Neuro Sensory Feedback Treatment For Recovery

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Here at the Robert Alexander Center for Addiction Recovery, we rely on scientific and evidence-based treatments to help our clients overcome addiction. One such treatment used at our rehab facility and incorporated into our various addiction treatment programs is neuro sensory feedback. This highly effective method enables the brain to rewire itself without medication.

At this point, you might be wondering what neuro sensory feedback is and how it's used to beat addiction.

In short, neurofeedback is an arm of biofeedback. Biofeedback is simply a scientific approach used to collect information about the body and its various processes through monitoring things like blood pressure, skin temperature, heart rate, and brain waves.

Neurofeedback reports on brainwaves or neurological activities in the brain and is an excellent tool for diagnosing brain health. This is a non-invasive, non-medication based treatment approach that has been used to help with various neurological issues such as PTSD, anxiety, depression, and even addiction. The use of this treatment approach is based on the reasoning that a compulsion to drink or use drugs stems from structural damage to the brain and neurofeedback helps reveal where this damage is located and prompts the brain to repair it.

Neurofeedback relies on technological devices to collect information about the brain directly from the brain itself. The client is hooked up to electronic sensors that along with monitoring devices and special software collect the needed information. Brainwaves are analyzed and understood in terms of their amplitude (height) and how they function with other waves from different parts of the brain. A lack of balance is evidence of dysregulation in the brain e.g. in a person who is recovering from addiction. The specific areas of this dysregulation are identified through quantitative Electroencephalography (EEG) i.e. a method used to record the brain's electrical activity.

Addiction and the Brain

To understand why neurofeedback is effective in addiction treatment, you have to understand how addiction affects the brain.

The brain regulates the entire body and its functions. It works through a complex system of information-laden circuits that send, receive, and interpret signals. Introducing drugs or alcohol into the brain confuses and changes how this circuitry works.

Alcohol and drugs trigger the release of dopamine which floods the brain's reward system with pleasurable messages, leading to a rush of pleasure in an individual – what is referred to as a high. The brain then remembers these signals and sends a message to the individual to keep using the addictive substance.

As dopamine levels increase, the brain tries to restore balance by producing less of it. This is what creates drug or alcohol tolerance in an individual. The person then requires a larger amount of drugs or drink to receive the same high as before. In the long term, the individual becomes unable to experience these levels of pressure outside substance abuse. Additionally, their cognitive functions are impaired and the brain remains sensitive to relapse, even after undergoing addiction treatment.

What Happens During a Neurofeedback Session

Many of those who are enrolled in our Intensive Outpatient Program or those in the Outpatient Program have neurofeedback sessions one or more times a week in the course of their treatment.

During these sessions, the client is hooked up to an EEG monitor by attaching specific electrodes to their scalp. These electrodes are connected to a monitoring system running a program that records electrical activity in the brain.

The client sits in front of a monitor, picks a movie of their choice, sits back, and starts watching it. This movie is meant to stimulate their brain and when issues such as their anxiety, PTSD, depression, etc, come up the monitors pick up this activity. In response, the image on the screen shrinks while the volume also reduces. The brain registers these changes and as the client becomes aware of their reaction, they can begin working on changing their response.

Over several sessions, the client has to learn how to calm themselves down and level out the EEG. Once this happens, they are rewarded by the screen resizing back up and the volume returning to normal.

As the person learns to control themselves and their response, neurofeedback prompts the brain to find its balance by rebuilding new pathways around the individual's addiction, depression, PTSD, and other problematic issues. This is how it rewires itself without the use of medication.

Neurofeedback and Breaking the Cycle of Addiction

From the explanation above, you can see how neurofeedback can help those struggling with addiction to break free. The dysregulation of brain activity caused by addiction throws off brain function and neurofeedback treatment can help get it back to a normal state.

The calmness brought about by neurofeedback allows for long term sobriety since it eliminates the need for instant gratification and immediate relief that comes with craving drugs. The client learns to recognize the symptoms of cravings and by applying the techniques learned in neurofeedback, they can calm themselves and respond rationally rather than reacting impulsively. This calm and rational state also helps prevent relapse since the client can now monitor and control their response to stressors.

Additionally, neurofeedback helps to rebalance the entire nervous system. This not only alleviates the symptoms of addiction but also helps the entire body to function more harmoniously, improving the client's health.

Get the Addiction Treatment Help You Need

If you or a loved one is struggling with addiction, we can help. The Robert Alexander Center for Recovery is a leading addiction treatment provider with an excellent recovery rate. We make use of neurofeedback with all our clients to improve their addiction treatment outcomes.

Our staff includes highly experienced and professional addiction therapists and psychiatrists who have helped hundreds of people struggling with addiction to get better. Our comfortable rehab facility in Kentucky is designed to make your treatment as enjoyable and effective as possible and our staff is dedicated to helping you succeed in your recovery journey.

For more information on neuro sensory feedback treatment for addiction recovery or any of our treatment programs, call us today at (502) 443-9950.

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