

Overcoming addiction. Myths and reality

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ESPAD

(The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs)



ESPAD

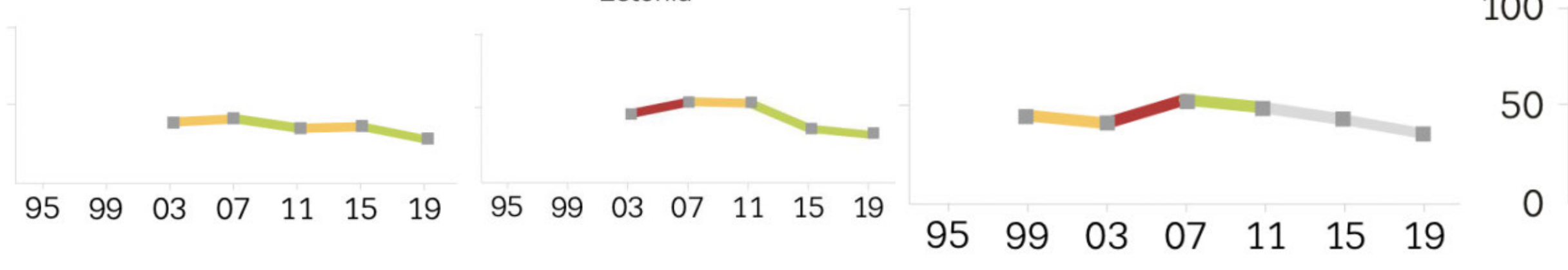
(The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs)




Lithuania

Estonia

Latvia



A young man with short hair, wearing a blue woven hat, a blue and white plaid shirt, and blue jeans, is sitting on a concrete ledge. He is looking down and to the left, holding a small, light-colored object in his right hand. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and a bright sky. The overall tone is somewhat somber and contemplative.

Prevalence of cannabis use in the last 30 days (2019)

- EU - 7,1%
- LT – 5,5%
- ES – 6,6%
- LV – 10%

- Prevalence of high-risk cannabis users
- EU - 4%
- LT – 4%
- ES – 4,2%
- LV – 5,8%

The European School Survey Project on Alcohol and Other Drugs (2019)

Used prescription drugs
(tranquillisers/sedatives) at
least once in their life without a
prescription.

ES - 15%

LT - 20%

LV - 21%

EU - 6.6%



ESPAD

E-cigarette use: prevalence in the last 30 days by gender (percentage)

