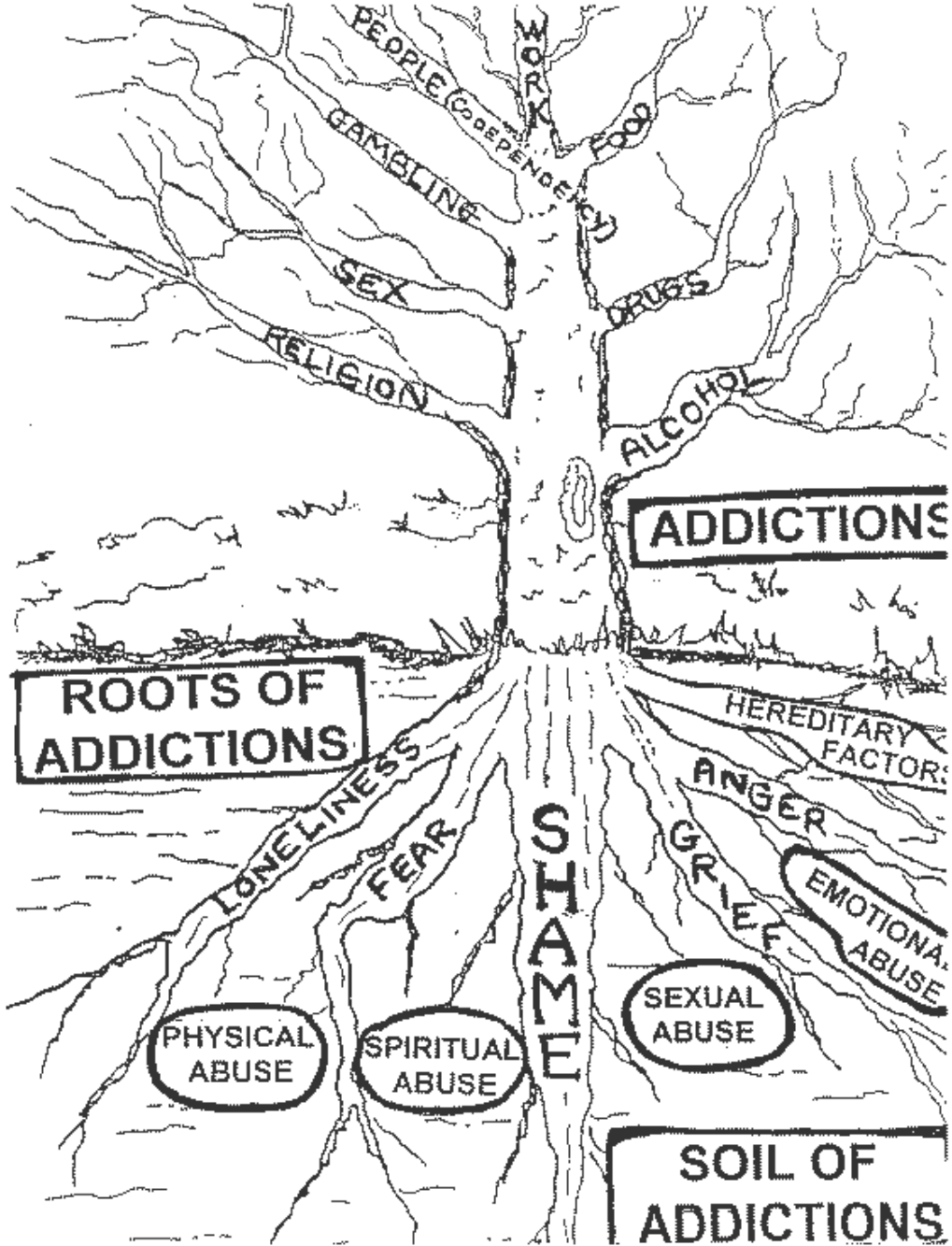


# ADDICTION

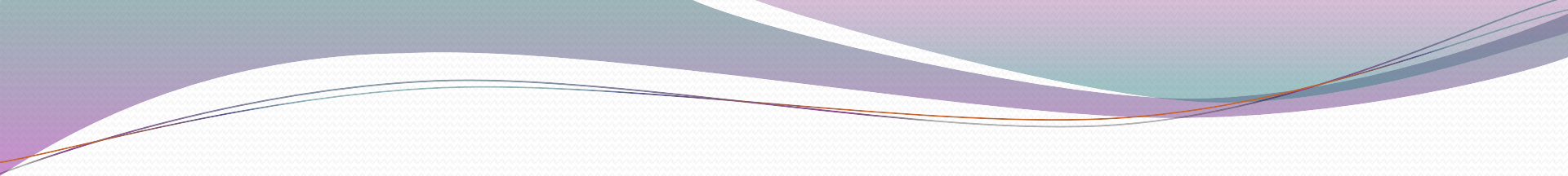
**A CHRONIC MEDICAL DISEASE**

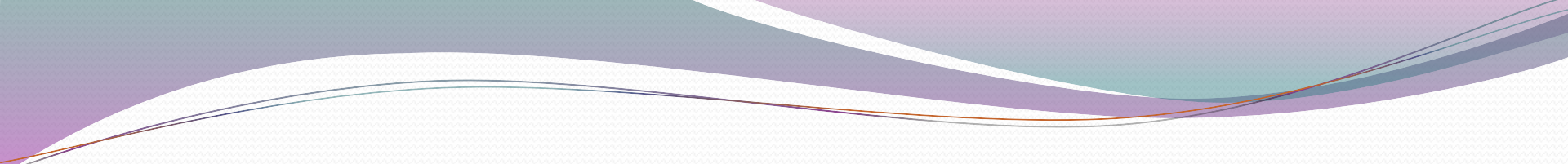
**IT IS NOT A "MORAL FAILURE"**

# TREE OF ADDICTIONS



a shot to kill the pain  
a pill to drain the shame  
a purge to stop the gain  
a cut to break the vein  
a smoke to ease the crave  
a drink to win the game  
an addiction's an addiction  
because it always hurts  
the same

- 
- Addiction has similarities to other chronic diseases in that it can be managed, however, is still present. (diabetes, asthma etc.)
  - Stereotyping and stigma attached with addicts when noncompliant – less likely to be forgiven by our society when falter from care plan.
  - It has a neurobiological basis causing changes in the brain, particularly influencing these 3 regions.
  - Cortex – area of the brain which allows us to think, learn and understand. Higher cognitive processes occur here with reckless behavior being controlled by the frontal lobe.
  - Limbic region – the brains “reward circuit” – activated in response to pleasure and emotions – explaining the mood altering properties of many substances and addictive activities.
  - Hippocampus – where long term memory cells reside, it is “plugged in” to the limbic region’s emotional circuits.



