

## **Diagnostic Criteria For Substance Use Disorders**

Substance-Related Disorders encompass ten (10) separate classes of drugs: alcohol; caffeine; cannabis; hallucinogens; inhalants; opioids; sedatives, hypnotics, and anxiolytics; stimulants (amphetamine-type substances, cocaine and other stimulants) and other (or unknown) substances.

The diagnosis of a substance use disorder is based upon a pathological set of behaviors related to the use of that substance.

These behaviors fall into four (4) main categories:

- A. Impaired control (Criteria 1-4)
- B. Social impairment (Criteria 5-7)
- C. Risky use (Criteria 8-9)
- D. Pharmacological indicators (tolerance and withdrawal) (Criteria 10-11)

### **Diagnostic Criteria**

1. The individual may take the substance in larger amounts or over a longer period than originally intended.
2. The individual may express a persistent desire to cut down or regulate substance use and may report multiple unsuccessful efforts to decrease or discontinue use.
3. The individual may spend a great deal of time obtaining the substance, using the substance, or recovering from its effects.
4. Craving is manifested by an intense desire or urge for the drug that may occur at any time but is more likely when in an environment where the drug was used.
5. Recurrent substance use may result in a failure to fulfill major role obligations at work, school, or home.
6. The individual may continue substance use despite having persistent or recurrent social or interpersonal problems caused or exacerbated by the effects of the substance.
7. Important social, occupational, or recreational activities may be given up or reduced because of substance use.
8. Recurrent substance use in situations in which it is physically hazardous.
9. The individual may continue substance use despite knowledge of having a persistent or recurrent physical or psychological problem that is likely to have been caused or exacerbated by the substance.
10. Tolerance as defined by either a need for markedly increased amounts to achieve intoxication or desired effect or markedly diminished effect with continued use of the same amount.
11. Withdrawal manifesting as either characteristic syndrome or the substance is used to avoid withdrawal.

A minimum of 2-3 criteria is required for a mild substance use disorder diagnosis, while 4-5 is moderate, and 6-7 is severe (APA, DSM-V, 2013).

Neither Tolerance nor withdrawal is necessary for diagnosis of a substance use disorder.