



Holistic Healing:

Modern Approaches to
Addiction Treatment



SILVER RIDGE

A PREMIER PROGRAM BY PYRAMID HEALTHCARE

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When it comes to addiction treatment and successful recovery, there is no one-size-fits-all solution. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, there are many pathways to recovery, and a holistic approach to treatment offers the best possible outcomes.¹

Holistic treatment is highly individualized and addresses issues of body, mind and spirit for whole-person healing. This research-based approach has been shown to help people end an addiction for the long-term and improve their overall quality of life.



A woman with dark hair pulled back, wearing a brown top, is shown in profile from the chest up. She is resting her chin on her hands and looking off to the side with a thoughtful expression. The background is a soft-focus field of tall, golden-brown grasses under a bright, hazy sky.

Addiction
and the Goals of
Holistic Treatment



Addiction is a chronic disease caused by changes in the brain's physical structures and chemical functions in response to heavy drug or alcohol abuse. Addiction is characterized by compulsive substance use despite the negative consequences it causes. People who are addicted will find that they can't quit using, even though they want to or have tried to stop.

The brain changes associated with addiction lead to intense cravings and dysfunctional thought and behavior patterns that further perpetuate the substance abuse. The addiction often causes relationship, financial, legal, and health problems, and these need to be addressed for successful recovery. In many cases, the problems that led to the substance abuse in the first place become worse. A holistic treatment program addresses all of these problems and more.

The Over-Arching Goals of Addiction Treatment

A holistic treatment program involves a highly personalized treatment plan that's based on a person's unique issues, needs and problems. A variety of therapies are used to help individuals:

- Identify and change self-destructive thought and behavior patterns.
- Develop essential coping skills for dealing with negative emotions, stress and other relapse triggers.
- Work through a variety of issues that underlie the substance abuse, which commonly include chronic stress, a history of trauma or mental illness.
- Repair damaged relationships.
- Make positive, permanent lifestyle changes.
- Improve the functioning of the family system.
- Develop healthy social skills.
- Improve self-esteem, self-confidence and self-awareness.
- Learn how to relax and have fun without drugs or alcohol.
- Identify purpose and meaning in a life of sobriety.
- Develop healthy hobbies and relationships for greater happiness and wellbeing.

Both traditional and complementary therapies are at the heart of a high quality, holistic treatment program, and they take place in both group and individual settings.



Traditional
Treatment Therapies



**TRADITIONAL THERAPIES ARE THOSE THAT
HAVE BEEN SHOWN THROUGH RESEARCH TO
BE EFFECTIVE FOR TREATING ADDICTION.**

Traditional therapies are those that have been shown through research to be effective for treating addiction. The most commonly used traditional treatment therapies are behavioral psychotherapies, or "talk" therapies.

Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy

The most effective and widely used treatment therapy for addiction is cognitive behavioral therapy, or CBT, which is based on the understanding that learning processes play a crucial role in the development of an addiction. By examining these processes, individuals develop essential skills and end self-destructive behaviors.

CBT involves evaluating attitudes, beliefs and thought and behavior patterns and replacing those that are unhelpful with healthier ways of thinking and behaving. It helps individuals address the underlying causes of the addiction and develop missing coping skills.



Dialectical Behavior Therapy

Dialectical behavior therapy, or DBT, is a type of cognitive-behavioral therapy that's commonly used to treat post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and addiction.

Many people who develop an addiction to drugs or alcohol first use these substances to cope with or suppress emotions they don't want to confront. DBT helps individuals learn to manage difficult or painful emotions and develop a tolerance for distress to reduce the need to escape from it. Participants learn to accept their negative emotions, experience them fully and control their reactions to these emotions. They learn interpersonal skills to help them communicate in an assertive way that helps them maintain self-respect and strengthen their relationships.

Family Therapy

Addiction is a family disease, according to the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence.² It leads to dysfunction in the family system as family members learn to cope with the addiction, often in unhealthy ways. Family members may develop co-dependent and enabling behaviors that perpetuate the addiction. The stress, chaos and fear that come with living with addiction undermine the wellbeing of family members.

