Healing Process of Drugs Abuser During Rehabilitation Program

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Abstract: The case of drugs abuse was increasing in number in Indonesia. The number of victim of drugs abuse did not decrease and tend to increase every year. This number will increase whenever there is no effort to overcome this problem. The majority of the cases showed that it was difficult to heal people from drugs abuse. People with drugs addiction are difficult to heal; most of them would relapse or consume narcotics again; thus, it is necessary to research deeper the efforts taken by drugs abusers to heal themselves from drugs abuse. Based on this thought, the researchers were interested to find out the healing process of drugs abuser. This research was focused on the drugs abuser during the stages of healing process. This research was aimed at understanding the healing process toward recovery experienced by a drugs abuser in his/her course of the future. This research adopted qualitative approach using case study research design. Qualitative method is defined as a research procedure that provide descriptive data in the form of oral or written words (interview), and in the form of observed behaviors. The data were analyzed by the use of qualitative analysis with coding. From the results of the interviews, the researchers found descriptions regarding the reason to stop narcotics consumption, efforts taken to stop narcotics consumption, coping behavior during healing stages, and supports during healing stages. Details of the research results were described in this research report.

Keywords: healing process, drugs abuse

1. Introduction

Impacts of drugs abuse are very dangerous for the life of people throughout the world, including especially the people of Indonesia. The cases of drugs abuse tend to increase in number. Victim of drugs addiction did not decrease, but tend to increase in number yearly. The danger or negative effects of drugs abuse are very detrimental to the drugs abusers themselves. Excessive consumption of narcotics might be the cause of physical or psychological dependence, or even death. Without efforts to overcome this problem, the number of victims of drugs abuse will increase.

Many cases showed that it was not easy to release one’s addiction. For addicted people, the hardest thing to do is to stop narcotics consumption or release their addiction. They can be healed but this recovery is the most difficult effort because this healing should pass through careful medical treatment, longer period of healing, and needs relatively expensive costs. People with narcotics addiction are difficult to recover; most of them will relapse or consume narcotics again; thus it is necessary to conduct a deeper review on the efforts made by drugs abusers to get free from their addiction. Based on this thought, the researchers were interested to find out the healing process of drugs abuser. This research was focused on the drugs abusers who was undergoing healing process.

2. Literature Study

2.1 Healing Process of Narcotics Addiction

1) Definition of Narcotics

The term “narkoba” came to appear in around 1998 because of the increase of drugs abuse and consumption of prohibited addictive drugs. In this respect, in order to simplify or facilitate communication and to avoid long phrase, then the phrase “prohibited narcotics and addictive drugs” had been abbreviated as “narkoba” (Supramono, 2004).

The term narkoba was derived from the word narcotics, meaning the same with narcotics, that is narcose, which cause a sleep, a drug that cause a sleep. Kline and French (1986) defined narcotics as any substance that can cause anesthetic effects or the loss of consciousness because the substance influence central nervous system.

According to the Act RI number 9 Year (in Joewana, 1989), narcotics is a substance or drugs derived from plants or not from plants that has an ability to cause degradation or change of consciousness, loss of sensation, reduce or even deaden the pain, and may cause dependence. Meanwhile, according to the Act No 5 Year 1997 (in Sasanka, 2003), narcotics is a substance or drugs, naturally or synthetically obtained, that cause a psychoactive effect through selective impacts on behavior.

From the descriptions given above regarding narcotics, it can be concluded that narcotics is any substance, extracted from plants or synthetically, that cause the loss of consciousness, reduce or influence the work of central nervous system, trigger dependence and is damaging.

