

EXISTENTIAL ISSUES IN RECOVERY AND LIFE

Existential Issues

Core Values in Existential Therapy

Spiritual Needs in Recovery

Existential Issues

1. Fear of...
2. Loss of Fear of...

Existential Issues

Fear of:

- Freedom
 - choice, recovery, responsibility, success
- Isolation
 - being alone
- Death
 - unknown
- Meaninglessness
 - no purpose

Existential Issues

Fear of: (con't)

These are all existential concerns that can keep one in an addictive lifestyle; A fear of helplessness over control of ones life and surroundings, the feeling of being born alone and dying alone.

Existential Issues

Loss of Fear of:

- Fear
- Isolation
- Death
- Meaninglessness

Existential Issues

Loss of Fear of: (con't)

In the recovery process (12-A.A.), the alcoholic/addict learns to trust in a “Power greater than themselves”, and learn to accept things as they are (the serenity prayer), in reality.

Existential Issues

Loss of Fear of: (con't)

Fears that once were of life-threatening concern are now dealt with in a realistic manner. When one takes responsibility for themselves, fear abates life, and life takes on a whole new dimension of serenity and sobriety, based on reality, not myth.

Five Core Values in Existential Therapy

Five Core Values

1. Recognize that life is unfair and unjust.
2. Recognize there is no escape from pain or death.
3. Facing our mortality, and thus living more fully.
4. Realizing we face life alone, no matter how close we get to someone.
5. Taking ultimate responsibility for our lives and the way we live, no matter what history we've lived.

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

1. Self
2. Others
3. Mysteries of Existence

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

There are three dimensions of one's spiritual needs.

1. Self
2. Others
3. Mysteries of Existence

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

1. **Self**

The need for a sense of meaning, purpose, and value in one's life, through carrying the message of peace, love and sobriety to others.

- Steps 1, 4, 5, 6 & 7

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

2. Others

The need for a feeling of deep and relatedness to life and living among others- Fellowship, Belonging, Sharing love.

- Steps 8, 9, 10 & 12

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

3. **Mysteries of Existence**

The need for a direct experience, a relationship with the mysteries of existence, the luminous higher power of the universe.

- Steps 2, 3 & 11

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

3. **Mysteries of Existence (con't)**

Faith, hope, love, peace, patience, kindness, honesty, goodness, forgiveness, justice, temperance, fortitude, prudence, humility, wisdom, non-violence, family- hood, service, tolerance.

Three Spiritual Needs in Recovery

3. **Mysteries of Existence (con't)**

Meeting spiritual needs simultaneously addresses existential concerns, and can reduce existential anxieties such as fear death, freedom, isolation, and meaningless.