



The Place For Wellness

Why Do I Need To Go To Rehab?

Everyone with an addiction, or who knows someone with an addiction (and that's just about all of us) has heard the line "I'm just going to stop." Ask someone in recovery, and they will tell you it was a frequent statement made to families, friends, and themselves. Spouses will tell you they long ago lost count of how many times they were promised that the drinking or drug use would stop. But the declaration of change, regardless of its sincerity, is usually short-lived.

The reason why the promises of sobriety are so easily broken lies in the nature of addiction. It is a disease that highjacks the brain and the way in which a person thinks. Right action is much more than willpower, it requires learning how to win the battle inside one's own head. As Dr. Lloyd Gordon, medical director of COPAC explains, "in order to stay happily and comfortably sober, you have to change your thinking and your actions. Because alcoholism and drug addiction are essentially brain diseases, there's no way to think your way into acting right. You have to act your way into right thinking."

Rehab is about understanding how the disease of addiction affects your mind, and learning to change the way you respond to feelings, events and the daily stress of life. The addicted part of the brain has an answer for every occasion – use your drug of choice. Over time, the voice of addiction becomes so loud and so powerful that it drowns out the voices of reason, truth, and responsibility. The power of the disease of addiction is seen all around us as we hear of doctors losing their licenses, teachers losing their jobs, and men and women losing their lifelines. Only when we stop underestimating the power of addiction do we have a realistic chance of breaking free from its power.

The reason why rehab is the most successful form of treatment is because it does not underestimate the enemy. Changing the way in which your mind works, learning new behaviors, regaining your health so that you can fight back against addiction, are no small challenges. Trying to accomplish all this without professional help, and without a healing rehab environment that provides temporary shelter from life's stressors and the power of your disease, is a daunting task. A successful recovery after a solid rehab program is tough – so no wonder the success rate without rehab is very low.

Rehab is much more than learning about addiction – it's about learning how to live life differently. The addicted brain likes to run away from problems, it avoids conflict, it doesn't seek answers to reduce stress, and it avoids life rather than embracing it. Addiction is an escape, not only from life's challenges, but ultimately from its joys and richness. The true goal of rehab is to help you live more fully. Life in recovery should be so much better than life in addiction.