



PALMETTO®
ADDICTION RECOVERY CENTER

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NEWSLETTER



Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier

In 1958, Bill Wilson wrote, "I think that many oldsters who have put our AA "booze cure" to severe but successful tests will find that they lack emotional sobriety. Perhaps they will be the spearhead for the next major development in AA – the development of much more real maturity and balance (which is to say, humility) in our relations with ourselves, with our fellows, and with God." He basically said they had emphasized not drinking more than having emotional stability, and he felt that they put the cart before the horse. He saw this as the next level of maturity in the AA program itself.

In effect, all twelve-step programs are about developing emotional sobriety. Many individuals who consider themselves to have a co-occurring mood disorder may find that through the twelve-step program, not only can they maintain sobriety, but their mood disorder improves. Others will need medication while working the 12 steps, and should be under the care of a professional who is trained to help addicts/alcoholics with mood disorders.

All of these changes occur ultimately in the limbic system. It sets the mind's emotional tone. It filters events through internal states (creating emotional coloring), stores highly charged emotional memories, modulates motivation, controls appetite and sleep cycles, promotes bonding, directly processes the sense of smell and modulates libido.

An impaired limbic system can

Continued inside

"The great thing in this world is not so much where you stand, as in what direction you are moving."

– Oliver Wendell Holmes

IN THIS ISSUE

Staff Highlight

Welcome
Tiffany Hatfield, LPC

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier

Why maturity and emotional balance are essential to recovery

Recovery Resolutions for 2018

Emotional Sobriety: The Next Frontier

Continued from front

manifest as moodiness, irritability, clinical depression, negative thinking, negative perceptions of events, decreased motivation, floods of negative emotion, appetite and sleep problems, decreased or increased sexual responsiveness and possibly social isolation. Primarily there's an impaired ability to regulate levels of fear, anger, and sadness which is part of the foundation of states such as chronic anxiety or depression.

As one recovering nurse anesthetist put it, "emotional sobriety is my ability to stay in the day and face challenges calmly one day at a time. I've had several over the past year, and I'm able to see

my part in them, even if they seem circumstantial. And it's the ability to reign in my catastrophizing, square my shoulders back and tackle a piece of the problem today."

Tian Dayton, PhD has identified signs of emotional sobriety:

- Ability to regulate strong emotions
- Ability to regulate mood
- Ability to maintain a perspective on life circumstances
- Ability to regulate potentially harmful substances or behaviors

- Ability to live in the present
- Ability to regulate activity levels
- Ability to live with deep, intimate connection
- Resilience (the ability to roll with the punches)

We at Palmetto teach these principles as part of our goal in helping addicts, alcoholics, gamblers, and eating disorder patients. This sets the foundation for utilizing the 12 steps for much more than simply curtailing the addiction or dependency. As Bill Wilson put it 23 years after founding AA: It is the next frontier.



Welcome Tiffany Hatfield, LPC

Tiffany is a graduate of Louisiana State University with a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology and a Masters of Arts from Louisiana Tech University in Guidance and Counseling. Tiffany is a Licensed Professional Counselor with Appraisal Privilege registered with the Louisiana State Board of Examiners. She is also a member of the Louisiana

Counseling Association (LCA) in the Mental Health Counselors Division.

Since 2008, she has had the privilege of working with a variety of fields, including inpatient and outpatient mental health, juvenile corrections, veterans transitional living, and private practice. Tiffany's chosen approach to counseling is centered in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, with aspects of Gestalt and Existential Therapy. She employs Palmetto's holistic approach in providing counseling services. She believes that in order to achieve total wellness we must be well mentally, physically, socially, spiritually and emotionally. She views this holistic approach as a valuable key to maintaining gains achieved in therapy.

Recovery Resolutions for 2018

Resolve to lean on loved ones for support.

Resolve to stay positive.

Resolve to take responsibility for your own actions and intentions.

Resolve to make a healthy change for your body.

Resolve to read an inspirational book.

Resolve to count your blessings every day.



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PalmettoCenter.com

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