

# Women, Addiction, and the Therapeutic Process

## Overview

The powerful need in our culture to evade or deny the reality of addiction in women's lives permeates the field of addiction treatment itself. Historically, research and treatment have been designed for the male addict. In acknowledging that women, too, become addicted, it is important that we understand the special needs and concerns of women with addictive disorders and answer the question: What is healing for women?

This workshop is designed to give clinicians, counselors, recovering women, and others a basic understanding of our current knowledge concerning addiction. The major focus of the workshop is on women's recovery with an emphasis on the issues of self, relationships, sexuality, and spirituality, as well as on the therapeutic techniques for dealing with these issues. Originally designed for the Women's Program at the Betty Ford Center, this treatment model integrates current theories of addiction, women's psychological development, and trauma. The workshop also seeks to reconcile the separate professional fields of addiction services and mental health treatment by increasing mutual understanding and integrating the contributions of both fields in the healing process. Finally, spirituality and the contributions and limitations of Twelve Step programs for women are discussed.

## Topics

- Historical overview
- Theoretical integration
- Gender differences
- Implications for treatment
- Treatment strategies
  - Sense of self/self-esteem*
  - Building healthy relationships*
  - Exploring sexual issues*
  - Healing trauma*
  - Developing a spiritual life*

## Objectives

- Discuss the history of women's treatment
- Integrate current theoretical perspectives
- Understand a developmental model of addiction for women
- Examine the multiple issues in women's recovery and learn treatment strategies
- Discuss the integration of spirituality and psychotherapy

STEPHANIE S. COVINGTON, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.

7946 IVANHOE AVE., #201 B, LA JOLLA, CA 92037 TEL: 858-454-8528 FAX: 858-454-8598 [www.stephaniecovington.com](http://www.stephaniecovington.com)