

Community Education Series

The Recovery Village and Advanced Recovery Systems



ADVANCED RECOVERY

S Y S T E M S

an advanced approach to patient care





Presentation Topic:

**The Bottle Looks Familiar:
Alcohol Abuse And The Role Of The Family
In The Latinx Community**



Speaker:

Genesis Games, LMHC

About the Speaker:

Genesis Games

LMHC



- Primary therapist for Drug Court program in outpatient setting.
- Primary therapist at a substance use residential facility.
- Clinician at a shelter for unaccompanied minors.
- Currently, works with individuals and their families in early recovery in private practice.
- Gottman Trained Couples Therapist
- Additional training in Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy.

Objectives

- The role of cultural norms including messages around drinking, gender differences, and religious beliefs.
- The role of mental health and trauma in alcohol use disorder including colonization, immigration, acculturation, multigenerational trauma, and stigma around seeking help.
- The role that family plays in enabling alcohol use vs. serving as a protective factor. Providing culturally sensitive assessments.
- Determining appropriate treatment approach based on cultural understanding and medical necessity.

The Role of Culture

Cultural Diversity



- Largest ethnic minority group in the U.S.
- Latinx in the U.S. are a heterogeneous group including people born in Spanish-speaking Latin American countries (including the Caribbean) and people born in the U.S. with a Latin American ancestry.
- Each country has their own cultural differences, history, dialects, and political landscape.
- Differences in immigration:
 - How they arrived to the
 - U.S? Immigration status.

Historical Colonization

- Genocides and destruction of indigenous cultures.
- Ideology that Native Americans were “savages without soul,” who needed to be taught the “true civilization.”
- Eurocentric relationship styles as ideals and pathologizing the relationship dynamics of ethnic minorities.

Latinx Cultural Values

- Familismo- dedication and commitment to one's family.
- La Familia-supersedes financial or professional achievements.
- La familia is multigenerational and includes extended family members.
- Respeto- respect is owed to everyone.
- Personalismo- the importance of cultivating meaningful interpersonal relationships in diverse social settings.
- Colectivismo- importance of evaluating the ways in which one's actions impact the common good.
- Machismo- Latinx men domineering towards women, patriarchy.
 - Women are the caretakers.
- Positive Machismo- motivates men to establish interpersonal relationships characterized by emotional openness, gender equality, and family commitment.

Messages Around Drinking

- Across Latinx subgroups, beer is preferred over wine and hard liquor.
- Celebrations revolve around alcohol.
- Acceptable for men to drink as a reward for a “day’s work.”
- Women tend to have a more conservative attitude.
- Latinx who identify as protestants adhere to abstinence.



Mental Health & Trauma Associated to Immigration

**Why they left their
home country?**

**What was the journey to the
U.S. like?**

**What is it like to live in
the U.S.?**

**What is their immigration
status?**

Latinx Immigration



- Latinx immigrants have historically been tolerated at best and at worst persecuted.
- Seen as a threat to the cultural and political integrity of the U.S.
- Welcomed whenever there is a shortage of labor.
- Convenient scapegoats.

Acculturation

Conforming to a different culture, usually the dominant one.

- Acculturation happens gradually and on a spectrum.
- Shifts in attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors. Impacts social and psychological well-being.

Acculturative Stress

- Continuously trying to balance demands placed on them by their culture of origin and the dominant culture to which they are trying to adjust.
- Intergenerational gap increases acculturative stress (family tension).
- Resulting in: alcohol use disorder, depression, and psychosomatic symptoms.

Acculturation & Alcohol Abuse



- Euro-Americans tend to drink more frequently.
- Latinx consume more drinks per sitting.
- Rate of drinking among Latinx increases as acculturation stress increases.
- Acculturated Latinas drink more and are more likely to engage in binge drinking.

Bicultural

Healthiest most functional approach.

- Integrating elements from their native culture and the dominant culture.
- Not forced to choose.
- Reduces acculturative stress.

Stigma Around Seeking Help



- *“Terapia es cosa de locos.”*
- *“La ropa sucia se lava en casa.”*
- *Religion and therapy don’t mix.*
- *Certain emotions are not welcomed.*
- *Lack of education about mental health and addiction.*
- *Lack of education about therapy and treatment. Lack of representation as most therapists are not POC.*

The Role of Family

Family As A Protective Factor

- *Families are highly connected.*
- *Extended families play a huge role and provide social support.*
- *Multi-generational households.*
- *Reduces impact of outside stressors and improves health.*



Enmeshment

- *Enmeshed families expect that members turn towards the family for satisfaction and support rather than turning to the larger world.*
- *Stunts individual growth.*
- *Creates guilt and shame stemming from a sense of obligation.*
- *Alliances between family members, choosing sides.*



Enabling

Shields people from experiencing the full impact and consequences from their behaviors

- *Keep secrets to keep peace*
- *Makes excuses for inappropriate behavior*
- *Bails out of trouble*
- *Blames others*
- *Control seeking*
- *“Caretakes” Avoids*
- *Makes empty threats*
- *Throws money at the problem*
-



Culturally Sensitive Assessment and Treatment Approach

**Addiction is an unhealthy
response to a traumatic
childhood event.**



Addiction

- *Any repetitive behavior that satisfies a craving and provides both pleasure and release in the short-term, while having long-term negative consequences.*

Addiction As An Attachment Disorder

Attachment Style Overviews

1. Secure Attachment
2. Anxious Attachment
3. Avoidant Attachment
4. Disorganized Attachment

Addiction As An Attachment Disorder

Consequence and dysfunctional solution to the absence of satisfying close relationships.

- *Securely attached individuals engage in self-protective health behaviors.*
- *Higher levels of attachment anxiety and avoidance in close relationships results in decreased emotion regulation.*
- *Addiction is associated with negative and shameful views of self.*
 - *Inadequate and undeserving*
- *Alcohol becomes the a safe haven and secure base.*

Therapist's Role

- Therapeutic alliance is the predictor of treatment success.
- Rupture & repair: models healthy relationships.
- Unconditional positive regard.
- Unassuming stance.
- Be in the moment WITH the client and FOR the
- client. "Invite" the client.
- Find yourself a balance between directive and non directive



Mindfulness on the Couch

C.O.A.L

By. Dr. Dan Siegel

Curious

Open

Accepting

Loving



Assessment Process

- Clear history of their immigration experience and cultural identity.
- The relationship between their cultural values and their alcohol use.
- Explore gender narratives and expressions of emotions.
- Listen to the client's story and recognize attachment style.
- Clarify the presenting problem.
- Discuss motivation for treatment and potential obstacles.
- Identify support system and their perspective on presenting problem and treatment. If possible, include the main support person(s) in the assessment process.
- Assess utilizing formal assessments (with caution) and/or going through the DSM 5 criteria. Outline collaboratively goals for therapy.

Appropriate Approach to Treatment

Determine appropriate level of care and provide education.

Consider:

- Least restrictive level of care that would meet the client's needs.
- Family ability to be involved.
- Location.
- Financial constraints.
- Occupational obligations.
- Childcare.
- Religious affiliations.

If selecting Detox, Residential, PHP, or IOP ensure that the program is truly in Spanish and culturally sensitive.

References

- Dr. Gabor Mate
- Dr. Dan Siegel
- Dr. SueJohnson
- Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation
- National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

QUESTIONS?

THANK YOU

