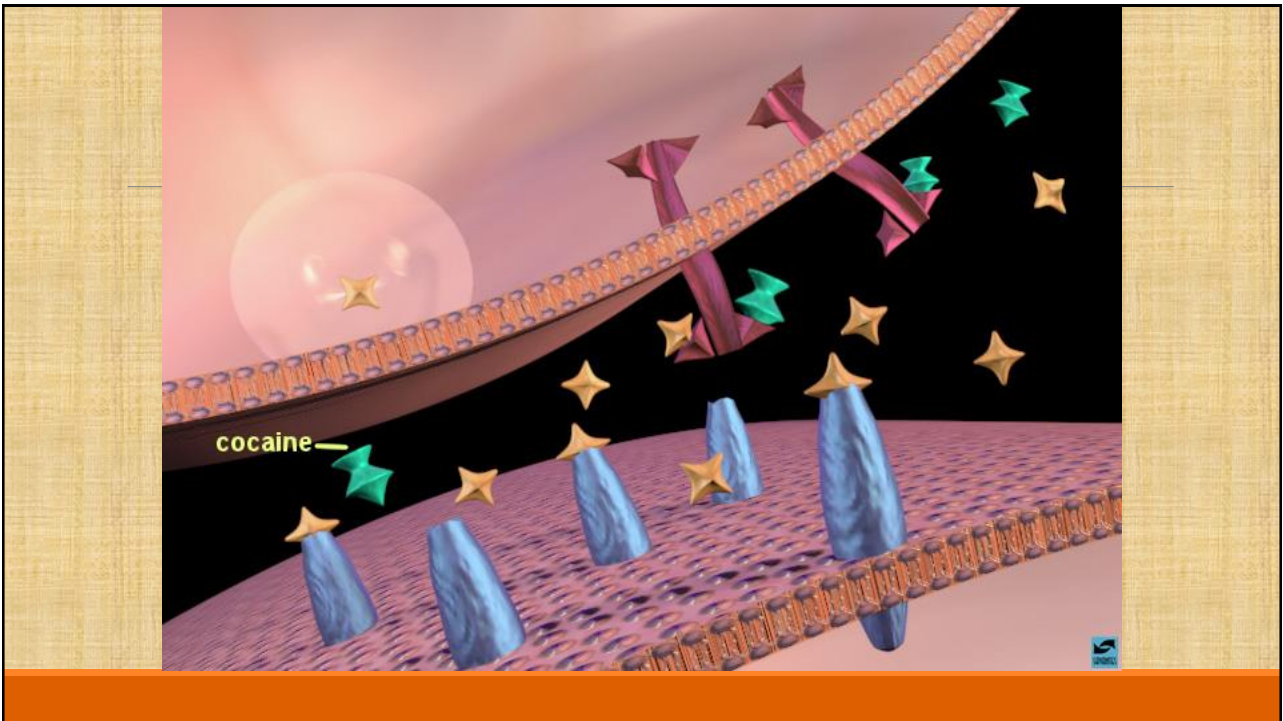
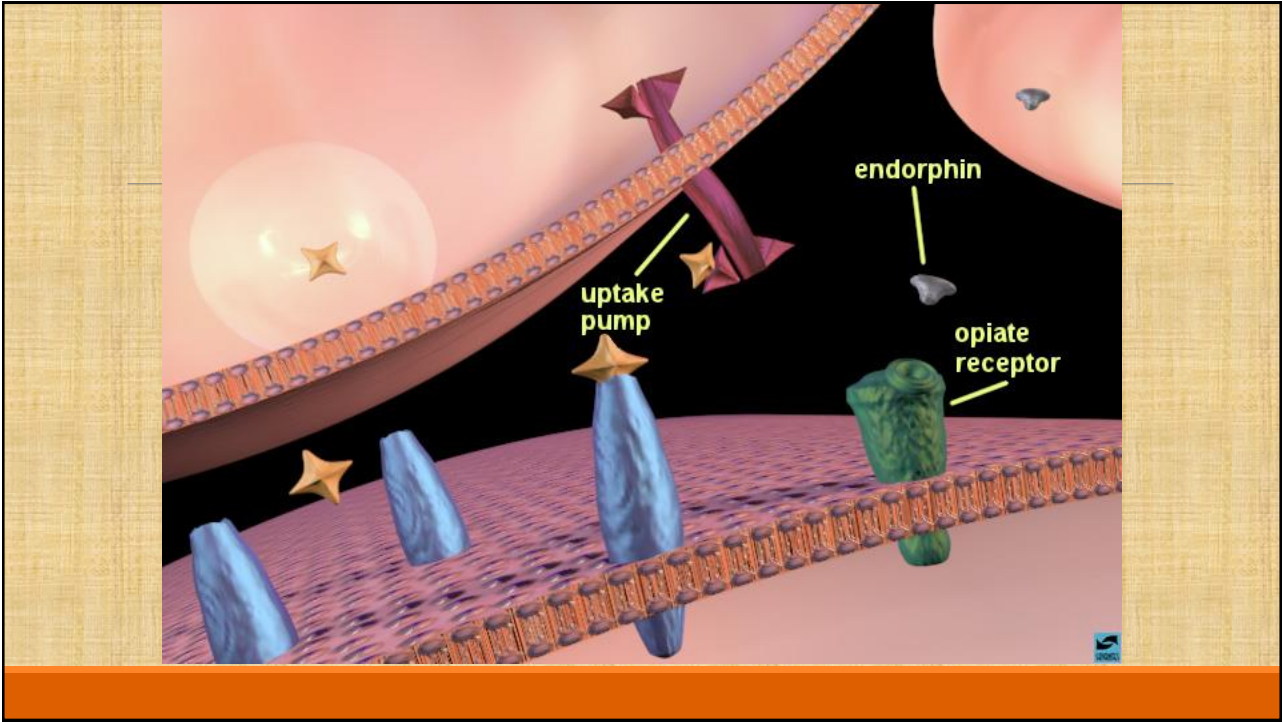




