

choosing a quality
Christian Alcohol & Drug Rehab



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Some people who seek alcohol and drug treatment arrive at the treatment facility longing for a renewed or a new connection with a spiritual power. Perhaps you had a strong connection with a God of your understanding when you were young, but through a series of events lost your conscious connection, or perhaps you were never raised in an environment with the awareness of a higher power.

Whatever your path is to finding a God of your understanding, Recovery Connection understands that obtaining quality treatment through the teachings of Christ is of paramount importance to some. To help you understand the components of a quality Christian drug addiction treatment program, we have created this easy to read overview.

The decision to enter addiction treatment is monumental and finding the right program for your needs is a necessary component of your ability to stop the chaos created by alcoholism and drug addiction. Before we can discuss the value in a Christian alcohol or drug rehab program for some people, it is important to define an addict and then explore the relationship between recovery and faith.

What is an addict or alcoholic?

The definition used by the National Institute of Drug Abuse identifies addiction as a “chronic, relapsing brain disease that is characterized by compulsive drug seeking and use, despite harmful consequences.”

The reasons people start drinking or using drugs vary. Yet, there is a common denominator among all of those who suffer from the disease of addiction. Addiction to a substance, a behavior, or an emotion, results in permanent changes in the brain. These changes have a profound impact upon every organ in one’s body, one’s thinking process, and one’s emotional and spiritual health. Because of these changes in brain function addiction is considered a disease. Once the addiction has set in, an intervention (treatment) is needed to arrest the disease. Addiction is a progressive disease that is treatable and just like diabetes, it requires constant attention.

There is an expression in the 12 Step programs that states: Addiction is a disease of the mind, the body, and the spirit. All areas of one’s being must be addressed to enable healing and halt the progressive nature of the disease.

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What is a Christian Based Recovery Program?

The discussion now focuses on an approach to addiction that encompasses Christian beliefs and Jesus’ teachings. In *Healing Is a Choice*, Stephen Arterburn, a minister who writes, speaks, and works in the area of healing, poses the question early in his work: Do you want to get well?

The work that faces a drug addict and alcoholic when he or she enters alcohol and drug rehab seems overwhelming. Indeed, there is a good deal of work to be done-- self reflection, honesty, openness, a willingness to listen, and the admission of addiction and forgiveness are all necessary to begin the healing process.

Quality Christian drug rehab programs recognize the power imbedded using your faith in Jesus as a support while recognizing that you must do the work to get well. The support and comfort that a person receives by being in an addiction treatment environment with other people of similar faiths cannot be under estimated.

Research has demonstrated the power that faith and healing provides people. A key component in quality Christian addiction treatment programs is the concept that we cannot do the journey of healing and growing alone. Every aspect of treatment then is done through the lens of Christian drug rehab therapists with expertise in addiction treatment.

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What Are the Component Parts of a Christian Alcohol and Drug Rehab

For many entering drug rehabilitation, the need to have a Christian guided treatment program is paramount. Yet, there are crucial differences between Christian drug rehab treatment programs. They are not all alike nor are they all good. Some drug treatment programs incorporate the medical model of addiction and combine it with Christian teachings, while others do not accept the notion of addiction as anything other than a weakness of faith.

If you break a leg, prayer alone will not reset the bones. Yet, refusing to utilize the medical component to heal addiction is like praying that the leg heals correctly without taking appropriate action. We wish to restate that addiction is classified as a disease of the body, mind, and spirit.

While the process of addiction is the same for everyone, the circumstances that lead to a person's addiction vary. Sometimes trauma causes one to seek relief in the use of drugs and alcohol. Sometimes, a person is prescribed pain medication for a medical problem only to find that he or she has become addicted. A person may suffer from an undiagnosed mental health disorder and using drugs or alcohol began as a way to medicate the symptoms of the disorder (anxiety, panic, PTSD, depression, etc.). Sometimes, a person experiments in a social setting with drugs and alcohol and enjoy the change in mood brought on by the drugs and alcohol. Before long the social context of the drug and alcohol use has turned into a private nightmare of drug and alcohol addiction. The shift from experimenting, to misuse, abuse and dependence can be subtle and catch you before you are aware of the cycle of addiction. During this process, the spiritual connection to God gets shifted and addiction becomes our higher power.

These underlying issues contribute to the use, abuse and then dependence and must be addressed directly. In a quality Christian drug rehab program, the treating therapists will be Christian who understand faith based recovery, the role of Christian teachings and recovery focused bible study which highlight the spiritual principles behind the 12 Step model.

