



Addiction and Recovery

I feel it is important to approach recovery in much the same way I approach all of my patients—holistically—body, soul (mind) and spirit. The triad of body-mind-spirit is interdependent and if one aspect is neglected, then the other two will also suffer. In pursuing the goals of mind and spirit, all too many patients neglect or actually abuse the body—consuming caffeine by the quart, smoking cigarettes by the carton, and eating non-nutritious junk food on a daily basis. All of this abuse has a definite impact on the mind and the spirit too. My belief is that no one is really in recovery until his or her BODY is in recovery. The body is more than a receptacle for the mind and the spirit, it is PART of the mind and spirit and disorders of the body are reflected in the patient's moods, feelings, and thought processes. You just can't think straight if you are not feeling well. If you have ever tried to work when sick with the flu, you can understand this concept.

The conditions that bring many into the recovery movement have devastating effects on the body from the tiniest cell in the lining of the intestine to the longest nerve connecting the brain to the toes. Nothing escapes unharmed. The devastation is comprehensive because every cell in the body is affected. The billions of cells that carry out basic body processes have not only been poisoned but starved. Often, even before addiction was an issue for many of the patients, they were probably operating with several strikes against them—biological and psychological factors that contributed to the eventual rise of addiction and compulsive disorders. Once the underlying factors are complicated by addiction, alcoholism, or eating disorders, an already bad situation becomes incomparably worse. There is abundant research addressing these very issues. When recovery is viewed from this multifaceted perspective, it is easy to see why many patients are not maximizing their existing recovery programs. It could be why approximately 70% of people who start treatment drop out before the end of the first year. The good news is that there are new technologies and diagnostic tools available that can make a difference in patient's lives.

This new technology could help to significantly improve the quality and length of a patient's life as well as ensuring better compliance with abstinence. Overwhelming evidence shows that individuals with an addiction history are at a greater risk for relapse if their biochemistry issues go unaddressed. Now, there are specific laboratory assessment profiles and clinical tools in the field of endocrinology, neurology and immunology which can reveal a patient's status in all areas by looking at neuromodulators, hormones, and immune markers. Having this knowledge enables the practitioner to design targeted interventions that help the patient regain their health.

In addition, there are diagnostic tools that measure the intracellular function of selected vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and other essential micronutrients within living blood cells (lymphocytes). Lymphocytes carry an individual's nutritional history for a period of four to six months, versus traditional serum testing which has a much narrower window of function and cannot determine what nutrients have successfully been absorbed within your living cells. These tests can reveal an individual's nutrient status over a substantial period of time. The results obtained, therefore, uncover deficiencies that a standard serum test may potentially miss. If not corrected, such deficiencies could impair health contributing to the development and/or progression of chronic disease and could certainly impede recovery for these individuals. In addition, overwhelming evidence documents that vitamin, mineral, antioxidant and

nutrient deficiencies suppress the function of the immune system and contribute to other diseases. Eating a “balanced diet” hardly ensures that your body is receiving the nutrients it needs because every individual has unique deterrents to the absorption of nutrients. In addition, vitamin, mineral, and nutrient deficiencies caused by over the counter preparations and prescriptions can complicate the picture.

Another important laboratory assessment tool looks at food sensitivities. It’s hard to imagine that the food that fuels our bodies can also be the source of health concerns. The fact is that our bodies do react negatively to some food and it can be making you ill. Symptoms can range from severe anaphylactic shock (in the case of peanut allergy) to low grade, persistent headaches and chronic fatigue. Food sensitivity is the general term given to a specific type of reactions that are driven by disruptions in your GI system and an overactive immune system. Unfortunately, it may not always be obvious if foods are causing symptoms. And if foods are causing symptoms, it may not be obvious which foods are at the root of the problem. This particular food sensitivity testing panel is a simple blood test that can detect immune reactions to various foods. Test panels include from 22 to 154 of the most common dietary offenders. Additionally, testing can provide information about “gastrointestinal permeability”, a measure of how likely undigested food particles are crossing from your intestines into blood circulation.

All of the aforementioned tests reflect truly individualized medicine and provide a way to identify, correct, and restore optimal health for patients.

For further information, please contact the office by email at totalhealthsolutions@protonmail.com or by phone at 954-577-0008 to request an appointment.

T. Boland, ARNP, FAARM, ABAHP, LMFT
Total Health Solutions, Inc.™
totalhealthsolutions@protonmail.com