

Survivor's Journey: Brain Injury Recovery & Substance Use Disorder

A presentation of Kenneth Webb's Journey With Gina Wheatley LCSW

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Created in partnership, we plan to share a blend of a survivor's personal journey along with professional data/info to provide you with a valuable combination of information!

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Learning Objectives:

To define how much alcohol is safe for a survivor of brain injury.

To be able to define Substance Use Disorder.

To identify the major risk factors for having a Brain Injury and Substance Use Disorder.

To define what key recovery factors can increase the likelihood of success in maintaining sobriety.

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How many drinks of alcohol is safe for a survivor of brain injury?

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Handwriting practice lines (7 horizontal lines)

None!

reference
According to
brain line.org

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Handwriting practice lines (7 horizontal lines)

2. Substance Use Disorder

→ **What is it?**

Substance use disorder (SUD) is a complex condition in which there is uncontrolled use of a substance despite harmful consequences. People with SUD have an intense focus on using a certain substance(s), to the point where the person's ability to function in day-to-day life becomes impaired. The most severe SUDs are sometimes called addictions. (American Psychiatric Association 2023)

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Handwriting practice lines (7 horizontal lines)

What Is Substance Use Disorder (SUD)?

Often referred to as "addiction," [substance use disorder](#)(SUD) is a disease that causes people to have difficulty controlling their use of alcohol, drugs, and other substances, including opioids. Untreated, this misuse can begin to influence many aspects of life.

Signs and Symptoms of SUD

- Increased urge to drink or to use drugs.
- Inability to stop drinking or using drugs.
- Drinking or using drugs in hazardous situations (e.g., drinking and driving).
- Change in relationships due to drinking or drug use.
- Feeling depressed or anxious about your substance use.
- Feeling sick and experiencing withdrawal symptoms when drinking or drug use stops.
- Increased tolerance, which refers to the need over time for more alcohol or stronger drugs to achieve the desired effect.

Substance Use Disorders. (2019). Va.gov. <https://www.research.va.gov/topics/sud.cfm>

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Several reviews have concluded that at-risk substance use is more likely to cause TBI than TBI is to cause SUD (4–6), while others have concluded that there is insufficient evidence to make definitive conclusions about the directionality of causal influences (1,2).

Reference
 Olsen CM, Corrigan JD. Does Traumatic Brain Injury Cause Risky Substance Use or Substance Use Disorder? Biol Psychiatry. 2022 Mar 1;91(5):421-437. doi: 10.1016/j.biopsych.2021.07.013. Epub 2021 Jul 21. PMID: 34561027;PMCID: PMC8776913.

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3. Major risk factors for having a Traumatic Brain Injury according to the Mayo Clinic

→ The people most at risk of traumatic brain injury include:

- Children, especially newborns to 4-year-olds
- Young adults, especially those between ages 15 and 24
- Adults age 60 and older
- Males in any age group

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Risk factors for SUD

People of any age, sex or economic status can become addicted to a drug. Certain factors can affect the likelihood and speed of developing an addiction:

- **Family history of addiction.** Drug addiction is more common in some families and likely involves an increased risk based on genes. If you have a blood relative, such as a parent or sibling, with alcohol or drug addiction, you're at greater risk of developing a drug addiction.
- **Mental health disorder.** If you have a mental health disorder such as depression, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) or post-traumatic stress disorder, you're more likely to become addicted to drugs. Using drugs can become a way of coping with painful feelings, such as anxiety, depression and loneliness, and can make these problems even worse.
- **Peer pressure.** Peer pressure is a strong factor in starting to use and misuse drugs, particularly for young people.
- **Lack of family involvement.** Difficult family situations or lack of a bond with your parents or siblings may increase the risk of addiction, as can a lack of parental supervision.
- **Early use.** Using drugs at an early age can cause changes in the developing brain and increase the likelihood of progressing to drug addiction.
- **Taking a highly addictive drug.** Some drugs, such as stimulants, cocaine or opioid painkillers, may result in faster development of addiction than other drugs. Smoking or injecting drugs can increase the potential for addiction. Taking drugs considered less addicting — so-called "light drugs" — can start you on a pathway of drug use and addiction.

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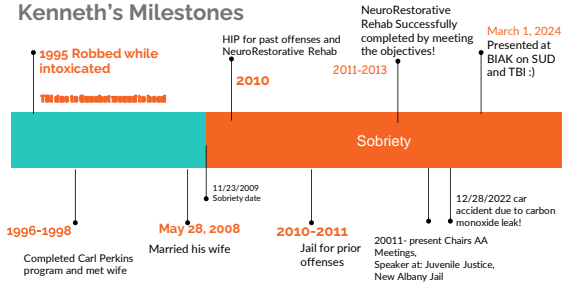
Meet Kenneth.

He received and successfully graduated from KY ABI Medicaid Waiver services in recent years. He has a history of both TBI and SUD.

He maintains a supportive network of family and friends and attends AA meetings regularly. He also chairs and speaks at meetings regularly.

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Kenneth's Milestones



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The power of support

Family, friends, AA supports/sponsor, former ABI team aka "NeuroRestorative Alumni", etc.

Tip

Support helps Kenneth to continue to reach his goals and maintain progress with both TBI and SUD rehabilitation.

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Study: Kentucky ranks 7th best in the nation for drug rehabilitation!



Reference

Williams, D. (2024, January 17). Study: Kentucky ranks 7th best in the nation for drug rehabilitation. Spectrum News Kentucky. <https://www.spectrumnews.com/news/2024/01/17/study-kentucky-ranks-7th-best-in-the-nation-for-drug-rehabilitation>

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Want to learn more?

atcnetwork.org

Free Online Resource

This toolkit merges the content on traumatic brain injury (TBI) and substance use disorders (SUD) to expand the capacity to address both issues in treatment. It is a resource for behavioral health treatment providers, healthcare providers, educators, and health and human service administrators to gain a deeper understanding of the impact of SUD on persons who have survived a TBI. The merging of the two fields expands the capacity of providers to address both concerns, with a specific recommendation for treatment protocols and screening tools.


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4.Review

- No safe amount of alcohol for survivors of ABI
SUD can lead to ABI and ABI can lead to SUD.
No clear research results of the causality
- Risk Factors for ABI: Children, especially newborns to 4-year-olds, Young adults, especially those between ages 15 and 24, Adults age 60 and older, Males in any age group
- Risk Factors for SUD: Family history of addiction, mental health, Peer pressure, Lack of family involvement, Early use, and Taking a highly addictive drug.
- What's next?
Please help survivors avoid or address SUD in addition to their ABI rehab.

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References:

Substance use disorders. (n.d.).
<https://www.research.va.gov/topics/sud.cfm>

Olson CM, Corrigan JD. Does Traumatic Brain Injury Cause Risky Substance Use or Substance Use Disorder? Biol Psychiatry. 2022 Mar 1;91(5):421-437. doi: 10.1016/j.biopsych.2021.07.013. Epub 2021 Jul 21. PMID: 34561027. PMCID: PMC3776913.

Williams, D. (2024, January 12). Study: Kentucky ranks 7th best in the nation for drug rehabilitation. *Spectrum News Kentucky*.
<https://spectrumnews1.com/ky/brain-the-health/2024/01/07/study-kentucky-ranks-7th-best-in-the-nation-for-drug-rehabilitation>

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