2) Kinds of Narcotics

Narcotics consists of various kinds (Mandagi and Wresniwiro, 1995), that is:

a) Canabis Sativa (marijuana)

Marijuana is a plant that trigger addiction and influence the work of central nervous system. This narcotics is consumed by smoking, smelling, or swallowing it. Pharmacologically, marijuana is categorized as hallucinogen.

b) Opium

Opium is originally used by physicians to alleviate pains of injury, wound, or malignant cancer. Effects of opium trigger
pathologic behavior and chronic toxicity, because central nervous system damages and the brain is not capable to control user’s behavior.

c) Morphine
Morphine is extracted from opium and is a sedative substance to deaden pains. Excessive use of morphine will increase brain, central nervous system, heart and blood circulatory activities.

d) Heroine
Heroin is extracted from opium through distillation and certain chemical processes. Basically, impacts of heroine consumption are similar to those of morphine and heroine.

e) Cocaine
Cocaine is a kind of stimulants extracted from the plant *erytroislon coca*. Excessive consumption of cocaine results in such symptoms as degradation of consciousness, irregular respiration, tremor, widened pupils, higher heart beats, higher blood tension, fear and anxiety.

f) Synthetic and semisynthetic narcotics
Semisynthetic narcotics is a kind of narcotics yielded from chemical modification processes of such basic narcotic matters as opium, marijuana, heroine, and cocaine. For example, methadone, ecstasy, meperidine, and so on.

3) Impacts of Narcotics Consumption
Excessive consumption of narcotics results in dependence or addiction. Maroef (1986) described impacts of narcotics, as follows:

a) Influence the work of functions of brain, central nervous system, heart, and blood tension.

b) Abnormal condition of body

c) Unconsciousness and faint

d) Death

e) And violation of law

f) Drugs abuser
Essentially, drugs abuser is a man or woman whose life had been depended on or controlled by narcotics in such ways that his or her behavior is influenced by narcotics and these conditions create troubles and difficulties in all aspects of their life or her life (Narcotics Anonymous, 1999). Winick (1971) added that drugs abuser is a man or woman having typical personality that tends to overcome his or her problems with unconscious reasons.

4) Relapse
One of those difficulties facing drugs abuser who want to stop consuming narcotics is the drive to relapse or consume narcotics again. An ex-addicted has stop consuming narcotics, however inner drive or suggestion to consume narcotics is still not extant. Among the triggers are moods and un conducive environment. According to Somar (2001), the signs or symptoms of relapse shown by ex drugs abuser are as follows:

a) Related to troubles and problem facing them

b) Experiencing increasingly intense stress or continuous mental pressure

c) Showing behaviors driven by self will

d) Living in solitude or reject other people.

e) Indicating that he or she has many problems.

f) Tendencies to yield or surrender.
Effects of these narcotic relapse can damage emotionally, rationally, physically, and socially, the ex abuser. The ex abuser feels that he or she had been failed, because his or her confidence and self-esteem vanished. Furthermore, negative feelings about their failure will create prolonging sadness, feeling of guilt and shame which, in turn, produce self-instability. These factors may drive ex abuser to relapse or flee healing process.

This model showed that experiences within interpersonal environment such as conflict between individuals living in an environment, or nonpersonal occurrences such as individual failure – for example, failure in finding job – may indirectly cause relapse. These interpersonal and nonpersonal occurrences may simultaneously create negative and positive emotions. These emotional conditions drive someone directly or indirectly to yield to their wants for consuming narcotics because of social pressures or other factors relating to the drugs (Gossop, 1989).

According to Nizar (2005), the process of relapping into narcotic consumption is a real process by choosing narcotics consumption as the ultimate response or last resort which is not adaptive against prolonging stresses coming forth from either internalities or externalities of their selves. Relapsing is a progressive manifestation of negative interpersonal behavior that ends into physical and emotional ruins. In facing life problems, loss of emotional control and escalation of disfunctional behavior pushes ex-abuser to consume narcotics again (loss of coping skill). This is the classical problem: the individual shackle himself with a personality susceptible to drugs abuse, desires and fantacies or apparent comforts (pseudocomforts) related to narcotic consumption. Domestic environment plays main role in anticipating relapses.

From these explanations regarding relapse it can be concluded that relapse is the most difficult problem facing ex drugs abusers because suggestions for consuming narcotics again still exist within their selves. Environment plays key role in preventing relapse; thus healthy environment shall become the powerful support for prevention of relapse.

