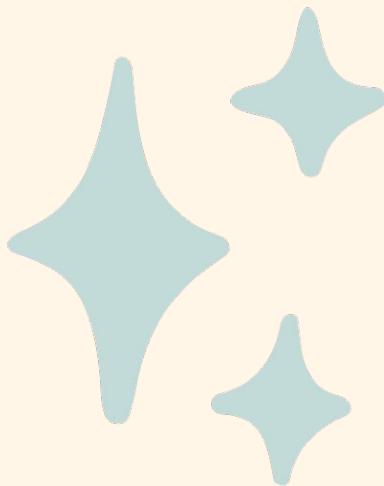
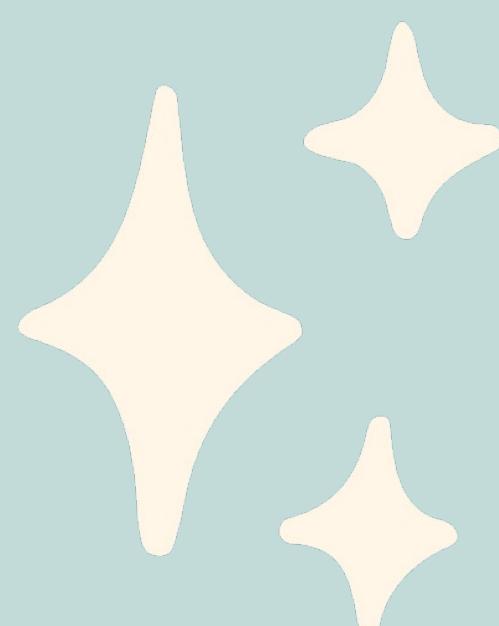
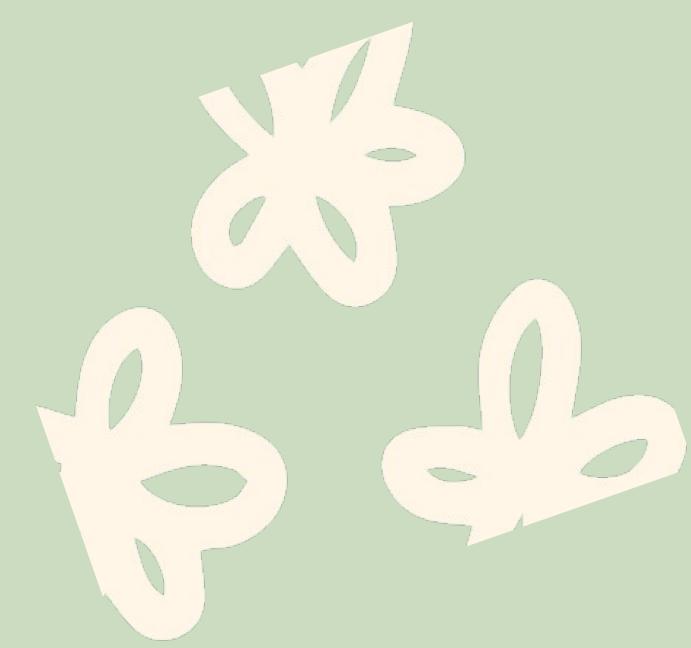


Supporting Clients Impacted by Family Addiction

**Developing Clinical Skills, Strategies, and
Compassionate Care**
Larissa Theison, LCSW, LSCSW





ABOUT THE TRAINER:

LARISSA THEISON, LCSW, LSCSW

CLINICAL EXPERIENCE

- Education
- Work History
- Evidence-Based Tx
- Workbook

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

- A life impacted by the many facets of addiction and more

The Unifying Truth:
Most people have been impacted by addiction in one way or another



TODAY'S TRAINING OBJECTIVES:

- 1)Understand the unique challenges clients face when they have loved ones or family members who struggle with addiction(s).
- 2)Identify the broad impact of addiction and addiction-related losses clients experience.
- 3)Explore Practical Strategies for support and compassionate care

ADDICTION AND IMPACT

WHAT IS ADDICTION?

“Addiction is a treatable, chronic medical disease involving complex interactions among brain circuits, genetics, the environment, and an individual’s life experiences. People with addiction use substances or engage in behaviors that become compulsive and often continue despite harmful consequences.”
(American Society of Addiction Medicine)

***behavioral or chemical**

WHAT IS THE IMPACT?

