

## Similarities Between Substance Abuse and Domestic Violence

### Behavioral Issues

Mood swings, Irritability and Anti-social behavior

Self-gratifying

Forgetful, Secretive

Lack of Self-control

Inability to stop addiction or abusive behavior without intervention

Risk Taking

### Psychological/Emotional Issues

Denial, Minimization, Rationalization, Manipulation

Trust Issues, Betrayal, Dishonesty, Secretive, Resentment, Jealousy

Undependable, excuses,

Fear

Counter-Attacks

Blame - Source of the problem blamed on external causes

Entitlement

Over time both the abuser/partner and the addict/partner become preoccupied with the behavior

Tolerance develops – the threshold of defining addictive/abusive behaviors changes as well as the ability to endure physical, emotional, trauma and pain.

### Criminality

Disrespectful of laws/authority/rules

Involvement with Law enforcement and the Criminal Justice system

Examples:

DUI's, Restraining Orders, Arrests/Jail, Probation

Accidents

Murder – through physical violence or vehicular homicide

### Health Issues

Effects on children (even pre-born)

Depression & other mental health issues

Substance Abuse Black Outs / Rage Red Outs

## Economic/Financial

Debt/Credit Issues

Job Issues – poor performance, absences, unemployment,

Spending family income for substances or self-entitlement desires

Withholding Money

Lying or Secretive about financial issues

## Generational Influence

Behavior, choices, consequences and life examples influence all family members

Likelihood of children becoming addicted/abusive or partnering with an addict/abuser

## Relationship Breakdown

Fights/Conflict with family members

Affect Intimacy & Sexuality

Emotional Isolation

Mistrust

Resentment

Separation/Divorce

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The majority of this information comes from the article “When is Domestic Violence a Hidden Face of Addiction” by Richard Irons, M.D., and Jennifer P. Schneider, M.D., Ph.D.

Journal of Psychoactive Drugs, Vol.29, pages 337-344, 1997

## **Similarities Between Substance Abuse and Domestic Violence**

### Both have a cycle

Addiction: Preoccupation with the addictive behavior, rituals associated with the behavior, acting out, then remorse or guilt/shame.... which in turn begins the preoccupation with the addictive behavior again (Carnes, 1983)

Domestic Violence: Tension-building phase, the explosion or acute battering incident phase, then the honeymoon phase...which in turn leads to increase in tension within the relationship and the cycle repeats (Walker, 1979)

Partners in both incidences have difficulty leaving the unhealthy relationship and often get caught up in the cycle of codependency.

Both have:

Loss of control – Black Outs or Rage Red Outs

Continuation despite adverse consequences

Preoccupation or obsession

Entitlement and self-gratifying

Tolerance and Withdrawal

Involvement of the entire family including extended family members

Effects multiple generations

Use of the defenses of denial, minimization, and rationalization

Difficult for the partner to leave

Increased likelihood of physical/sexual abuse of children

Affect intimacy and sexuality

Relationship difficulties and/or breakdown

Increased likelihood of involvement with the Criminal Justice System

May lead to murder - vehicular homicide or physical violence resulting in death