

Resources for Alcoholism/Addiction

“Addiction is not about drugs; it’s about brains. It’s about what happens in a person’s brain when they’re exposed to rewarding substances or rewarding behaviors. Addiction is a chronic brain disease” (American Society of Addiction Medicine).

These are my top two:

1. ***Breathing Under Water*** by Richard Rohr. This book connects the 12 Steps of AA with the Christian life. There's a chapter for each step. Each chapter has scripture references for that particular step and then a short explanation by Richard Rohr. I think this would be a great "bible study" for a clergy person with her vestry or a bishop with her convocations. The book also contains a bibliography and a study guide for group discussions or individual reflection.
2. ***Thirst*** by James Nelson. This book is written by a priest who is in recovery, so he knows what he's talking about. (I tend to look a bit askance at stuff written about alcoholism by people who haven't experienced it firsthand. There is so much misinformation and subconscious prejudice out there by well-meaning but clueless people.) And the author tackles the subject from a spiritual (Christian) point of view, which I think is absolutely essential because addiction is both a physical and a spiritual disease.

Other good resources are:

3. ***Addiction & Grace*** by Gerald May. This book covers the psychological, neurological, and theological nature of addiction, but it was written in 1988 so it’s probably a little dated. But dated Gerald May is still Gerald May, which is great. Another great book by Gerald May is *The Dark Night of the Soul*. It’s not about addiction, but it describes the wilderness that addicts (and all people if they’re honest with themselves) go through.
4. ***A Gentle Path Through the Twelve Steps*** by Patrick Carnes. This is a do-it-yourself kind of book, which is sort of contradictory since AA is all about recovery in community. Still it might be a good step for someone who's not quite ready to take the first step (pun intended) of going to an AA meeting. My therapist recommended it.
5. ***Meditations for The Twelve Steps—A Spiritual Journey***. Also recommended by my therapist. This one is like *Forward Day by Day*. Each page has a step, a related bible passage, and a reflection/story. At the bottom is a one-two sentence prayer/summation. Each step has multiple reflections/pages.
6. ***The Life Recovery Bible*** (NLT) by Tyndale. Yet another recommendation from my therapist. Each book of the bible has recovery-type commentary. There are also several indexes and chapters such as *The Twelve Steps*, *The Twelve Steps and Scripture*, *The Twelve Laws of Recovery*, etc.

7. ***The 12 Step Prayer Book***: A Collection of Favorite 12 Step Prayers and Inspirational Readings, Written and Compiled by Bill P. and Lisa D.
8. ***So You Think You Don't Know One*** by Nancy Van Dyke Platt and Chilton R. Knudsen. We all have this one. Have we read it yet?
9. Anything put out by Alcoholics Anonymous World Services such as ***The Big Book, Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions***. The down side is that the language in a lot of these books is very dated. That can be a turn-off.
10. ***Dreamland***: The True Tale of America's Opiate Epidemic, Sam Quinones--I haven't read this yet, but it's supposed to be great.
11. ***Drinking in America: Our Secret History*** by Susan Cheever
12. ***Pleasure Unwoven: An Explanation of the Brain Disease of Addiction***—This is a dvd.
13. ***The Anonymous People***—A feature documentary film about the 23.5 million Americans living in long-term recovery from alcohol and other drug addiction.
14. Opioid Epidemic Practical Toolkit:
<https://www.hhs.gov/about/agencies/iea/partnerships/opioid-toolkit/index.html>