Introduction to Addictive Thinking

Addictive thinking patterns are very similar to criminal thinking patterns. Criminal thinking patterns say it is okay to violate others or their property. Addictive thinking patterns say it is okay to use alcohol or other drugs as much as you want and to do whatever you need to do to get them.

The main feature of addictive thinking is denial. Denial is a trick the addict’s mind plays to excuse the use of alcohol and other drugs no matter what harm it causes. You can see how others are heading down a self-destructive road through addiction, but you can’t seem to see this in yourself. If you really saw this, you’d have to begin your recovery. You avoid this truth in order to keep using.

You keep using because you’re obsessed with the desire to feel good. You don’t feel good without consuming an addictive substance (alcohol or other drugs, food, nicotine) or engaging in an addictive process (sex, gambling, dominating, raging). So, your mind becomes obsessed with repeating the experience. You’re so absorbed in your own cravings that you are unable to consider the wants and needs of others. You become self-obsessed.

Obsessed with addictive cravings, you can’t think straight. You think irrationally, because your thoughts revolve around justifying and excusing your addiction. You’re not open to the truth. To stay in denial, you lie, invent stories, twist facts—anything that serves your addiction.

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Your Addictive Thinking Patterns

Review the nine addictive thinking patterns. Which three patterns do you see yourself falling into regularly?

1. _________________________________________________________
2. _________________________________________________________
3. _________________________________________________________

Describe an incident that shows how you think in an addictive thinking pattern.

____________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________

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Anyone using criminal and addictive thinking patterns is going to behave in destructive ways that may lead to incarceration. Correcting the behavior starts with correcting the thinking.