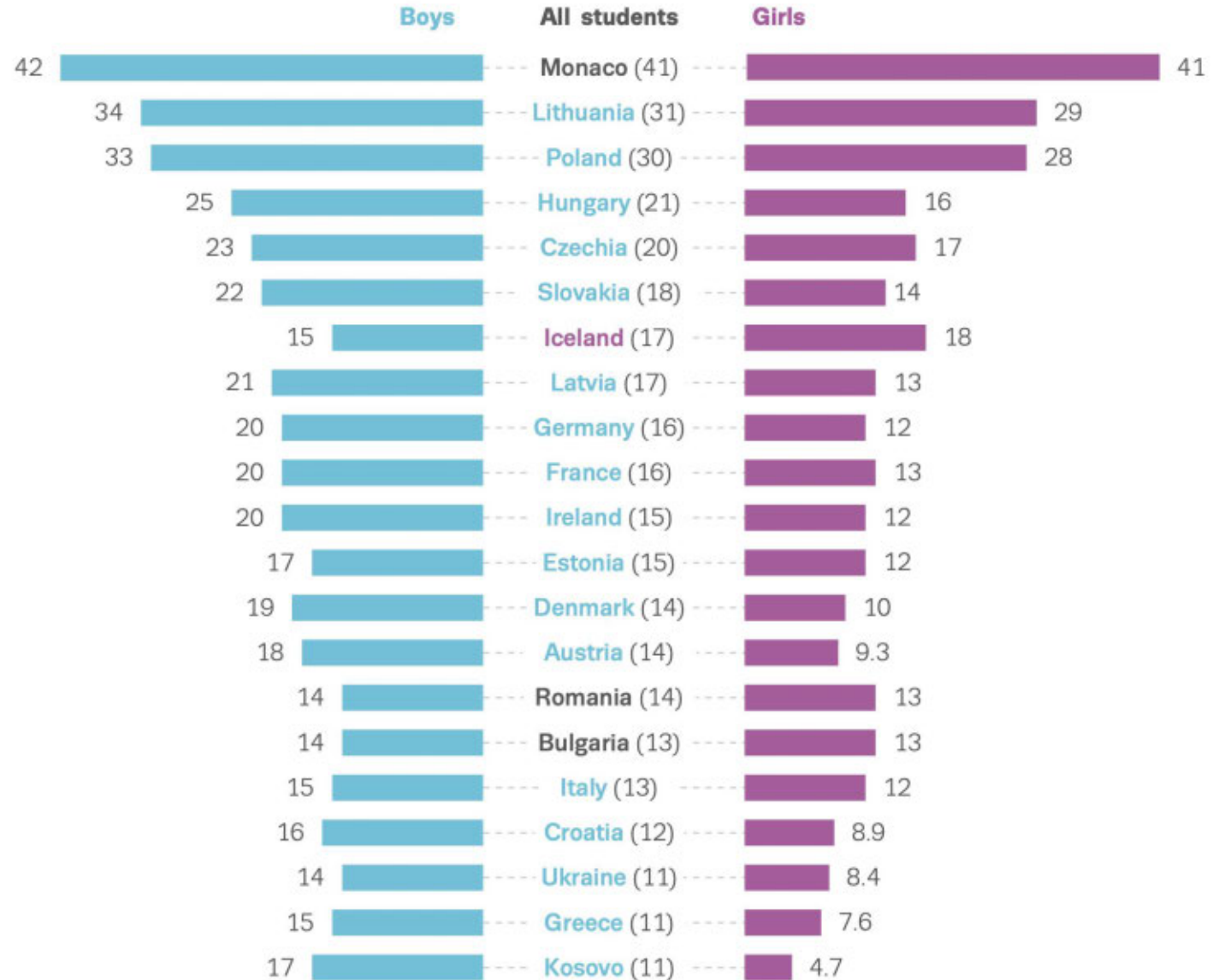
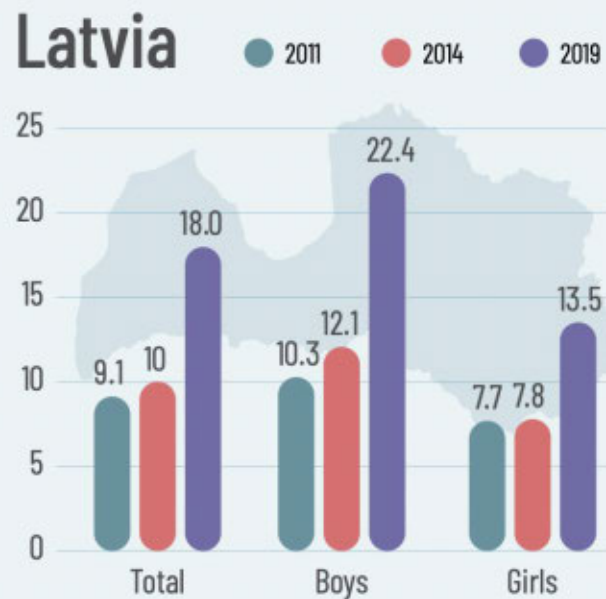
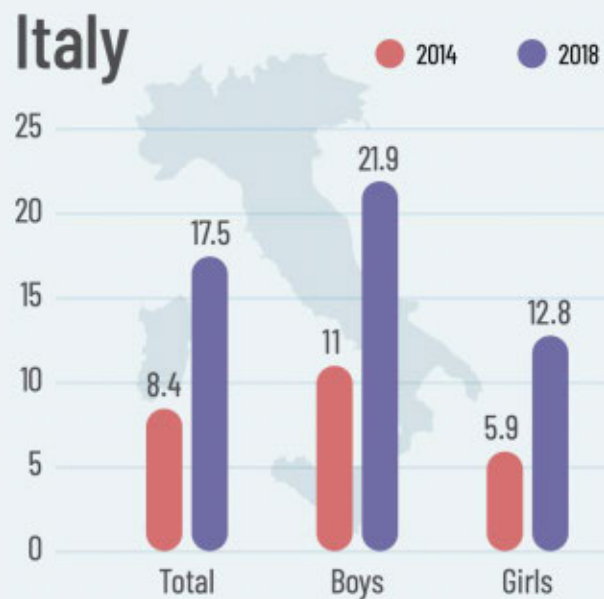
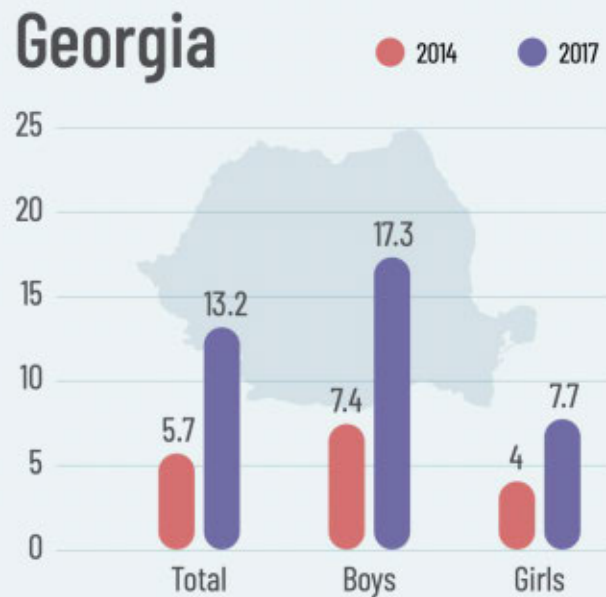
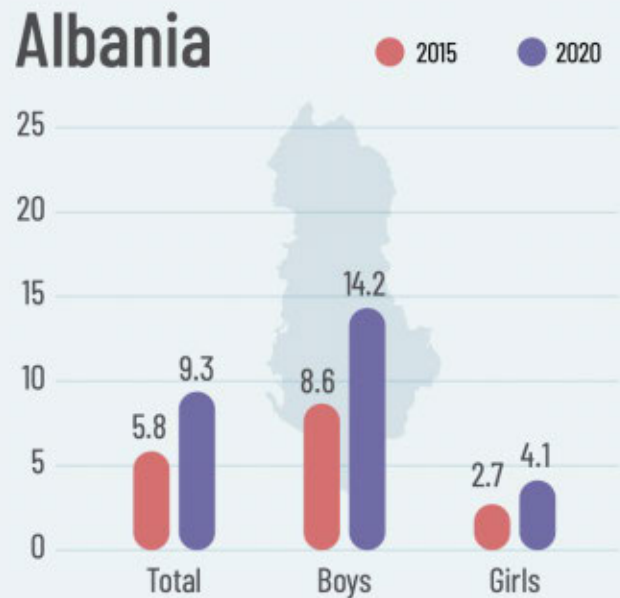