Substituting one addictive drug for another was a common means of treating substance abuse in the late 19th century. What all these well-intentioned games of medical musical chairs did most reliably was to create “new and improved” addicts.

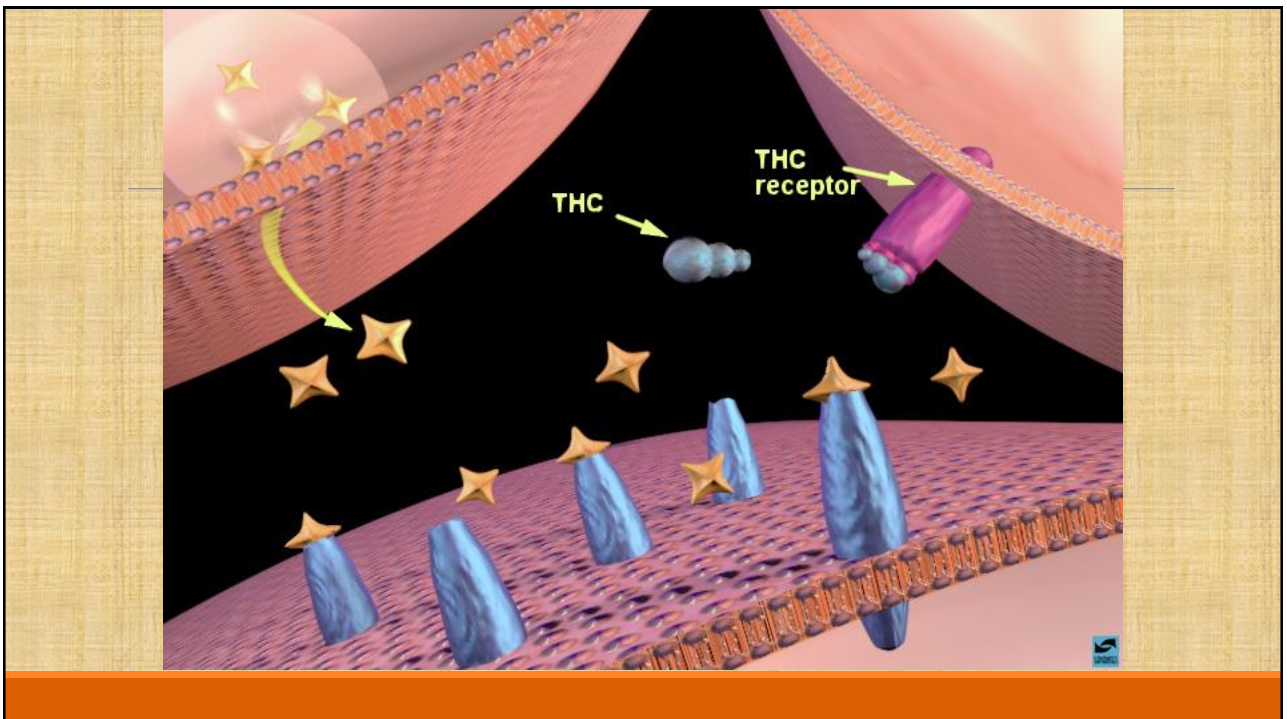
Dr. Howard Markel author of "An Anatomy of Addiction: Sigmund Freud, William Halsted, and the Miracle Drug Cocaine"





"driving that train, high on cocaine, Casey Jones, you better watch your speed."

The Grateful Dead 1970



“We don’t usually vote on what is a medicine. And we don’t smoke it.”

DR. SCOTT TEITELBAUM

PROFESSOR AND VICE CHAIR- PSYCHIATRY
DEPARTMENT

U OF FL MEDICAL SCHOOL

Alcoholism / Drug Addiction

Not bad people, just people with a bad disease

A Chronic, Progressive and very unpleasant, on the way to being Fatal illness

An illness that is preventable and treatable, but not curable

First, we need to define Recovery and that's not a simple thing. Well, I think it is, but...