Broad impact

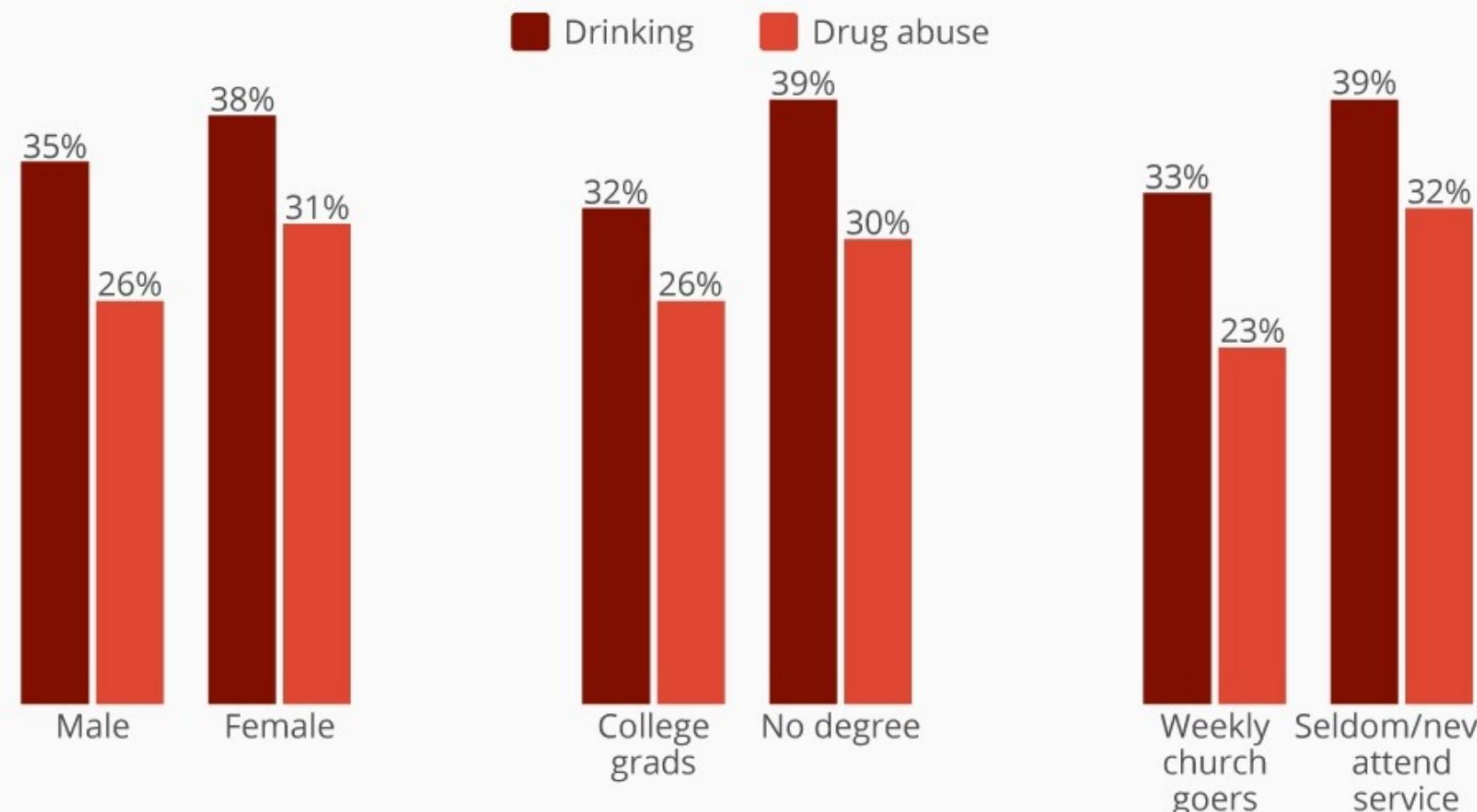
One of the top public health issues

Alcohol is the most common, then nicotine and marijuana
(Cleveland Clinic)

ADDICTION AND IMPACT (CONT)