Family therapy helps restore function to the family unit by helping families:

- Improve communication in the household.
- Repair damaged relationships and restore broken trust.
- Reduce stress in the home.
- Solve problems in healthy ways.
- Develop healthy coping skills.
- Understand addiction and the common unhealthy behaviors that result from it.



Psychoeducational Groups

Understanding the mechanics of addiction and co-occurring mental illnesses helps people better understand their illness and how they can cope with it. Topics are wide-ranging and include:

- Addiction
- Mental illnesses like anxiety and depression
- Medications used to treat addiction and mental illness
- Triggers and high-risk situations that can lead to relapse
- Stress and its role in relapse
- Trauma and its role in developing an addiction
- Healthy relationships and how they support recovery

Psychoeducational groups typically involve presentations followed by therapist-led group discussions. Many high quality, holistic treatment programs will include psychoeducational groups for family members to help them learn how to best support their loved one in recovery.

Pharmacotherapy

Pharmacotherapy, or the use of medications to treat an illness, can be central to successful addiction recovery. According to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, medication-assisted treatment, or MAT, is the most effective treatment option for opioid addiction, and can help treat alcohol addiction.³

MAT involves two components. The first is medication that reduces cravings, blocks the effects of alcohol or opioids, and helps to normalize brain function. The second is a counseling component that includes a variety of traditional and complementary therapies. MAT enables people with an addiction to focus better on the counseling component to help them restore their lives and end their need for drugs or alcohol.



Complementary
Treatment Therapies



COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES ARE THOSE THAT HAVE BEEN SHOWN THROUGH RESEARCH TO BE EFFECTIVE FOR TREATING ADDICTION WHEN THEY'RE USED ALONG WITH TRADITIONAL THERAPIES.

Complementary therapies are those that have been shown through research to be effective for treating addiction when they're used along with traditional therapies. Holistic treatment programs offer a variety of complementary therapies to enhance recovery.

Biofeedback Therapy

Stress is a major trigger for relapse, and a holistic treatment program will put a heavy focus on reducing stress and learning to cope better with life's stressors. Biofeedback is one of the most effective tools for helping individuals learn to manage their stress.

During biofeedback, a therapist attaches sensors to the body to monitor a range of physiological functions related to the stress response, including heart rate, blood pressure and muscle tension. This information is shown on a monitor while the therapist demonstrates techniques to reduce stress, such as progressive relaxation, deep breathing, guided imagery and mindfulness meditation. As clients practice these techniques, they can see their stress response go down on the monitor. When biofeedback is put into practice, individuals can lower their stress on the spot for improved mental health and increased resilience.



Meditation

A large body of research shows that meditation reduces anxiety and depression--sometimes as effectively as prescription medication. It's also a potent, long-term stress reliever. Researchers at Harvard and MIT found that after just eight weeks of daily meditation, study participants were better able to control their alpha brain wave function to reduce stress and improve how external events affected them.⁴

According to the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health, brain imaging research shows that meditation changes the brain's physical structures, including decreasing activity in the region responsible for mind-wandering; increasing the cortical thickness in areas of the brain that govern learning, memory and emotional regulation; and a decrease in brain cell volume in the amygdala, which is the center of stress, fear and anxiety.

Yoga

Yoga is a mind-body practice that combines movement, meditation and controlled breathing. It's widely used to improve strength, balance and flexibility, but it also has several benefits for people in recovery. According to the American Psychological Association, yoga is helpful for relieving anxiety and depression and has been shown to help heal emotional wounds.⁵ It's also beneficial for reducing stress, and can help your body learn better ways of responding to stress in the future, according to Harvard Medical School.⁶

Horticultural Therapy

A nature-based therapy, horticultural therapy takes place in the garden, where a certified horticultural therapist helps participants make connections between gardening activities and their own experiences. Horticultural therapy helps improve mood, according to a study published in the *Journal of Cardiopulmonary Rehabilitation*, and it increases self-esteem, self-confidence and self-control.⁷ It also reduces stress, promotes emotional growth and improves memory and concentration.

