### Addiction is a Disease

#### Body & Brain

Drug addiction is a disease because the brain works to keep drugs in the body even after the drug has worn off. 

#### The Stages of the Disease

1. **Precontemplation**
   - The person is not aware they have a problem.
   - No change.
   - No action.

2. **Contemplation**
   - The person is aware of their problem but not ready to change.
   - They are contemplating and thinking about changing.

3. **Preparation**
   - The person is ready to take action to change and is planning their recovery.
   - The person is taking steps towards recovery.

4. **Action**
   - The person is taking action to change.
   - The person is working their recovery program.

5. **Maintenance**
   - The person is working to maintain their recovery.
   - The person is attempting to prevent a relapse.

6. **Termination**
   - The person has been sober for many years and is no longer at risk for relapse.

#### It's Widespread

- More than half of Americans aged 12 or older drink alcohol or other drug dependence disorder.
- Among 16.5 million heavy drinkers, 12.2 million (74.0%) were employed either full or part time.
- 42.3 million (74.0%) were employed either full or part time.
- Among 16.9 million heavy drinkers, 12.2 million (74.0%) were employed either full or part time.

#### DO I HAVE AN ADDICTION?

- People who self-report to use alcohol or other drugs sometimes have an addiction.
  - They may not be able to control how much they drink or use.
  - They may experience withdrawal symptoms when they try to stop using.
  - They may feel bad about their use.

#### Treatment Works

- Addiction is a disease, not a weakness.
- People cannot will themselves to get an addiction.
- Addiction is treatable.

#### Professionals Can Help

- A variety of health professionals can help people with a substance use disorder. They include:
  - Peer recovery support staff
  - Mental health professionals
  - Addiction specialists
  - Other health professionals

#### Treatment... Just Like

- Cancer
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease
- Obesity

#### Sources

- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. (2012). Results from the National Survey on Drug Use and Health: 2012 National Findings (HS-228). Rockville, MD.