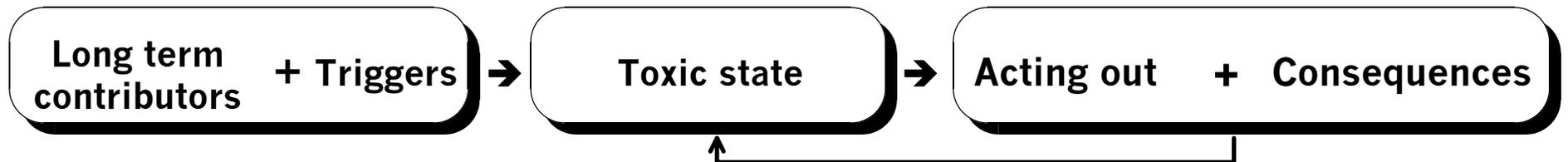


Cycle of Addiction



Culture
Genetics
Dysfunctional family
Abuse (sexual, physical, etc.)
Using "highs" to relieve stress
Obsessive coping strategies
Other addictions
Depression/anxiety
Negative core beliefs
Thinking styles (cognitive distortions)
General isolation, loneliness, hopelessness

People
Places
Things
Toxic feelings
Toxic thoughts
Toxic behaviors

Loneliness
Sexual preoccupation
This state is formed from pain and swallows up all reason and sanity.
Depression ↑
Anxiety ↑
"I feel horrible, like I'm gonna crawl out of my skin"
"I really feel deprived"
"This is too difficult, I can't stand this. I need to get fixed *fast*"
"Other people's cravings may be temporary, but not mine"
"Life without lots of sex would be *incredibly* boring"
"It'll feel great, and this time I will be able to hold onto the feeling" (euphoric recall)
Urges, cravings

Behaviors that spiral out of control
Gradually involves:
- behaviors that are clearly dangerous and must be stopped to avoid major medical, financial, or legal consequences
- behaviors that could cause you to lose your job or primary relationship
- behaviors that risk your physical safety

Watch for...
Budding signs - behaviors indicating a shaky sobriety
Rituals, grooming

Positive (short-lived)
Quick "fix" - an intense "high", nirvana; in some cases simply a numbing of bad feelings
Reassurance that everything's ok...can control moods by acting out
Anxiety/depression ↓

Negative
Remorse, shame, self-hatred
Medical, financial, legal, career, relational physical safety problems
Mood swings - emotional roller coaster
Tolerance - more and more acting out is required to obtain desired result - mtn. top feeling doesn't happen as much
Withdrawal - physiological/psychological symptoms occur if acting out behavior is stopped

When people enter recovery the toxic state is consuming. As recovery progresses, it gets less. Genuine recovery involves making progress in the first column - a primary goal of treatment.