Art or Music Therapy

Art and music therapy are effective treatments for healing emotional wounds. These therapies involve making, viewing and talking about art or music. This enables participants to look at old problems in new ways, express difficult emotions and synthesize their experiences. According to a study published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, art and music therapy increase self-awareness, promote self-reflection and help participants alter harmful patterns of thinking and behaving.⁸



Equine Therapy

During equine therapy, participants are assigned a horse and spend time feeding, grooming and exercising the animal. Horses sense shifts in human mood and emotion, and their behaviors reflect those shifts, giving individuals real-time feedback on their emotional state. Participants develop a relationship with the horse and benefit from playing the role of caretaker, which improves their own level of self-care. Equine therapy has been shown to increase resilience, self-confidence and self-awareness. It helps individuals lower their defensive barriers, look at problems in new ways and gain new perspectives on relationships and patterns of behaving.

A middle-aged man with a grey beard and mustache, wearing a white t-shirt and a silver watch, stands on a balcony. He is smiling and looking to the left. The background features a modern building with a white and orange facade, a balcony railing, and lush green plants with white flowers. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

Types of Treatment Programs

Holistic healing occurs via many pathways, and the type of treatment program a person chooses can have an important impact on recovery.

Trauma-Informed Treatment

Trauma-informed treatment is staffed by therapists who specialize in working with people who have experienced trauma, such as physical or abuse and exposure to violence. It pays particular attention to helping clients feel safe, supported and empowered.

A variety of evidence-based trauma interventions are used in this type of treatment program, including:

- **Seeking Safety**, which focuses on the present and helps individuals regain a sense of safety. It emphasizes setting boundaries, creating meaning, and detaching from emotional pain.
- **Acceptance and commitment therapy**, or ACT, which helps clients develop psychological flexibility, accept negative emotions and make life choices that support their personal values.
- **Dialectical behavior therapy**, which helps individuals achieve control over their emotions and learn healthy skills for coping with distress and negative emotions.



LGBTQ+ Programs

People in the LGBTQ+ community face challenges unique to that demographic. Holistic LGBTQ+ treatment programs focus on providing a safe, nurturing environment where group members can relate to each other's self-identity and speak openly without fear of discrimination or prejudice based on their sexual or gender orientation.

Men- or Women-Only Programs

For a variety of reasons, an individual may choose an all-male or all-female treatment program. Men and women experience addiction differently, and they recover differently, too. Both men and women who have experienced sexual trauma may be reluctant to open up about their experiences in a co-ed group. Women who lack assertiveness or have low self-esteem may feel more comfortable in a female-only group, while men may feel more comfortable sharing their intimate feelings in a male-only group. Gender-specific treatment programs help individuals work through issues common to their gender in an environment that's comfortable for them.

Age-Specific Programs

Adolescents have very different issues underlying their addiction than those who are in their fifties. Particularly for very young people and seniors, finding a treatment program that specializes in adolescent or geriatric treatment can be beneficial for recovery.

Religious and Secular Programs

A religion-based treatment program isn't always suitable for someone who is non-religious, and vice-versa. Finding a program that aligns with beliefs and values can be a boon to recovery. Secular treatment programs typically have a spiritual component, but typically don't adhere to any particular religious tenets.





Recovery
Support Services



HOLISTIC ADDICTION TREATMENT ATTENDS TO AN INDIVIDUAL'S MULTIPLE NEEDS.

Holistic addiction treatment attends to an individual's multiple needs. Recovery support services are not treatment, but rather services that are used during treatment and beyond to enhance recovery and promote long-term abstinence. Support services help improve various aspects of an individual's life. They're offered in high quality treatment programs and included in the aftercare plan that's put into place once treatment is complete.

Employment Support

Employment support services help people in recovery find or maintain employment. Services may include vocational rehabilitation, which helps individuals get the training and skill-building they need to find employment. Participants set goals, participate in workshops, create resumes, practice interviewing skills and find meaningful work.

