
TARZANA TREATMENT CENTERS, INC.

ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUGS (AOD) TREATMENT PHILOSOPHY

Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc. (TTC) embraces an integrated treatment approach that emphasizes dignity, respect and compassion, while providing a safe, supportive environment, which empowers the individual to reach his or her recovery goals. Treatment involves (1) understanding addiction; (2) learning specific recovery skills; (3) developing a drug-free support system through 12-step meetings and/or other activities; (4) working towards the resolution of personal issues and life problems; and (5) finding a new, and often spiritual, direction in life.

Tarzana Treatment Centers' treatment philosophy is grounded in the seven values of our organization: dignity, diversity, quality, advocacy, integrity, progress, and innovation.

What is addiction?

We view addiction as a chronic, yet treatable, recurring disorder. Research indicates that both genetics and the environment can place an individual at risk for developing an addictive disorder, and having a psychiatric disorder increases one's risk of an addictive disorder as well. We are learning that the release of neurotransmitters to the reward center of the brain produces the euphoria associated with substance use, and that prolonged use can cause structural changes to parts of the brain, which may explain why addicts cannot return to occasional use even after long periods of abstinence. Many individuals with substance use disorders may require more than one episode of treatment, as is common with most chronic diseases. In fact, *success* rates (or really compliance rates) with substance abuse treatment are frequently better than those found for other chronic diseases, such as diabetes, hypertension, and depression. There is overwhelming research evidence that shows that treatment does work, and that the length of time one stays in treatment and recovery activities is the best predictor of long-term positive outcomes.

How do we determine the intensity of treatment that is needed?

We recognize that individuals seeking treatment may range from adolescents experimenting with substance use to individuals with twenty (20) or more years of substance dependence. For this reason, we believe that a thorough assessment is necessary to fully evaluate the severity of an individual's substance use and other biopsychosocial areas that include (but are not limited to) psychological problems, medical status, family issues, and legal concerns. The initial assessment is needed to determine the intensity of treatment, which is often referred to as the *level of care*. Levels of care include detoxification, residential rehabilitation, and outpatient treatment. We believe in placing individuals in the *least restrictive* level of care, based on their individualized assessment. Factors that influence the level of care placement include the intoxication level or withdrawal potential, medical conditions, psychiatric disorders, motivation level, relapse potential, and the recovery environment of the individual. Two individuals using the same amount of substances could be placed at different levels of care based on the evaluation of these six (6) factors.

How long should treatment last?

Treatment needs to be more than 90 days and preferably 9 to 12 months in length. This is particularly true for individuals with moderate to severe substance abuse problems.

A consistent finding in the research literature is that people in treatment less than 90 days generally obtain no long-term benefit from treatment, and the longer people stay in treatment the better they do.

As stabilization is achieved, patients can be moved to lower levels of care, and the intensity of treatment can be decreased. Once they are stable in treatment, patients enter *aftercare*, which involves a weekly group and a monthly check-in with a counselor. We know that any lifestyle change requires considerable time to become established, whether it is weight loss, a change in diet or exercise, or abstinence from alcohol and drugs. However, we also recognize there may be fiscal restraints on an individual's ability to pay for prolonged treatment, through their health care coverage or limited personal resources. When such restraints are present every effort is made to intensify and speed up the treatment process to include the rapid establishment of needed support systems to enhance the probability of success. This includes Alumni and aftercare services.

What is our approach to treatment?

We view patients as valued and active partners, with our staff, in their treatment. We provide the support, information, counseling, and teach the skills most people need in order to learn how to stop their substance use and rebuild their lives, if necessary. We offer assistance with a variety of other areas of need, ranging from psychological counseling to vocational assessment and training. In many ways, our staff are coaches and consultants who help individuals achieve their treatment goals. Ultimately, the individual in treatment must decide, and often take risks, to make fundamental changes to improve the quality of his or her life. The staff provide support, encouragement, and understanding, because we recognize that change is not easy and often involves making some mistakes.

We treat each individual with respect and encourage each person to examine the choices they have and the consequences of their decisions. We recognize that many people are ambivalent about treatment and that they may be entering treatment due to a variety of internal and external pressures. This causes many people to drop out of treatment during the first few weeks, and we openly address this issue with them as part of treatment.

Our approach to treatment is to motivate individuals to work toward their treatment goals. We attempt to reward success whenever possible, since most individuals in treatment have experienced considerable guilt, shame, and disappointments in life. We want to support people in their growth and development and help them achieve their treatment goals.

Individuals with substance abuse problems often have limited structure in their lives, and their lives may be focused on obtaining, using, and recovering from substance use. Treatment is designed to provide the necessary structure, which decreases over time as integration back into the community is achieved. In addition, we work with each individual to remove barriers, increase skills, and develop interests that will sustain an enjoyable, drug-free, quality of life.

We believe that addressing family issues is often critical during treatment, and we encourage the involvement of family members, partners, and significant others, whenever possible and appropriate.

We recognize that individuals with co-existing medical and psychiatric disorders need these disorders treated in a comprehensive and integrated fashion, along with their substance abuse problems. Often times, medications are necessary to stabilize individuals and improve their functioning. Our programs provide special groups for these individuals, and licensed professionals provide and oversee all treatment in these areas.

We believe in the regular monitoring of substance use throughout treatment by drug testing. This provides an objective indicator of substance use, and is helpful in assessing whether treatment is working or if a higher level of care is needed.