Quality Christian based programs will be designed to combine both the research medically based protocols, addiction education and more. All the core components of a good addiction treatment program should be present in a quality Christian drug rehab program as well. Remember, addiction is a disease of the brain, the body and the spirit.

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The component parts should include:

- Medically based detox unit
- Multidisciplinary team of certified addiction physicians, psychiatric nurses, psychiatrists, Master's level therapists, and other certified staff members
- Regularly updated treatment plans and patient evaluation
- Christian therapists who have a deep understanding of the teachings of Christ and the relationship to recovery
- Workbooks that relate to Christian teachings as they apply to the work of recovery from addiction
- Individualized treatment plans
- Individual and group therapy
- Bible study groups
- Church services
- Dual Diagnosis treatment if needed
- Medication management if needed
- Relapse prevention workshops
- Life skills lectures
- Exercise, meditation, and nutritional counseling
- Family therapy programs
- Individualized aftercare plans

The approach of quality Christian drug rehab programs should be comprehensive addressing every aspect of the drug addict or alcoholics life.

Applying Christian teachings to Addiction Treatment

The New Testament offers us themes that run through the work of recovery. Belief in a power greater than ourselves is the foundation upon which we begin the work of recovery. Belief in Jesus does not diminish our responsibility for our actions. Change is supported by our faith, Philippians

4:13. Alone I will not get us clean and sober. Belief does not relieve us of the responsibility to do the work to change. The work facing each addict and alcoholic in recovery provides him or her with the opportunity to face shortcomings, admit denial, own the hurt inflicted upon others, let go of the bondage of distorted internal thinking and decision making, and develop a consciousness of his or her potential.

Life presents challenges to every one. How we move through those challenges can determine a personal outcome. In a Christian recovery program themes such as these are included:

- **Hope:** Psalm 119:114, "You are my refuge and my shield; I have put my hope in your word".
- **Commitment:** Psalm 61:8, "Then I will sing praises to your Name forever as I fulfill my vows each day".
- **Honesty:** Psalm 25:21, "May integrity and honesty protect me, for I put my hope in you".
- **Willingness:** Matthew 26:41, "Keep watch and pray, so that you will not give in to temptation. For the spirit is willing, but the body is weak".

These few key phrases are crucial to developing a strong foundation of recovery. The 12 Steps of Recovery, which are the guiding principles upon which AA and NA are based, are further defined and explained through bible verses, as above.

Dual Diagnoses Treatment and Christian Addiction Recovery

A dual diagnosis disorder is classified by the American Medical Association as a mental health disorder combined with a substance abuse disorder. In both cases, these disorders are medical conditions that require accurate diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

There is a misconception among many people about dual diagnosis. There are millions of Christians who love Jesus and still suffer from addiction and depression, panic, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. Without proper treatment both the addiction and the mental health disorder will worsen. Treatment must be simultaneous.

Mental health disorders encompass both a physiologic and psychological component: that means there are components of depression, panic, anxiety that are rooted within the brain and the way the brain functions. These illnesses are not the result of sin nor does the medical treatment for these mental health disorders contradict the teaching of Jesus or the word of the Lord.

Treatment of a mental health disorder may require medication as well as other behavioral therapies. Prayer has been shown to aid those suffering from many disorders, but prayer alone will not erase the chemical disorder in the brain that is present with those suffering from depression, anxiety etc.

In a quality alcohol and drug Christian rehab program, all of these issues can be properly diagnosed, treated and combined with spiritual work enabling one to regain normalcy and health in daily life.

"Why must I wander around in grief, oppressed by my enemies?
Send out your light and your truth; let them guide me...."

God works through others, doctors, nurses, teachers, therapists and in this context, those who are experts in addiction.

Why Choose a Christian Drug Rehab Program Away From Home?

It is scary to go away to treatment. Our first impulse is to say that we must stay home. We have family obligations, work obligations, obligations to friends, and many other reasons why we believe we should stay home for treatment.

The reality is exactly the opposite. Substance abuse treatment is for a finite period of time. The work done during treatment is intense and requires all of your attention as well as your physical and emotional energy. Research studies have shown over and over again, that when people stay home and go to outpatient treatment, the risk of relapsing during treatment is greatly increased.