Substance Abuse Touches Around Half of U.S. Families

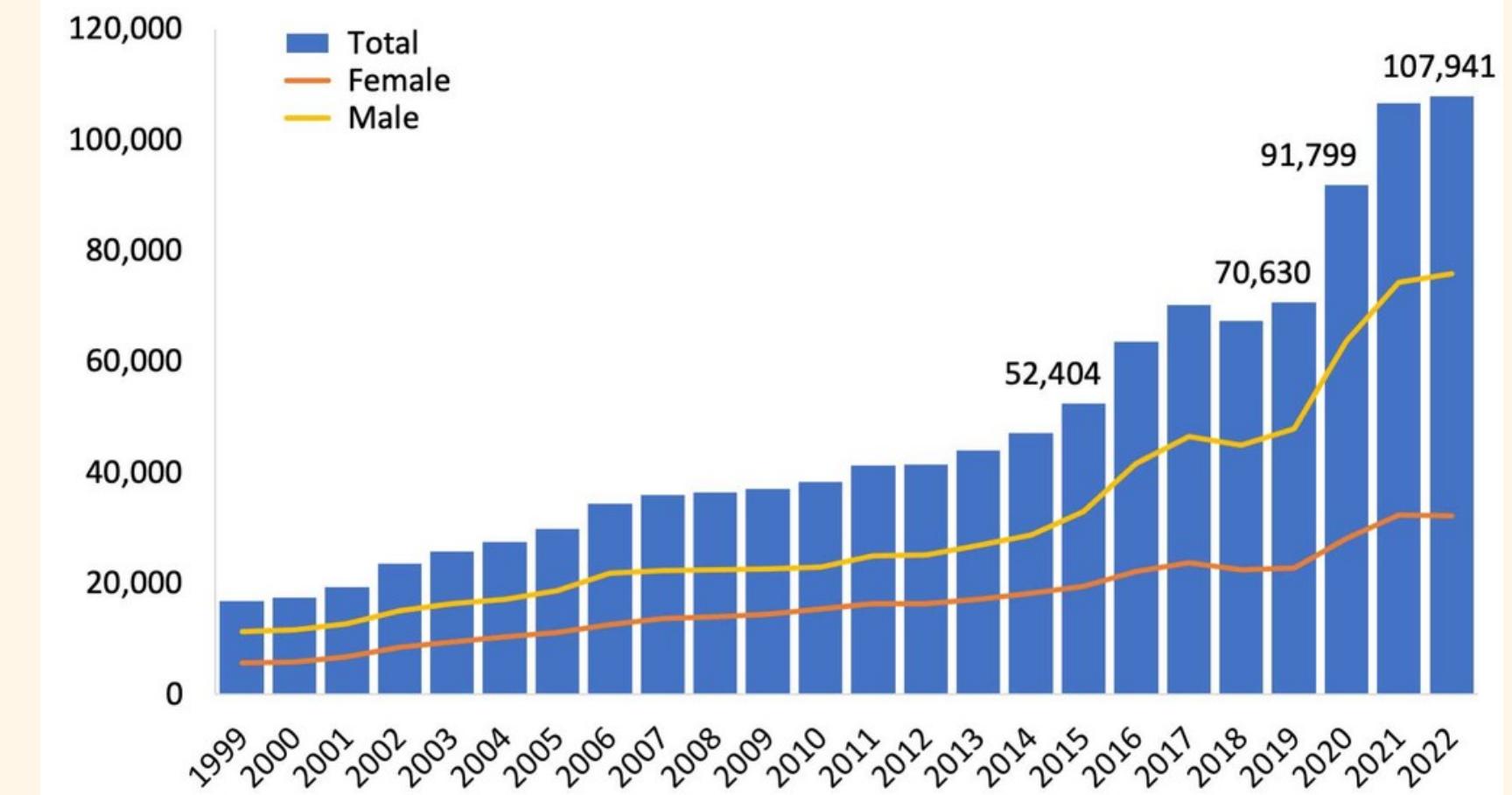
"Has drinking/drug abuse ever been a cause of trouble in your family?"



Around 1,000 U.S. adults surveyed in July 2019, multiple answers possible
@StatistaCharts Source: Gallup

statista

Figure 1. U.S. Overdose Deaths* by Sex, 1999-2022



*Includes deaths with underlying causes of unintentional drug poisoning (X40–X44), suicide drug poisoning (X60–X64), homicide drug poisoning (X85), or drug poisoning of undetermined intent (Y10–Y14), as coded in the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Revision
Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999–2022 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released 4/2024.

ADDICTION AND IMPACT-KEY INSIGHTS:

Alcohol Use Disorder: Approximately 29.5 million people aged 12 or older had an alcohol use disorder in 2022.

Drug Use Disorder: Around 27.2 million individuals experienced a drug use disorder, including 6.1 million with an opioid use disorder.

Co-occurring Disorders: Nearly 8 million people had both alcohol and drug use disorders, highlighting the complexity of addiction.

Mental Health and Addiction: Approximately 21.5 million adults had both a mental health disorder and a substance use disorder, underscoring the intertwined nature of these conditions.

