

Stopping the Transgenerational Cycle of Addiction: Is It an Unbreakable Chain?

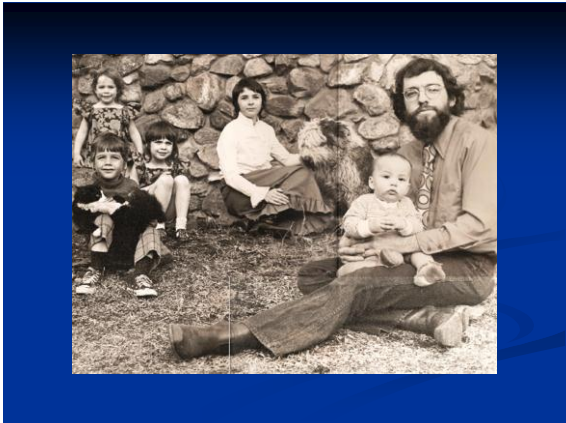


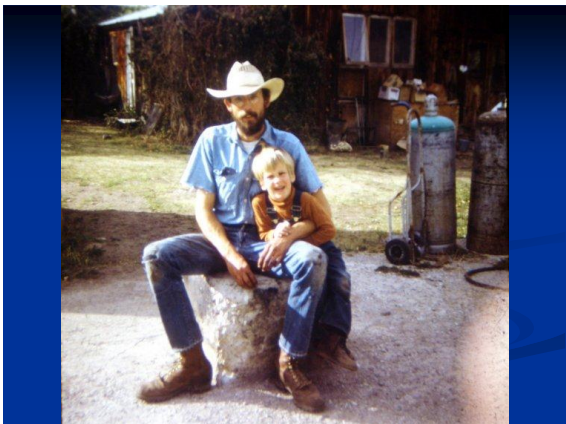
Presentation for the 2012 conference of the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children October 24, 2012
Nicolas T. Taylor, Ph.D. nt.tbh@montrose.net

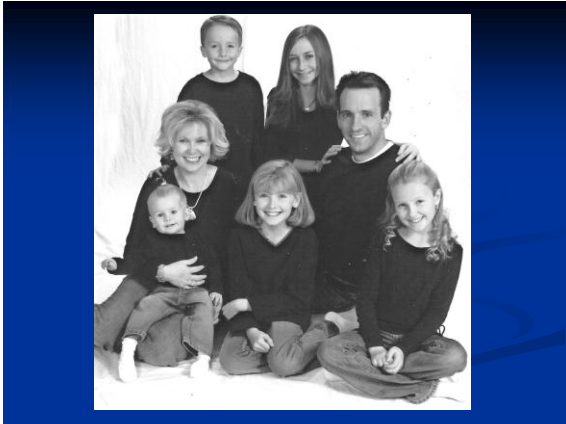
- Drug Endangered Children across the lifespan
- DECs becoming DAPs
- Will genetics and early childhood modeling end up determining outcome?
- If not, what is the role genetics play in the development of addictive behaviors?
- If yes, then what if anything can be done to change the trajectory of addictive behaviors?











Is there a heritability factor associated with addictive behaviors?

- Studies of identical twins indicate that as much as half of an individual's risk of becoming addicted depends on his or her genes. (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2008. *Topics in Brief: Genetics of Addiction*, NIMH: Washington DC)
- Adoption studies indicate that children of addicts are likely to grow up to be addicts themselves even when reared by non-using parents almost from birth.

YES

Points to be made about the heritability of addiction

- Addictive behavior is genetically influenced but that influence is *complex*.
 - Many genes involved
 - None of these genes will ever fully determine that a person will become affected
 - Genome/phenome interaction is not a matter of simple Mendelian mechanics

Points to be made about the heritability of addiction

- Hard to say exactly what it is that is inherited
 - Personality disposition
 - The trait of “disinhibition”
 - Cognitive factors
 - Mental illness that is self-medicated by substances of abuse
 - ADHD
 - Schizophrenia/psychotic disorders
 - Eating disorders
 - Metabolization issues
 - Alcohol-metabolizing enzymes

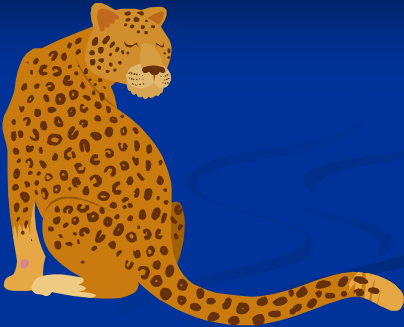
What about the role of environment?

- Phenotype impacted by variety of environmental influences
 - Opportunity
 - Trauma
 - Social role modeling
 - Person/environment mismatch
- Models for thinking about the interaction of genes and the environment
 - One hand clapping
 - Area determined by both length and width

What about the role of environment?

- What is inherited?
 - Risk
 - Predisposition
 - Susceptibility
- Nature vs. Nurture?
 - Nature enables nurture
 - Nature via nurture
 - Heredity deals the cards; environment plays the hand

Can a leopard change its spots?



Seven horizontal lines for writing.

Is the effect of environment on genetics like choosing options on a new car?

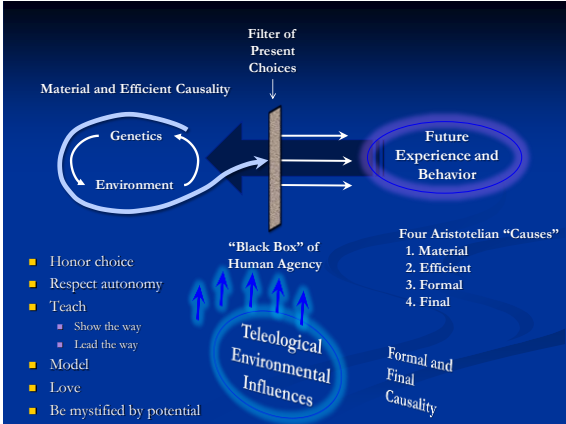


Seven horizontal lines for writing.

“In reality, we are both creatures and creators of our worlds. We are—it is a great truth—the products of our genes and environments. Nevertheless—another great truth—the stream of causation that shapes the future runs through our present choices. Our decisions today design our environments tomorrow. The human environment is not like the weather—something that just happens. We are its architects.”

David G. Myers, Ph.D.

Seven horizontal lines for writing.



The filter of present choices

- Childhood resiliency
- The power of agency and human choice
- The power of hope
- The power to change
- The absolute and unyielding unpredictability of human behavior
- Is organic and is influenced by other organic factors
- This is where we spend our time; everything else seems to happen “behind the scenes”

The transgenerational cycle of addiction

The chain can be broken!
What if there is effective treatment for the drug using parents?



Nicolas Taylor, Ph.D., CAC III
242 West Main Street, #9
Montrose, CO 81401
(970) 249-4448
(970) 249-4449 Fax
nt.tbh@montrose.net © 2012
