



877.881.2689
San Diego, CA 92116

www.apex.rehab /
4452 Park Blvd. Ste. 301

Why APEX?

What distinguishes APEX Recovery among addiction treatment centers in San Diego is that we offer a holistic, integrative psychological approach that utilizes evidence-based treatment approaches. Our core treatment program includes components of Motivational Interviewing and Cognitive Behavioral Therapies. Holistic treatment services include yoga, meditation, peer group recovery, organic dietician consultation, fitness classes, and esthetician services.

In our striving to create the most therapeutically effective treatment, we rely on regular feedback from clients to ensure that both our clinical services and the rest of the program are meeting clients' needs. In all of our individual therapy, and group therapy sessions, we have each client rate the session using a quick 4-item scale to let us know how we did. These rating scales are known as the Session Rating Scale, and Group Session Rating Scale, developed by psychologist Scott Miller and colleagues, under the heading of Feedback-Informed Treatment, have been granted status by SAMSHA as Evidence-Based Practice.



Sober Summer!



Here are some tips for sober summertime fun!

- Bring along a friend or other loved one to a social function for additional support.
- Leave the event early.
- Be sure to have transportation options that will allow you to leave the event early if necessary.
- Have a friend who you can call for support during the event and take a "timeout."
- Practice stress reduction techniques during this time of year (i.e., exercise, meditation, massage, etc.).
- Spend time with your friends in activities that would not involve alcohol.
- Be honest about your emotions with others.
- Avoid "people pleasing," as this involves trying to keep other people happy while neglecting your own needs.
- Let go of other's expectations and opinions. If you have a healthy relationship, then they will respect your personal choices.
- Engage in summer activities that you enjoy that do not involve alcohol and invite friends along.



Contrasting the Disease Model and a Psychological Model of Addiction

Written by Dr. Sean House, PsyD.
Clinical Director at APEX Recovery

One of the main benefits of believing in the disease model of addiction is that it can assuage guilt by placing responsibility for undesirable/harmful behavior on the disease, rather than the individual. Similarly, it can reduce uncomfortable feelings in loved ones who can understand their addicted loved one's harmful behavior as being due to the disease. Unfortunately, there are some downsides associated with believing in the disease model of addiction. Respected researcher, William Miller and colleagues found two predictors of alcohol relapse. 1) Lack of coping skills, 2) A belief in the disease model of alcoholism. Here's a link to the abstract of that research: [\(click here\)](#)

In place of the disease model, a psychological model offers a self-empowering approach in which the individual can understand the reasons for the choices made to use alcohol or other drugs, and can take full responsibility in knowing he/she has the choice not to use. This psychological shift from powerlessness to self-empowerment increases the person's belief in their self-efficacy of being able to overcome addictive behavior. It does require courage to accept full responsibility for one's life, one's choices, and one's behaviors (the disease model can help assuage guilt for "bad behaviors" by shifting the blame to the disease). In an existential sense, we are always responsible for our choices, even when we try to deny the choice.

Pragmatically, in talking with people who have developed addictions, they tend to acknowledge that they did make the choice to use, for a variety of reasons, each time they picked up. Understanding the reasons for the choice becomes of supreme importance for knowing oneself better and preparing to make healthier choices in the future. The choice to use is typically based in a desire to feel different than how one is currently feeling. Wanting to avoid anxiety, boredom, depression, anger, etc, are all common reasons to choose to use. Use is goal-directed behavior. Once a person has used, and is intoxicated, choosing to continue using occurs for the same reasons (i.e., wanting to sustain the feeling or get more intoxicated). It's still goal-directed behavior. Even choosing to use to avoid withdrawal symptoms is a choice. Sometimes people choose to go through withdrawal symptoms because they have a competing goal of wanting to overcome their addiction. Just because people often make bad choices (repeated drug use despite negative consequences) does not mean that they have "lost control" and are no longer able to choose. Bad choices are still choices.

Chef Lauren's Monthly Creation

Strawberry Chicken Salad

Ingredients:

For the salad

4 boneless, skinless chicken breast
1 8oz bag spring mix
1 basket of strawberries, tops removed and halved (quartered if large)
8 oz. broccoli slaw
2.5 oz feta cheese
1 2oz bag dried cherries
sunflower seeds (garnish)



Strawberry vinaigrette

1/4 c. strawberry puree
1/2 c. extra virgin olive oil
1/8-1/4 c. apple cider vinegar
salt and pepper to taste

Chicken marinade

1/2 c. olive oil
1/4 c. lemon juice
2 Tbs minced garlic

Balsamic Reduction:

1 c. balsamic vinegar
1/8 c. honey

Directions:

Mix marinade together in large ziplock bag, then add chicken breast, seal, and marinate for 1-4 hours.

1. Grill chicken on a hot grill pan or outdoor bbq for a more smoky flavor. Depending on the size of the chicken breast, it could take anywhere from 7-15 minutes. You will know the chicken is cooked when the meat is no longer pink, the internal temperature is 165 degrees, and the juices from the chicken run clear. Remove from heat, cover with foil, and set aside.
 2. While chicken is resting, combine salad ingredients (spring mix, broccoli slaw, dried cherries, strawberries) in a large bowl and set aside.
 3. The balsamic reduction: Pour balsamic into a small sauce pan and stir in honey. Heat on high heat until boiling, then turn heat down to medium and simmer for 15-20 minutes, or until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Set aside to cool.
 4. The vinaigrette: Pour strawberry puree and vinegar in a bowl and whisk to combine. While still whisking, slowly add olive oil in a steady stream. Once the ingredients have combined without separating, add salt and pepper to taste. Pour over salad mixture.
 5. Slice your chicken on the bias, or shred if desired.
 6. Place salad mixture on a plate to form a high pile. Place chicken on top, sprinkle with feta cheese, and garnish with sunflower seeds.
 7. Drizzle balsamic reduction over the top.
- Enjoy!

"Rock bottom became the foundation on which I rebuilt my life"

~ J.K. Rowling

Dr. Matthew Bruhin

Chief Executive Officer

Intake: 877.881.2689

Danielle Lacey

Marketing Director

619.997.3681

Corporate Office: 619.756.6424

dlacey@apex.rehab

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