**Each of these areas are impacted by addictions, resulting in an altered brain that has learned to do the wrong thing over and over again.**

**“To expect an addict to JUST SAY NO is purely magical thinking” as per Dr. Nora Volkow – Psychiatrist, Scientist and Director of the American National Institute on Drug Abuse**

# WHAT ARE **ADDICTIVE** BEHAVIOURS ?

- “Any activity, substance, object, or behaviour that has become the major focus of a person’s life to the exclusion of other activities, or that has begun to harm the individual or others physically, mentally, or socially.”
- Physical addictions (ex. alcohol, cocaine, Rx. drugs etc.)
- Psychological dependency to activities (ex. gambling, sex, work, shopping, eating etc.)
- Addictive cycles occur when endorphins (chemicals in the brain) become over stimulated creating a “high” feeling of well-being and euphoria which leads to continuation of problem behaviours even though they have negative health or social consequences.

# COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF ADDICTIVE BEHAVIOURS

- Obsession with an activity or substance.
- Seeking out or engaging in behaviour that causes harm.
- Compulsively engaging in an activity even when the individual wants to stop.
- Withdrawal symptoms upon cessation of the activity.
- Complete loss of control (drinking 8 beers when they only wanted 1, buying 8 pairs of shoes when they only wanted a belt).
- Denial of any problems.
- Hiding behaviors particularly after family or close friends voice concerns – more likely to become reclusive.
- Blackouts-absolutely no recall of events while engaged in addictive behaviour.
- Depression, low self esteem & anxiety are very commonly seen.



