Character Issue Or Disease?
Understanding Addiction

- Addiction affects about **1%** of population, 23 million
- Only **10%** are receiving treatment
- **Genetic** component **Take a Family History**
- Starts in middle school
- **Dopamine receptors depleted** = increased circulating dopamine, the new “normal” requirement for dopamine is increased

From lecture by Dr. Corey Waller
Survival

FOOD

WATER

DOPAMINE
Behavior

Lack of Dopamine

Survival Mode

Craving

Primal Action
Diagnosis based in the description of behavior

Aberrant behavior should be expected

Therefore behavior is a symptom not a frustration
Since lack of dopamine is the basis for driving the behavior.

Augmentation of Dopamine makes sense.

Buprenorphine and Methadone safely increase dopamine.

This allows for stabilization of craving.

Allowing for behavioral therapy to be effective.
Compare to diabetes

- Genetic risk
- Lifestyle factors
- Socioeconomic factors
- Food/Sugar “Addiction”

Would you tell a diabetic, “I won’t treat you if you eat cake?”
Goals  Abstinence or Harm Reduction?

Treatment retention rates 1 year
  MAT (Medication Assisted Treatment) 67%
  Abstinence based 7-25%
Suboxone 2 medication combo

- Buprenorphine-partial agonist
- Naloxone-blocker
- No “high” but reduces cravings
- Ceiling effect for respiratory depression
- May improve chronic pain control
Decreased
Mortality 50%
Criminal Activity
Illegal Drug Use
HIV/Hepatitis C infections
Patients can then stop survival mode behaviors and do other work to up regulate dopamine receptors, start other medications that help with neurotransmitter issues, and learn other strategies to increase their native dopamine/endorphin production.
Recovery

Psychotherapy
Group Therapy
Mindfulness

AA/NA (caveat)
Social integration

SSRIs/SNRIs
Prazosin
Beta blockers
NOT benzodiazepines!
DEA “waiver” must be obtained to prescribe as treatment for opioid use disorders.

8 hours minimum required for physicians-
Can be obtained on line

Because of the naloxone “blocker,” anyone currently on opioids needs to go through a process called “induction” to avoid precipitated withdrawal.