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Integrating spirituality and motivational interviewing into treatment plans for alcohol use disorder

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The integration of spirituality, praying with Motivational Interviewing (MI), and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) is effective in achieving short-term remission for alcohol use disorder. Recently a 63 aged female divorced, with two adult children was treated, who had relapsed in alcohol abuse after a 15 year period of sobriety, and achieved a one-month remission at follow-up. Psychosocial stressors, long-distance telephone calls from her ex-husband, and financial problems putting the children through college, triggered the relapse. The patient was self-medicating with red wine, nightly, and suffering blackouts as a result. Interviewed patient and discovered that she was a traditionalist Roman Catholic. It was asked by the author to her if she would like to pray, as well as talk about her issues, and then incorporated three prayers into her therapy session, the Lord's Prayer, The Ave Maria, and the Glory Be to God. These prayers were said at the top of the session and at the end of the 50 minute session. During the session, Motivational Interviewing (MI) and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) techniques were used therapeutically to help her clarify her goals, determine what she wanted out of life, etc. Mindfulness (Zen-based) techniques were used to help her determine what her internal and external stressors were. She also went to church daily, in the morning, for social support. This mixed mode intervention resulted in a one-month remission, at follow-up. When patient encountered another huge stressor, ex-husband asking her on telephone to come reunite with him in California, she relapsed, for 24 hours, as she did not utilize the prayer, MI, CBT and mindfulness techniques, nor did she go to church. She slipped, momentarily, into her old social environment and its triggers. A subsequent intervention with reminders of the principles of mindfulness, and with prayer, halted the relapse.

Conclusion: Further investigation is needed to see how integration of prayer with psychosocial therapies can help other patients with alcohol use disorder.

Biography

Eugene J Koprowski, MD completed his medical degree in India in 2012. He completed a research fellowship in psychoanalysis at the Institute for Psychoanalysis, Chicago, from 2012 to 2013. He holds a master's degree in religious studies from the University of Chicago, and completed his undergraduate training in applied psychology at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill. He is completing a two-year training program in addictions medicine/addictions psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry, King's College, University of London, presently. He is the author of many articles and two books including Nanotechnology in Medicine: Emerging Applications (Momentum Press, distributed by McGraw-Hill Education, 2012) and the Encyclopedia of Health Services Research. He is a science and technology columnist for Foxnews.com, a division of the Fox News Channel, and 20th Century Fox Corp., and earned an Emmy Award nomination for his science reportage in 2009. He has consulted for the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the U.S. Army Medical Command, Cancer Treatment Centers of America, and NASA. He is also an ordained priest in the Patriarchy of Kiev and All Rus, Orthodox Church, and has treated thousands of ATOD abusing patients in a community hospital setting.

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