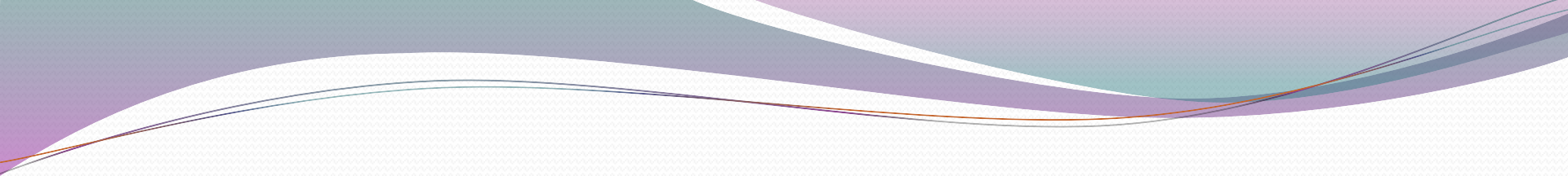
# ADDICTION IN THE WORKPLACE

- Cost in loss of productivity estimated at 24 billion dollars per year in Canada.
- Profound impact not only financially but also influencing relationships, job performance, absenteeism, and accidents in and outside of the workplace.
- Increased workload and stress for those working with the addicted individual.

## Indicators that depict substance abuse:

1. excessive absenteeism.
2. missing deadlines.
3. shirking important responsibilities.
4. extended breaks or lunches.
5. consistent early departures.
6. poor personal hygiene or grooming.
7. erratic behaviours such as excessive talking, impatience, paranoia, tremors, and sleepiness.
8. theft from company or colleagues.
9. unusual weight loss or gain.
10. attitude changes such as irritability, mood swings, restlessness, anxiety, over-reaction, blaming others for shortcomings.
11. withdrawal from normal social interactions.
12. accidents on or off the job.





- **Important for employees to be open and honest by not ignoring, excusing or covering up for a colleague which can further exacerbate the problem. Disclosure is more likely by concerned staff member if the employer has a supportive plan in place that they know will help their colleague.**

- **Beneficial to offer non-judgemental support and encourage them to seek treatment- Do not feel you have to solve the problem yourself.**

***Remember the staff member is a valuable resource for the company and it is in every company's best interest to proactively deal with addiction issues. It is much less costly to help them than it is to replace them.***



# ADDICTION RECOVERY STRATEGIES

- **Myths suggest that addicts are making a conscious choice to engage in their behaviours and that they should just be able to quit – this is totally inaccurate - they deserve the same compassion, respect and support that is required by all who are afflicted with illness.**
- **There are no quick fixes for any chronic illness.**
- **Hospitalization may be required for severe cases of withdrawal that require medical intervention.**
- **Follow up post hospitalization is crucial to successful recovery and prevention of relapse.**
- **Addictions Services can direct those in need of rehabilitation facilities to the appropriate resources available in our province.(Portage program for youth in Norton, N.B., LoneWater Farm for adult males in Grand Bay Westfield N.B., and Naomi and Ruth Rehabilitation and Wellness Center for Women in Northern N.B.)**
- **Mental Health and addiction services have outpatient programs available.**
- **Methadone Programs are now available and reporting high success rates.**

- **12 Step programs are accessible to both the addicted and their families who require support during the often turbulent recovery process and to reduce risk of relapse.**
- **Nutritional therapy is an important area to be considered in the healing process. Amino acids serve as the building blocks for powerful chemicals in the brain called neurotransmitters , all closely tied to addiction behaviour. With the use of various amino acids, brain chemistry can be changed to help normalize and restore deficiencies in the neurotransmitters that spur the cravings which lead to addiction and relapse. Multi-vitamin/mineral formulas assist in neurotransmitter synthesis and also restore general balance, vitality and well-being.**
- **Counselling is an ongoing process necessary to maintain positive lifestyle changes, healthy coping strategies, and emotional, physical, and spiritual well-being, all of which are necessary to promote optimal healing.**

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**IN CONCLUSION, IT IS VITAL FOR ALL WHO STRUGGLE WITH ADDICTIONS TO BE AWARE THAT THERE IS HELP OUT THERE. UNFORTUNATELY, IT IS USUALLY THEIR LOVED ONES WHO DESPERATELY DESIRE THE CHANGES THAT THE ADDICT THEMSELVES ARE NOT READY TO COMMIT TO. INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT FOR THE FAMILIES IS IMPERATIVE.**



This presentation is for educational purposes only. The information presented is for reference only and should not be taken as a treatment regimen or suggested treatment modality.