Reference: Partnership to end Addiction and Addictiongap 2022

HOW ADDICTION IMPACTS FAMILY SYSTEMS

DAY-TO-DAY IMPACT, OUR CLIENTS

Creates fractures or ruptures of family relationships

Behaviors of other family members can be impacted as part of the family trying to find a way to function

Behavioral and/or emotional patterns can continue through a lifetime

Family Roles:

Addiction as a Family Disease

Person with Addiction

Caretaker
(Enabler)

Mascot

Hero

Lost Child

Scapegoat

Roles Defined:

The person who is potentially seen as complicit to the addiction, possibly covering for or making it easier for the addiction to continue through denial and/or behavior (e.g. making excuses, justifying, acting like everything is okay)

The class clown--member of the family who uses humor to diffuse difficult emotions and/or to gain connection with family members.

The person who can do no wrong, holds self to high standard, and struggles with perfectionism. Doing it all and doing things well helps diffuse the difficult emotions--a feeling of control/mastery in the absence of control over the addiction.

The one whose needs fade into the background, diffuses anxiety by not being a burden or by disappearing into activities that aid in escape.

The one on whom the problems of the family may be blamed, and upon whom the family may be focused on as the issue. The scapegoat diffuses difficult feelings through what are often seen as demonstrations of challenging emotions/behaviors, signaling toward issues in the family.

Family Roles:

Addiction as a Family Disease (cont)

Person with Addiction

Remember--it's all about managing anxiety and suffering!

Caretaker
(Enabler)

Mascot

Hero

Lost Child

Scapegoat

Supportive Solutions

Reframe considerations: This person acts as glue, cares, and often wants people to get along and/or get better

Treatment Options: Explore values and wisdom around how to proceed with boundaries and limits

Reframe considerations: This person has a skilled way to develop and maintain connections, need for attachment bonds met

Treatment Options: Develop ability to tolerate affect and/or recognize parts of pain that may generally be avoided; consider broad impact of avoidance through laughter

Reframe considerations: This person is often highly skilled and eager to learn new and more adaptive information to manage personal and family dynamics

Treatment Options: Provide resources, work on self-compassion as it relates to perfectionism and/or self-criticism

Reframe considerations: This person is skilled in getting their own needs met or filling time with hobbies and/or other pursuits.

Treatment Options: Process through pain of isolation; identify importance of recognizing and acting on personal needs/wants.

Reframe considerations: This person is courageous and willing to "stick their neck out" in signaling of issues and/or a need for support/connection

Treatment Options: Urge surfing, resources on scapegoat, exploration of cognitive triangle; identify ways to get connection need met.

**All are likely need support on development of identity and affect identification and/or tolerance; grief and loss =

Options and Ideas for Evidence-Based Treatment

What support options are available to our clients/consumers?

CBT

Explore how their thoughts and beliefs impact how they feel; help develop awareness of painful thoughts or beliefs and reframe them to decrease suffering.

Develop skills to manage affect and support them in a constructive telling of the story--focus on how difficult, confusing, and traumatic experiences with addiction impacted them and their beliefs about themselves or the world.

TF-CBT

DBT

DBT tools that are helpful: Middle Path, Radical Acceptance, Mindfulness, 3 Minds, Emotion Regulation, Distress Tolerance, Interpersonal Effectiveness

Explore the clients' thoughts, feelings, and values and support behavior or progress toward those and note when actions or thoughts move away from them.

ACT

EMDR

Develop supportive resources and cognitive interweaves to help with pain and increase internal reserves of support. Engage in reprocessing memories, work on developing a more complete and compassionate frame of self and family.

"The Miracle Question" for goal development; therapy & interventions support movement toward the MC. Brainstorm re: support for actionable steps (ex: getting into support groups, journaling, doing intervention)..

SFBT

Options and Ideas for Evidence-Based Treatment

continued...

SOMATIC EXPERIENCING

Explore how their experience of the addiction in their family may have settled inside of them and how to process through this; get more body-aware (because suppression has likely occurred)

INTERNAL FAMILY SYSTEMS

Helpful for identification of different parts of self and/or management of these in more proactive, responsive, and compassionate ways.

NARRATIVE

Help clients to tell their stories and reshape them in meaningful, healing ways.

Particularly helpful for children, but also helpful for teens and adults! Find ways to process through difficult emotions through experiential means; music; helpful when the words are difficult to access.

PLAY / EXPRESSIVE

Work on dynamics to support the family unit or the couple; also to be considered if at least one partner experienced addiction in Family of Origin and considering how parallel processing may be occurring.

COUPLES/FAMILY

It is likely you will find it best to use a combination of tactics to help support your client(s), and it is best to help offer tools in response to the goals they are stating as most important to them.

AND MORE / ECLECTIC

Client-Informed and Compassionate: Not our agendas in the treatment

NEXT STEPS:

FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION

- 1) Is there one thing I want to learn more about or a way I can continue with development of my clinical capacity?
- 2) How might this information shape my treatment and interventions, and what it means for my clients?



Closing: A Mindful Moment

