

# **Separating The Help From the Hype: Not All Addiction and Recovery Information Resources Are Equal**

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On the internet, information is abundant regarding addiction and recovery. Unless you know about these topics, perceiving all resources equally valid is easy. However, this isn't the case.

Among the plethora of online content, you'll find advertisements, articles, and blog posts promoting addiction recovery products and services. Unfortunately, many resemble the latest fad diets promising weight loss without exercise or proper nutrition. If something seems too good to be true, it usually is. There are no magic pills, herbal supplements, or miraculous techniques that can resolve a substance use disorder.

Reliable and credible sources include SAMHSA, NIDA, NIAAA, NCADI, and Join Together, as well as reputable academic and professional sources. White papers and most journal articles reviewed by peers and written by scholars and clinical experts are also reliable sources of information. Some may be difficult for the layperson to comprehend, however. The websites of many treatment centers offer accurate and trustworthy informational articles. When seeking information about addiction, it's crucial to rely on individuals with academic and licensed qualifications.

The range of information about addiction that you might find runs the gamut from arguments about whether addiction is a disease to the benefits and what to expect in sustained recovery. There is a lot to know about addiction and recovery. When searching for information about addiction, look for opinions, descriptions, and other resources from qualified sources.

Keep in mind that achieving abstinence from mood-altering substances is but the beginning of recovery. Achieving abstinence is a challenging process that involves recognizing and accepting that alcohol and other drugs are the problem, not the solution. Defense mechanisms distort that fact and impede the process for most people who eventually make their way into recovery. Just as a substance use disorder develops gradually over time, the recovery journey occurs over time, usually with many failed attempts.

A common misconception perpetuated online is the belief that identifying the underlying cause of addiction can lead to a cure. While trauma and other adverse life experiences may contribute to addiction, they are not its sole cause. Once individuals establish abstinence, they must engage in recovery activities aimed at exploring the triggers for substance use. These activities are essential for ongoing recovery and relapse prevention, but they do not provide a quick fix.

The internet provides an abundance of information on addiction and recovery, but discerning reliable sources is essential. Many online resources promote quick fixes for addiction. However, achieving abstinence from mood-altering substances is just the beginning of recovery. It's crucial to rely on reputable sources like SAMHSA, NIDA, and academic institutions for accurate information. Recovery is a journey that requires ongoing exploration of triggers for substance use, but there is no one-size-fits-all solution. Instead, recovery involves gradual progress and learning to overcome challenges over time. **Note: This article has been revised and edited from its original version, which was previously published in 2010 on this site. The content has been updated for contemporary language, clarity and accuracy.**

