DIRECTIONS IN PASTORAL CARE OF ALCOHOL USE, ABUSE AND ADDICTION (PART 1)

Richard Winter
“Leaving yourself behind”

“A culture that promises a liquid makeover – from the inside out”

*Drinking: A Love Story*, Caroline Knapp

“I drink alone to get rid of myself, to send myself away. Wine makes a man better pleased with himself.” Samuel Boswell in *The Life of Johnson*. 
Drinking patterns

- Low risk/"safe" drinking
- Frequent drinking
- Binge drinking
  - Men: 5 or more on one occasion
  - Women: 4 or more on one occasion
  - Pass out, miss work, feel sick, drive drunk, fights
  - Damage to body
  - Teens and drinking
Family history

- Greater vulnerability
  - 4 times risk if you have alcoholic parent or sibling
  - “alcohol travels through families like water over a landscape”
  - Diminished sensitivity to intoxication
  - Heightened sensitivity to anxiety reducing effects
  - Higher risk if other psychiatric disorder
Abuse and Dependence (Alcohol Use Disorder)

- Tolerance
- Withdrawal
- Loss of control
- Attempting to cut down or quit without success
- Greater focus on alcohol: Less focus on other things
- Continue despite consequences
  - Ignoring problems – missing work, accidents, relationship problems, financial problems, fights
Assessment tools

- **CAGE**
  - Have you ever felt you should Cut down your drinking?
  - Have people Annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
  - Have you felt Guilty or bad about your drinking?
  - Have you had a drink first thing in the morning to steady nerves or get rid of hangover? Eye opener

- **AUDIT**
Typical alcoholic??

- **Young adult (31.5%)** –
  - Few mental health disorders and little family history
- **Young antisocial (21%)**
  - 50%+ have family history of Alc, depression, anxiety, smoke, + other drugs
- **Functional (19.5%)**
  - Middle aged, well educated, stable jobs and families
- **Intermediate family (19%)**
  - Middle aged, strong family history of Alc, depression, bipolar, smoke
- **Chronic severe (9%)**
  - Started young, criminal behaviors, mental illness, other drugs
Total alcohol per capita (15+ years) consumption, in litres of pure alcohol, 2010

Per capita consumption (litres)
- <2.5
- 2.5–4.9
- 5.0–7.4
- 7.5–9.9
- 10.0–12.4
- ≥12.50

Data Source: World Health Organization
Map Production: Health Statistics and Information Systems (HSI)
World Health Organization
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Av amount consumed by 15+ year olds per capita between 2008 and 2010

1. Belarus - 17.5 litres
2. Rep of Moldova - 16.8
3. Lithuania - 15.4
4. Russian Federation - 15.1
5. Romania - 14.4
6. Ukraine - 13.9
7. Andorra - 13.8
8. Hungary - 13.3
9. Czech Rep and Slovakia - 13
10. Portugal - 12.9
25. Britain - 11.6
USA - 9.2
Global average - 6.2
Women and alcohol

Women much more vulnerable to addiction and harmful effects

- Metabolism
- History of emotional and/or sexual abuse
- Complications:
  - Pregnancy and STD
  - Osteoporosis, falls and fractures
  - Premature menopause
  - Infertility and miscarriages
  - Hypertension and cardiovascular disease
  - Breast cancer
Health benefits

- Lower risk
  - Heart disease
  - Stroke

- But many lifestyle factors involved
Dangers to Health

- Digestive problems
  - Liver damage
- Heart disease and stroke
- Brain damage*
- Cancer risk
  - Mouth, throat, oesophagus, liver, colon, breast
  - Alcoholics tend to smoke more
- Drinking and driving
- Interaction with medications
- Dis-inhibition and violence
  - Murder, suicide, sexual offences, assaults, domestic violence, child abuse
Steps to Recovery

Push Past Denial

- Denial, minimization and rationalization
- Deceit of self and others – lies++
- Intervention may be needed – tough love
Steps to recovery

- There is hope!
  - 10-30% abstain of seriously limit their drinking without treatment
  - With treatment 50% relapse in first 3 months
  - With treatment 17-35% abstinent after 1 year
Steps to Recovery

- Education
- Evaluation
- Is detox necessary? (Valium/librium 2-5 days)
- Working with pastor, counselor or doctor
  - Insight
  - Identify triggers
  - Relapse prevention skills
  - Medication – Naltrexone, Antabuse
  - Alcoholics Anonymous/sponsor/support group
The 12 Steps

1. Admission of powerlessness
2. Belief in ‘higher power”
3. Commitment to “God”
4. Searching and fearless moral inventory
5. Confession
6. Ready to have God remove defects
The 12 Steps

- 7. Asked him to remove shortcomings
- 8. Make a list for restitution of wrongs
- 9. Make direct amends
- 10. Continue personal inventory/confession
- 11. Improve contact with God...
- 12. Tell the world...
A day at a time

- Structure
- Discipline
- Choices
- Emotional immaturity
Steps to Recovery

- Spiritual awakening
- Reclaiming values
- Deepening of faith
- Forgiveness – receiving and giving
Working with family

- **Effects**
  - Don’t see, Don’t feel, Don’t talk

- **Living with alcoholic**
  - Unpredictability
  - Continuous uncertainty
  - Fear
  - Shame
  - Frustration and anger
  - Depression and anxiety
  - Hopelessness

- **Problems of adult children of alcoholics**
Compulsive addictive cycle

- family abuse, dysfunction or trauma
- shame
- emotional pain
- low self esteem
- loneliness

Pressure, stress

more shame + despair

"fix" alcohol, drugs, food, work, sex...

Tempo-rary relief

Adapted from Eli Coleman & Patrick Carnes