- ❖ Abstinence from all mood-altering drugs or substances. Additionally active engagement with others in Recovery and practice of Spiritual principles for a happy new way of living. This is what most folks in long term Recovery would support, if they are happy being Recovered.
- ❖ Abstinence or controlled use of certain drugs or substances. Managing one's use. Sort of a "California sober" approach.
- ❖ Medically managed Recovery. This seems to be the most frequent form now. With heavy support(mandated) from organized medicine, governments and payors. It's primarily a business model and decision. Medical professional as Higher Power
- ❖ *Three pertinent ideas come to mind.

"It doesn't take a lot of sense to get sober, it just takes all that you've got."

DR. JOHN MOONEY

CO-FOUNDER OF WILLINGWAY HOSPITAL

STATESBORO, GEORGIA

Classes of substances to avoid that are easy to spot. And should be easy to agree upon.

- ❖ Alcohol- Any form of ethyl alcohol from any source in any amount.
- ❖ Cocaine and Amphetamines- and those newer drugs that act in similar ways. Stimulants- if it keeps you awake it's trouble.
- ❖ Sedatives and Hypnotics- essentially Benzodiazepines and Z-drugs. But any substance that relaxes or causes drowsiness- if it makes you sleep it's trouble
- ❖ Opioids and Opiates- If it's an agonist at the Mu receptor it's addictive.

Classes of substances to avoid that are easy to spot. And should be easy to agree upon.
Continued

- ❖ Inhalants- Either medical or things not meant to be inhaled like paint or Dust off.
- ❖ New substances sold at convenience stores or gas stations, often with hand painted signs in the window. Neon signs if they are well funded and aren't illegal in the state yet.
- ❖ Anything bought from a dealer or "friend" off the street.
- ❖ Designer drugs you can buy online, usually from overseas.
- ❖ "Natural substances" usually from a shrub or vine that grows in Southeast Asia. Or the desert Southwest.

Signs by the road or hand made, often a tip off



Classes of substances to avoid that are easy to spot. And should be easy to agree upon. Continued

- ❖ Androgenic steroids- Often overlooked but frequent relapse inducers
- ❖ Alpha2 Agonists- Dexmedetomidine, Xylazine, Tizanidine especially
- ❖ Hallucinogens – LSD, psilocybin, mescaline
- ❖ Dissociatives- PCP, Ketamine, Dextromethorphan
- ❖ Tianeptine- An antidepressant legal in some European countries but bought online here
- ❖ Substances or behaviors that mimic or remind the brain of using Addictive substances. Vapes, Energy drinks, Mocktails...
- ❖ This one is a sore subject, but nicotine is associated with more frequent relapse to other use. Not to mention in earlier times tobacco related illness was the most common cause of early deaths in the Recovery population. Still pretty frequent.

And Cannabis

- ❖ Even when it's legal. The brain of a person with an addiction doesn't differentiate where the substance is bought nor any attendant paperwork. Nor does it take into account the intentions of the user.
- ❖ There certainly could be, even might be, useful substances derived from the Cannabis plant. Just like Foxglove and digitalis, but there's work to do. And we generally don't smoke medications.

Other drugs with potential for trouble. While not addictive themselves they are not a good idea in those who have Addictions.

- ❖ Sedating antihistamines- think older generation H1 blockers like Diphenhydramine, Hydroxyzine, Chlorphenamine, Cyproheptadine, Promethazine...
- ❖ Sedating antidepressants- Mirtazapine, Amitriptyline, Trazadone
- ❖ Stimulative antidepressants- Bupropion mostly
- ❖ Sedating antipsychotics- Quetiapine
- ❖ Gabapentin and Pregabalin are controlled substances. And with good reason. **these probably are addictive*

“...has not been
systematically studied in
humans for its potential for
abuse ...”

From PDR under Effexor,
Cymbalta, Paxil, Seroquel,
Neurontin, Zyprexa, Celexa...

I probably ought to stop here.

- ❖ The primary point I hope I am making is this-
- ❖ The brains of folks with substance addictions won't react predictably the way the general population will.
- ❖ The person who has the Addiction to substances is the final authority on what they want as far as Recovery or Sobriety... But they still pose real and potential danger to themselves and others. And that's the rub. Addictions and contagious infections can and do pose risk to others.
- ❖ The form of Recovery that has the highest likelihood of sustained success is the Abstinence and Spiritual method.



“Mother needs something today to
calm her down
And though she's not really ill,
there's a little yellow pill
She goes running for the shelter of
her mother's little helper...”The Rolling
Stones 1966

Questions?

- ❖ I do wish to thank the committee for asking me to speak here.
- ❖ I want to also thank all of you who are here to learn to be better helpers of a tough group of folks to help. But the reward is great, and miracles happen everyday.
- ❖ Thank you