Going away from home allows you the opportunity to focus completely on you, your drug or alcohol addiction, the physical problems that might be contributing to your addiction, and the internal thought processes that are causing you emotional pain. When we choose to stay at home or go to residential treatment near home, we run the risk of allowing feelings of fear, home sickness, or guilt to take over. We may receive a phone call about a parent, a child or a spouse who needs help. We are so close, how can we not help out? Perhaps a bill collector calls or the family car breaks down. Are you going to be able to stay in treatment and maintain your schedule while phone calls about emergencies are happening?

When you stay in your home environment and attend outpatient treatment, you are more likely to collide with all the triggers that contributed to your using or drinking in the first place such as, frustrations with family members, behavior of friends or co-workers, passing places you drank or copped drugs.

When you leave town to attend alcohol and drug rehab, you are more likely to finish your program. You can not easily go back home. Distance away from family and friends without the distractions of everyday life can be a life saving component of treatment. Remove the pressures of daily living and you are freed to focus on yourself and strengthening your spiritual connection with God. Without a concerted focus or a willingness to do the hard work of self reflection, you will not have the energy, the willingness, or the desire to stop the alcohol and drug addiction. Sadly, a belief in God alone will not stop the addiction.

It should also be pointed out that outpatient programs rely upon self reporting. Outpatient programs are most successfully used as an aftercare tool. Self reporting through detox and early recovery is less than reliable. You may not know that you are agitated. Perhaps you are very emotional or you react too quickly. Perhaps you are feeling out of control but you do not want to admit these feelings. Perhaps these symptoms are related to drug withdrawal. The observations of a nurse and therapist about your behavior, and your reactions in early recovery are far more reliable.

Sometimes, your behavior indicates an approaching crisis either physical or psychological. In a residential addiction treatment program, these symptoms are monitored carefully and interventions can occur early. Should a crisis arise, you will be in a safe, secure environment

that reduces the risk of giving up and going out to drink or use drugs. Outpatient treatment does not provide you with this type of safety net.

In a quality Christian residential addiction treatment center, how your faith supports your work on addictive behaviors is understood. At a local outpatient Christian drug rehab program, the work on addictive behaviors may be overlooked to focus on faith alone. To state it clearly and once again, addiction is a disease that alters brain functions; it involves the body, mind and the spirit; therefore all aspects of the disease must be dealt with to arrest the progression of addiction.

Why You Should Choose a Comprehensive Christian Residential Alcohol and Drug Rehab?

A comprehensive alcohol and drug rehab will provide you with a continuum of care. As you move from detox to treatment and through the different levels of alcohol and drug treatment, you do not have to change facilities. Research has demonstrated that a continuum of care and relapse result in improved outcomes or better results. The risk of relapse during the addiction treatment process is greatly reduced.

Detox is the first step in the treatment process. Detox serves only one function. It is a cleansing procedure; it removes the toxins from drugs and alcohol from the body. Sometimes this course of action requires medically prescribed drugs to reduce the body's trauma during withdrawal. Doctors will manage your withdrawal symptoms ensuring that you are safe and comfortable, as some withdrawals may be uncomfortable while others may be life threatening.

There are both physiological and psychological withdrawal symptoms that may require medical attention. It is important to withdraw with the aid of medical supervision or the likelihood of giving up during the alcohol and drug detox process is greatly increased.

Finally, it is important to understand that *detox is not treatment*. Detox does not teach you about addiction, nor does it provide you with the skills or the knowledge to stop using drugs or drinking alcohol.

Once you have completed detox, treatment can begin. It is during this stage of early recovery that you begin to address your underlying issues, deal with dual diagnosis (such as panic attacks and drug use, for example) if necessary, medication management, understanding the cycle of addiction, behavioral patterns that foster addiction, and more. Research again and again has illustrated that a smooth transition from alcohol and drug detox to treatment for addiction is the most successful transition.

The reality is this: the chances of using again increase with the length of time between detox and rehab.

The work of recovery begins in treatment not detox. As you can see from the component parts of a quality treatment program, a number of therapeutic treatments combined with Christian workbooks and readings in a recovery Bible begin to help you sort out your personal problems, look at the destructive self behavior, and give you hope for a future. It is stated in 12 Step programs that the life you can have in recovery is beyond your wildest dreams. Nothing is possible until you get treatment for your addiction.

Call Recovery Connection at 1-866-483-2753 now to find a treatment program to address your needs. Our coordinators are specially trained with experience in addiction. You don't have to suffer alone. A quality Christian drug rehab program is available now.

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