Education support

For people in recovery who wish to return to school, educational support services can help obtain a GED, navigate the college application process, find financial aid and plan the class schedule.



Illness Management

Maintaining good physical and mental health is central to successful recovery. Illness management services help with setting meaningful health goals and provide information and skills to help them manage their physical and mental illnesses.

Legal Assistance

Many people enter treatment with legal troubles, such as DUI or possession charges. This may lead to discrimination in housing and the workplace. Legal assistance to those in recovery includes court liaison services, legal advice, assistance with finding a lawyer and help navigating the court system.

Pain Management

For people with chronic pain who have developed an opioid addiction, pain management services help them find opioid-free relief from pain. Common alternative pain therapies include hypnosis, stress relief, acupuncture and acupressure, massage therapy, physical therapy and non-opioid pain medications.

Housing Support

Whether an individual enters treatment with a history of homelessness or has an unsafe or unstable living environment at home, housing support helps people in recovery find safe and affordable housing.

Housing solutions may include a sober living home, which offers a sober living environment with built-in recovery support and a high level of structure and supervision.

Life Skills Support

People with a long history of addiction may lack the life skills they need to succeed outside of a supervised treatment setting. Life skills supports that may be provided includes financial, job, relationship, domestic, parenting, and self-care skills.

Support Groups

Peer support groups are an essential component of any recovery plan. Support groups help combat loneliness and isolation, foster a high level of self-accountability and offer advice, emotional support and resources.

Twelve-step groups like Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous are the most popular support groups, but for those who prefer a more secular program, 12-step alternatives include:

- **SMART Recovery**, which is focused on building motivation; coping with cravings; managing thoughts, emotions and behaviors; and living a balanced life.
- **Secular Organizations for Sobriety, or SOS**, which takes a science-based approach to recovery that involves self-empowerment.
- **LifeRing Secular Recovery**, which focuses on personal growth and empowerment and living a purposeful life.
- **HAMS, or Harm Reduction for Alcohol**, which encompasses making positive changes, setting goals, and learning to cope with life without alcohol.



Holistic Treatment

Works



HOLISTIC TREATMENT HELPS PEOPLE FIND THEIR OWN INTRINSIC MOTIVATION FOR WANTING TO RECOVER.

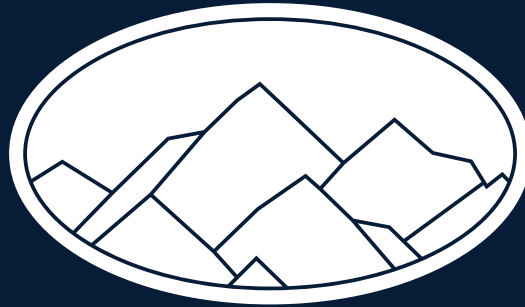
Addiction is a treatable disease, but there is no single pathway to recovery that works for every individual. A holistic treatment program helps people recover from an addiction while restoring all areas of their lives. Holistic treatment helps people find their own intrinsic motivation for wanting to recover. It helps find purpose and meaning in a life without drugs or alcohol and to develop and maintain healthy relationships that support long-term recovery.

The National Institute on Drug Abuse's *Principles of Effective Treatment* underscores the importance of choosing a treatment program that addresses not just the substance abuse, but also the multiple needs of an individual, including medical, psychological, social, legal and vocational problems.⁹

Holistic treatment works for most people who engage with their treatment plan, and it can work for you or someone you love, regardless of the severity of the addiction. Holistic treatment leads to a higher quality of life, better health and a greater sense of wellbeing long-term.

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SILVER RIDGE

A PREMIER PROGRAM BY PYRAMID HEALTHCARE

Silver Ridge serves established midlife adults who need to retreat discreetly from their daily lives. Here, we provide the perfect setting to focus on the addictions compromising your relationships, your future and your legacy.

Every great legacy has a strong foundation. Build yours here.