5) Healing Efforts
In accordance with these explanations, Gallon (2004) also proposed several steps for healing process, as follows:

a) During the initial stages of healing process, abusers shall necessarily a coping strategy individually and modify their behaviors in such way that they can manage their life and face any challenge against their efforts to get free from narcotics.

b) After several months, the abusers during rehabilitation program will feel a better change inside their selves and start to believe that drugs abuse is an individual or personal problem. During this stage the abusers are very susceptible to relapse because they sometimes feel bad; environment plays very important role during this stage.

c) The most important effort is to develop a social relationship between abusers and their environment; initially the abusers exist within an uncomfortable social
situation when they interact with people who are not drugs abusers; therefore environment shall be supportive for their efforts to avoid narcotic consumption.

d) Another focus in healing (rehabilitation) process is to generate strong, positive confidence inside their selves by helping them in coping uncomfortable feelings, for example by involving them in several social or family activities, so that they start to believe that they can function well within their environment.

Healing or process by the use of medication can be performed in these ways:

a) Detoxification

Hawari (2000) explained that one of those therapeutic method for removing toxins of narcotics or other toxic substances from patient’s body is by total avoidance of consumption of such substances or by gradual reduction, and also by substituting such substances with other substances that create better effects on the body. In accordance with this, Alemi et al. (1995) said that detoxification should be focused on handling medical treatment and symptoms of stopping narcotics consumption shown by drugs abusers. This program is effective for reducing toxins contained in abuser’s body.

b) Rehabilitation

Hawari (2000) said that rehabilitation is an effort to heal and recover physical, psychological, social, spiritual conditions of ex abusers. Duration rehabilitation program depends on methods adopted, usually from 3 to 6 months. There are two types of rehabilitation: religious and general (detoxification). The two types of rehabilitation of drugs abuser mentionedabove are most frequently adopted. Healing efforts by detoxification helps release toxins from abuser’s body – this efforts are usually conducted in certain hospitals which especially treat narcotic addiction. Meanwhile, abusers who undergo rehabilitation program are placed in professional institutions that have specialty in treating drugs abusers. From various meaning or descriptions concerning healing it can be concluded that healing is an effort to control or evade oneself from relapsing or consumption of narcotics, develop and nurture a new social relationship, manage one’s life, so that the individual can recover his or her biological, psychological, and social functionsto the previous conditions as before consuming narcotics.

Choosing subjects in a qualitative research is the main key in collecting information in order to study in deep the phenomenon to be researched. Procedure for sample data collection generally reveals several characters, that are: (1) directed not to a large number of sample but to typical cases in accordance with the specificity of the phenomenon researched; (2) is not determined rigidly since the beginning, but can be changed in number or characteristics of the sample, according to conceptual understanding developed during execution of this research; (3) is not directed on representation (in respect of number or random events) but to the contextual conformity. Research subjects were collected according to the specific characters of drugs abuser. Subjects of this research are drugs abuser grouped in a specific community whose members are inclusively drugs abusers. Subjects of this research were selected as referring to information and recommendations of the community members where the subjects joined in that community activities so that we could choose the right subjects for this research.

3.1 Method for Data Collection

Methods for data collection in this research were:

1) Observation

a) This observation is direct between the researchers and respondents, so that, in case of ambiguous data, the researchers could check validity of the data directly from the respondents.

b) Observation presents possibility for the researchers to see and observe directly and then record behaviors and events actually.

c) The researchers record events in a situation relevant with either the propositional knowledge or understandings derived directly from the data.

d) Data confidence can be checked by conducting observation.

e) Observation presents a chance for the researchers to understand complicated situations; this is important whenever the researchers want to observe several respondents’ behavior simultaneously; and

f) In case where communication technique is impossible, method of data collection by observation is very valuable.

2) Interviews

Interviews is a conversation with specific intentions or goals, and conducted by two parties, that is the interviewer who proposes questions and the interviewee who answers that questions.

