



Did You Know?

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Love + Addiction: During a recent interview Zendaya shared this sentiment regarding her character's struggle with substance misuse on the show Euphoria, "It's my hope for people watching that they still see her as a person worthy of their love, and worthy of their time. And that she has a redemptive quality still, and that we still see the good in her even if she can't see it in herself... and watch her make the changes and steps to heal and humanize her through her sobriety journey and her addiction, then maybe they can extend that to people in real life."

It is important to remember that addiction does not discriminate, and that it is a universal disease impacting lives and communities across the globe. Also, addiction is not solely tied to substance misuse. Caffeine, sugar, shopping, gambling, pornography, etc. are just a few of the ways addiction can manifest in the life of someone suffering. It is our hope that we can reduce the fear, shame and stigma associated with addiction. Breaking down those barriers can allow others to gain the confidence to seek help and treatment.

What You Should Know:

- 23.5 million Americans have an addiction/substance use disorder. This equates to one in every ten Americans over the age of 12.
- Of the millions of Americans suffering an addiction, only 25 percent report receiving any form of treatment.
- NIDA shares that it is common for a person to relapse (or returning to use) during recovery. Relapse doesn't mean that treatment isn't working. As with other chronic health conditions, treatment should be ongoing and adjusted based on patient needs and responses.
- Addiction is a disease that changes crucial parts of brain function. Addiction is not a habit, and it is not something someone can simply "turn off."
- Addiction weakens the prefrontal cortex, the region of the brain that helps us make good decisions. It also increases the brain's reaction to stress, and makes the brain's reward network less sensitive.

What You Can Do:

- **Be a Support:** Vocalize your love, empathy and willingness to support someone who suffers an addiction. You may feel that your support is evident by your words and actions, but addiction can haze perception. It's always best to be upfront and leave nothing to assumption. Talk to those you love.
- **Educate and Teach:** Knowledge is the greatest tool against stigma. The more we collectively know about a disease, the less scary it is to talk about. When we are able to have conversations surrounding addiction, it opens the door for sufferers to feel comfortable and seek help.
- **Care for Yourself:** Addiction can be messy and extremely destructive for all involved. In order to be a successful support system for someone in need, you have to take care of yourself first. Be sure to maintain things like sleep, stress levels, a healthy diet, and positive mental health. If needed, set boundaries for what you are able to provide in the scope of someone else's road to recovery. Have others that can help YOU when YOU need time to care for yourself. No one is alone in this fight.
- **Find the Light:** It may seem incredibly dark at times, but keep your focus on the positives. If addiction was easy to overcome, no one would suffer. Celebrate successes even when they are small. No matter what, things can get better. If you or a loved one is in need help, please contact us via phone at (716) 831- 2298 or email at thecouncil@thepreventioncouncil.org.

Information obtained from: nida.nih.gov; nih.gov

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The Prevention Council of Erie County, publishes Did You Know, a regular update about alcohol & other drugs - - America's #1 public health problem. The Prevention Council • 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, NY 14216 • 716-831-2298 • www.thepreventioncouncil.org