

EEG BIOFEEDBACK SERVICES AND INFORMATION

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Neurofeedback / Biofeedback RESEARCH conducted at Cri-Help, Inc. reveals improved Residential Substance Abuse Treatment. Read about the study presented in May 2002 by the **American Psychiatric Association. Available on our website "www.cri-help.org"**

HOW NEUROFEEDBACK WORKS

The problem: Most people with substance abuse problems come from dysfunctional family systems. The main educational force in these systems is negative reinforcement. Children in these families observe their parents avoiding feelings and confrontation of personal responsibilities through denial, blaming, introversion, projection, obsessing, and depression. If one is to discuss feelings, or direct attention toward a solution to the real family issues, an immediate negative reinforcer is administered.

Most people with addictions, even prior to abusing chemicals, haven't learned to express or process feelings. They usually rationalize and justify their reality in place of creating it through confronting responsibilities. They are primarily fear driven and go through life trying to avoid pain and the discomfort surrounding personal growth / change. This way of life / program leaves one quite anxious and depressed. They have a strong attraction to others living the above program because reality is what a group perceives. Usually during school years, they discover the notion of sponsorship; very supportive person(s) with much in common that help them acquire new values and who gives strokes for new behaviors. This person teaches them how to get cigarettes, booze, roll joints etc. Once chemicals are introduced into their systems they experience a positive reward which for many is the first thing they did that they felt good about. Their sponsor introduces them to a larger network of support groups (bars and parties). Here they can be patted on the back for the forms of using related trouble, rationalized thinking, or for being the most destructive, in some circles. They often end up fear driven, supersensitive, do only what's familiar, and seeking immediate refuge from confrontation. A common philosophy that emerges is, "lets be in this together and convince each other our program is OK." The majority of the feelings they experience are chemically induced or result of ego inflation from being good at this way of life.

In addition to the biologic predisposing factors, being raised in and practicing the unnaturally rewarding program causes one brain to produce abnormal electrical activity. When people with addictions first drink or use they usually report feeling safe, secure, self-confident, and wondering where the chemical had been all their lives. Ingestion of chemicals significantly alter Alpha brainwaves. Alpha is associated with reward, safety and security. The theta brainwaves are related to surrender openness, creativity and resolution of unconscious conflicts. It is mentioned in Dr. Penniston's 1989 research that alcoholics and even children of alcoholics have abnormal alpha rhythms.

In 12-step treatment, people are taught and shown the way to a happy comfortable life. They are introduced to another large support network. They meet another sponsor but this one teaches them new steps to live by. The better living through chemistry and the sober program are identical with the exception of one obvious spiritual aspect. One is pretend and the other is real. Prior to treatment, many think therapy is brainwash when it's actually deprogramming from it.

The 12 step program is always effective for those who keep doing it. This isn't a catch 22 either. The problem is that the main benefits aren't received until about 6-18 months of practicing this program. Only about 10% of those introduced to traditional 12 step treatment have the necessary faith to stay with it even though there aren't that many immediate rewards. Most of their expectations, for some reason also run quite high. Twenty percent of the clients consistently see relapse, also neglect to grasp the new way of life or see its potential benefits. Most seek negative support for what they think is best for them, and either overtly or covertly oppose the 12 step process.

For between 60 to 80% of client's receiving eeg biofeedback , an improvement in their alpha and theta rhythms instills that sense of well-being they longed for in their using careers. It also sheds insight into psychological blocks and resolves unconscious conflicts. The 12 step portion of treatment teaches them on an on going basis, how to live life in such a way that they don't have to accumulate more baggage. When addicts increase alpha and theta, they experience the benefits of longer sobriety in a shorter period of time. This significantly increases the propensity of better integration and motivation toward ongoing 12-step maintenance and recovery.

EEG biofeedback can also be used to treat the following:

1. ADD
2. ADHD
3. PANIC DISORDERS
4. DEPRESSION
5. DYSTHYMIC DISORDER
6. ANXIETY
7. TMJ
8. PTSD
9. SLEEP DISORDERS
10. MIGRAINE HEADACHES