3.2 Execution and Results of Research

A. Research Orientation and Preparation

1) Research Orientation

In this research, the respondents are individuals who were drugs abuser, but they had been involved in healing process and did not actively use narcotics since then; they managed themselves in order not to relapse or avoid drugs addiction again. The goals of this research was to find out the healing processes taken place in the self of an addicts (abuser) in his or her journey toward a better future.
2) Research Preparation
   a) Administrative Preparation
       This research was conducted after consent or approval.
   b) Gauge Preparation
       Research method adopted by the researchers is a qualitative method, so that the gauge used here is an interview guide containing research questions aimed at digging deeper into healing processes of drug abusers or addicts. Therefore, before going to the field for collecting information, the researchers designed an interview guide used to dig into deeper the data existing in field.
   c) Data Collecting Preparation
       The first thing done by the researchers was to build a rapport with research respondents. Methods of data collection adopted in this research are interview and observation. Therefore, prior to execution, the researchers prepare papers containing interview guide, observation sheets, writing tools, and recorders presented by the researchers to the respondents. The steps are as follows:
       - Interview preparation in this research was made by contacting each respondent and making appointment for meeting for the day and time agreed. These steps should be performed so that a comfortable situation could be created during implementation of interview between subjects and researchers which, in turn, motivated the subjects to answers each question openly and without any doubt. These steps play key role in facilitating interviews.
       - Observation
         Observation was performed during implementation of interviews with respondents. During observation, the researchers recorded everything that should necessarily be observed and recorded. Observation was conducted during interviewing the subjects.

   In the beginning of interviewing process, the researchers explained the goals of interview, then built a rapport with respondents by arranging easy conversation - for example, by asking about respondents identity. The respondents had given consent for recording before implementation of the interview.

   In addition to the interview with respondents, the researchers also interviewed research informants in order to check the data obtained. The researchers interviewed three informants, that are respondent counselors. The three informants had a good relationship with respondents. Prior to the interview, the informants had given consent for recording results of the interview.

   Interviews with each of the respondents and the three informants were performed at different time and place, so that the respondents and informants felt comfortable and talked frankly during the interviewing process. On the whole, the interviewing process proceeded well.

4. Discussion

Based on the results of this research it was revealed that reasons for drugs abusers to stop consuming narcotics are the negative impacts of drugs abuse, family, crime, and their selves. Research conducted by Tyas (2002) reveals that there are various reasons for drugs abusers to stop consuming narcotics, among them are: disordered feelings caused by messy life, both physically and psychologically, deepest fatigue and confusion, guilty feelings and boring about their incessant dependence on narcotics.

Respondents’ reasons to stop consuming narcotics motivated them to take efforts and bearings to avoid relapse. These efforts include certain attitude of respondents against anything conducive to drugs abuse, taking parts in positive activities, and private reasons. Definite attitude against drugs abuse is a means used by respondents as a self-defense to resist desires for narcotics consumption, such as rejection of drugs, self-conditioning, finding new environment, involvement in positive activities.

Coping behavior adopted by respondents in facing a certain problem during healing period differs from coping behavior they adopt when they are still consuming narcotics. Attitude and efforts to resist narcotics consumption influence each other in overcoming challenges of healing success. Coping behavior of respondents can be classified into two types, that is approach and avoidance. Approach is a coping behavior adopted by respondents against a problem, by approaching and then solving the problem; for example by solving the problem they are facing. Meanwhile, avoidance is a coping behavior in which respondents avoid or reject the problem they are facing; for example, by arranging flee. The two coping behavior are performed irrelevant with narcotics, because the respondents were being in healing processes.

Respondents built their social relationships by seeking a new environment which is sterile from narcotics. Usually they found difficulties in their adjustment with new social situations. However, here they have learned to habituate themselves with loving each other.

Supports during healing period helped respondents in their efforts to stop narcotics consumption. These supports came from family, counselors and friends in rehabilitation. According to Yadi (1999), during the processes of rehabilitation of an addict, various factors should be taken into account, relating to domestic or family and societal aspects. Generally, respondents enjoyed full attentions from people around them during rehabilitation (healing) period and whenever they came home – commonly, these people are friends in rehabilitation environment, counselors, and their families. These intimate people gave attention, control, motivation, supports and monitoring to respondents. Certain respondents, during healing period, were visited by families and their needs were satisfied by their families. Results of the research by Sari (1995) reveal that social supports correlate positively with individual’s self-confidence (self-esteem); having self-confidence will help the individuals facing a new, strange, social situation.

