Pain, Suffering and Addiction

R. Corey Waller MD, MS
Pain vs Suffering

“If you are distressed by anything external, the pain is not due to the thing itself, but to your estimate of it; and this you have the power to revoke at any moment.”

— Marcus Aurelius, Meditations
Confounding Issues

• Early Life Trauma
• Superimposed MI
• Social Instability
• Familial Predisposition
• The Current Health Care System
Behavioral treatment of Pain

• Mindfulness, Meditation

• Operant, CBT, DBT, MET etc.
Pain Treatment can overlap with Suffering

- Opioids
- $\alpha_{2\delta}$ (alpha2delta) modulators (gabapentin, pregabalin)
- SNRIs
- Tricyclic's
Addiction?

- Is this Addiction or poorly controlled pain?
  - Screening
  - Testing
  - Monitoring
  - A conversation
Behavioral Treatment of Addiction

- Self Help
- CBT
- Motivational Enhancement Therapy
- Mindfulness
- Solution Based Therapy
Medication assisted treatment

• Opioids
  • Methadone, Suboxone, Naltrexone

• Alcohol
  • Naltrexone, Acamprosate, disulfiram, topiramate, gabapentin and Baclofen
Conclusions

• The overlap of Pain, Suffering and Addiction is significant
• Trauma Informed Care is the rule, not the exception
• Treatments for Pain, Suffering and Addiction are very similar in approach
• Take the emotion out of the treatment of addiction, it only gets in the way of the science