Pastoral Care for Young Adults Struggling with Addiction

UUA Ministries and Faith Development,
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P.C for Young Adults Struggling with Addiction

- Welcome
- Introductions
Objectives:

- Learn about the signs and symptoms of addiction
- The role of the campus ministry group in supporting people with addictions
- Commit 2 Community/InSide Out Groups
Why is it important for faith leaders to learn about drug dependence and other addictive behaviors that impact individuals, families, and the campus ministry group?
Addiction

- What is addiction?
Addiction

- Addiction – “is any compulsive, habitual behavior that limits the freedom of human desire. Is caused by the attachment, or nailing, of desire to specific objects.” (Gerald G. May, MD.)
- Basic elements of addiction:
  - Tolerance – the need for more to achieve the desired affect
  - Craving – strong desire to use despite negative consequences and is primary symptom of addiction
  - Loss of willpower – not being able to stop the behavior
  - Withdrawal – nausea, sweating, shakiness, irritability
  - Self-deception – denial, rationalization, displacement, repression
Behavioral Indicators of Addiction

• Preoccupation/obsessing on substance or behavior
• Inability to control or stop addictive behavior
• Frequent and progressive involvement in addictive behavior
• Deception and dishonesty regarding addictive behavior
• Neglect of job, school, family, church, etc
• Continuation of behavior despite problems.

(Spiritual Caregiving to Help Addicted Persons and Families, SAMHSA)
The Brain and Addiction

- Using alcohol and other drugs repeatedly over time changes brain function in fundamental and lasting ways.
- These changes are responsible for the distortions of cognitive and emotional functioning, including the compulsion to use.
What about you?

• What are your values and attitudes toward drug dependence and other addictive behaviors?

• What are your family of origin values and attitudes toward drug dependence and other addictive behaviors?
Substances

- What are some of the substances that are used/abused by young adults?
Substances

- Illegal drugs
- Prescription drugs
- Internet
- Porn
- Computer games
- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- Inhalants
- Bath Salts
Reasons Young Adults Use

• What are some of the reasons young adults use?
• What are some of the warning signs of substance use/abuse?
Warning Signs

• Loss of interest in studies and extracurricular activities
• Change in friends
• Loss of appetite
• Change in sleeping patterns
• Withdrawal from community
• Involvement with the criminal justice system
• Others
Challenges

- Parents who used substances as an young adult and are okay with their children “experimenting” with substances.
- Campus culture that normalizes using substances.
- Campus cultures that demonized substance use making it difficult for young adults to ask for help.
Challenges

- Family: lack of communication, lack of family together time, stress
- Alcohol or drug use/abuse by parent or other adults in young adult’s life
- Hiding pain and shame related to use/abuse
Spiritual Care Action Sheet

• Identify 5 helpful responses to young adults.
  1. 
  2. 
  3. 
  4. 
  5.

• Identify 5 unhelpful responses to young adults.
  1. 
  2. 
  3. 
  4. 
  5.

(Spiritual Caregiving to Help Addicted Persons and Families, SAMHSA)
Helpful Tips

• Maintain a list of appropriate referrals to helping professionals
• Maintain a library
• Be sensitive to cultural differences
• Be comfortable with yourself
Campus Ministry Team

- Alcohol, drug and behavior addictions affect the entire campus community.
- Model a non-judgmental attitude, understanding, sensitivity, and respect.
- Identify 3 local treatment or recovery programs that treat young adults and contact (visit) them for information.
- Access the past and present relationship your campus ministry group has with alcohol and other drugs.
- Educate yourself, educate the group, educate young adults!
Commit 2 Community
InSide Out Groups

• “The model was created by youth and young adults in 2005 at a Drug and Alcohol Summit. The purpose was to create dialog on the effects drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and sense pleasure addictions has on ones spirit.

• The goal is to understand how use/non-use/and addiction can effect individuals, small groups, and the overall community.

• The hope is to have congregations participate in Small Group Ministry inclusive of youth, young adults, and adults on the topic of drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and addiction.

• InSide Out Groups are an opportunity for us to heal on the InSide so we can join our faith communities with a greater understanding of personal spiritual healing.” (Nan E. C. Moore, Commit 2 Community Program Organizer)
InSide Out Group Structure

- Review Group Agreements and Confidentiality Agreements
- Opening Words (Light Chalice)
- Commit 2 Community Topic/discussion questions
- Journaling/drawing/art
- Closing reading or song (original readings and music—the best!)
Resources

• Commit 2 Community/InSide Out Groups, Nan Moore, nanmoore5@gmail.com
• Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, http://www.samhsa.gov/
• Alcoholics Anonymous, http://www.aa.org/?Media=PlayFlash
• Rev. Dr. Monica L. Cummings, mcummings@uua.org