Efforts by respondents to not consuming narcotics again (relapsing) undertaken by respondents and their social relationship during healing (rehabilitation) process also influence each other, similar to the coping behavior adopted by respondents to overcome any obstacle in their way toward success of rehabilitation. According to Azwar (1988), social attitude is shaped by interactions experienced by individuals; this social interaction contains more than a mere social contact and individual relationship
as a member of community; this interaction produce a reciprocal, intense relationship where the two parties influence each other. After deciding to stop narcotics consumption, the respondents showed a different attitude toward their environment as compared to their previous attitude before stopping narcotics consumption; respondents limited their interactions or decrease its frequencies within the old environment, took a distance with their old friends, or even they avoided them and removed from their old social environment.

In the new environment, respondents arranged social interaction by seeking a social environment which is sterile from narcotics. Although at times they found difficulties in their new social environment, they tried persistently to nurture a new habit to love each other.

Respondents found several obstacles in their efforts to stop narcotics consumption. These obstacles might be in the form of inner conflict (self-control), and addiction. Inner conflict (self-control) is a conflict within the self of the respondents regarding narcotics, addiction is a longing for old habit as a drugs abuser (suggestion); nevertheless, the respondents are able to overcome problems that trigger their desires to consume narcotics again.

Respondents succeeded in overcoming obstacles of healing (rehabilitation) process, and they would not relapse. Relapse means consumption of narcotics again by individuals who had successfully stop it previously.

Somar (2011) said that healing (rehabilitation) is a long process, sometimes painful, so that respondents should struggle hard for their new life.

Respondents who succeeded in overcoming obstacles or challenges during healing process would be recovered. It means that the respondents had completely been free from narcotics. These respondents also showed positive change, either physically or psychologically.

Based on the whole data the researchers obtained, healing processes of drugs abusers can be grouped into eight categories: that are, reasons to stop narcotics consumption, efforts not to consume narcotics, coping behavior during healing period, social relationship during healing period, relapse, obstacles during healing period, supports during healing period, and recovered (healed). These data were obtained by the researchers when they were conducting this research, so that these data is still far from perfects.

5. Conclusions

The reasons of addicts (abusers) to stop narcotics consumption would motivated them to make efforts to stop narcotics consumption. Supports during healing (rehabilitation) period which were given by families, counselors, friends in rehabilitation, would help respondents overcome any obstacle during healing (rehabilitation) processes. These efforts influence coping behaviors, and vice versa.

Respondents succeeded in overcoming obstacles during healing (rehabilitation) process, so that they would not relapse. It means that the respondents had been completely recovered from narcotics. These respondents also experienced changes, both physically and psychologically, after recovery.

6. Suggestions

1) For Drugs Addicts
To drugs addicts, in generally, this research proved that, with persistent will and efforts to stop consuming narcotics, addicts are able to stop their dependence on narcotics. Taking the fact in to account that efforts to stop narcotics consumption are not easy, addicts shall necessarily nurture their independence from narcotics and, if necessary, can share their experiences with other drugs addicts who want to get free from narcotics.

2) For Parents
Parents, especially with boys and girls who became drugs addicts, should never surrender in their efforts to get their children free from drugs addiction. Whenever their children had been released from addiction, the parents should nurture a better relationship with their children by relentlessly paying attention to their children although their children have been successfully recovered.

3) For Society
The society, especially people living in an environment with drugs abusers or addicts, shall necessarily sterilize their social environment from narcotics, and must help government in saving young generation, so that young generation can live well without narcotics. The society shall not reject or isolate any ex drugs abuser or addicts, because societal acceptance was very helpful for ex drugs abusers in accepting themselves and socializing or taking parts in their society.

4) For the Future Researchers
It is expected that research in the future shall be focused on life after recovery.

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