FIG. 6. E-CIGARETTE USE PREVALENCE OVER TIME IN SELECTED COUNTRIES OF THE WHO EUROPEAN REGION, GYTS, VARIOUS YEARS (%)



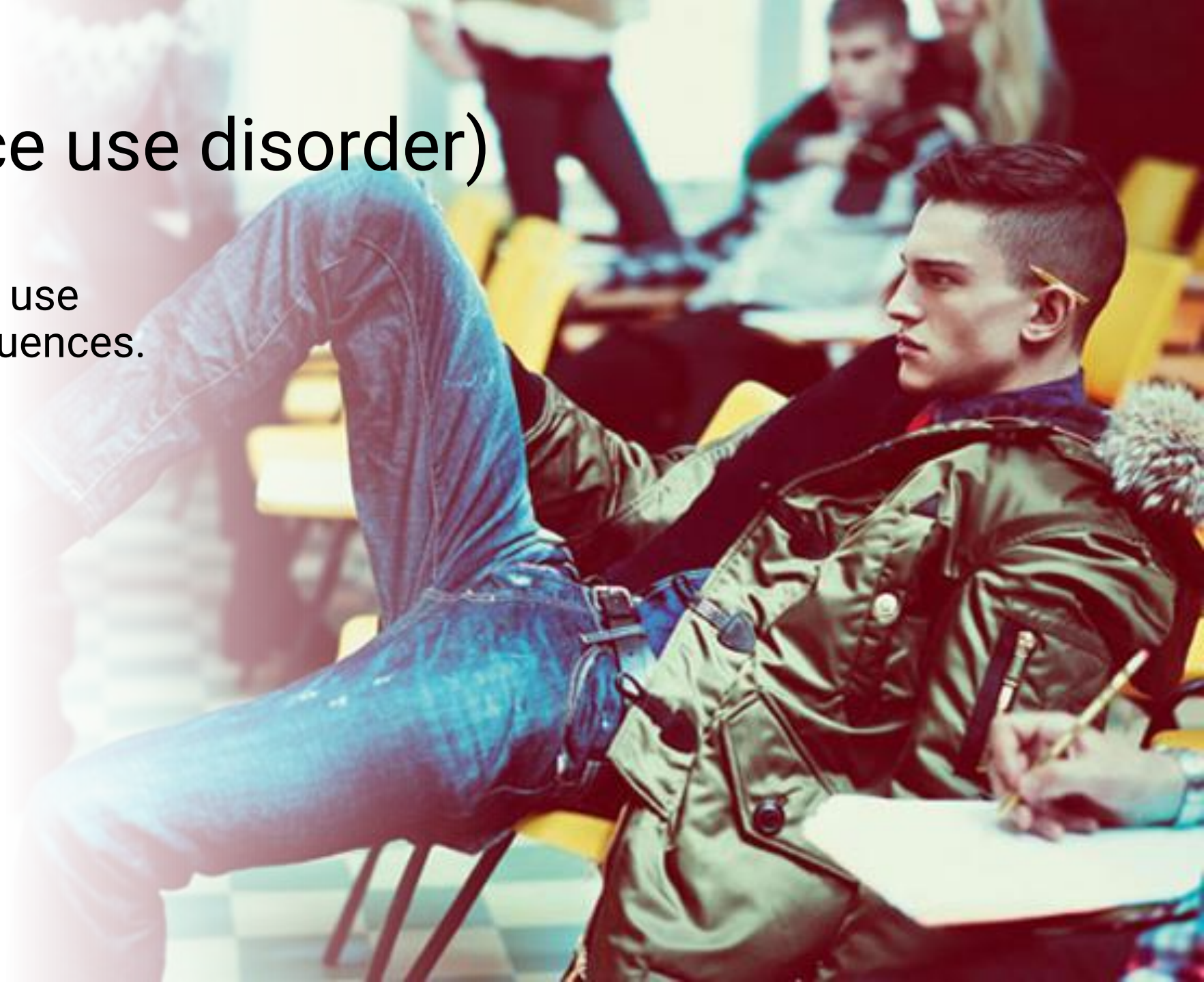
Global Youth Tobacco Survey 2022

El. cigarettes

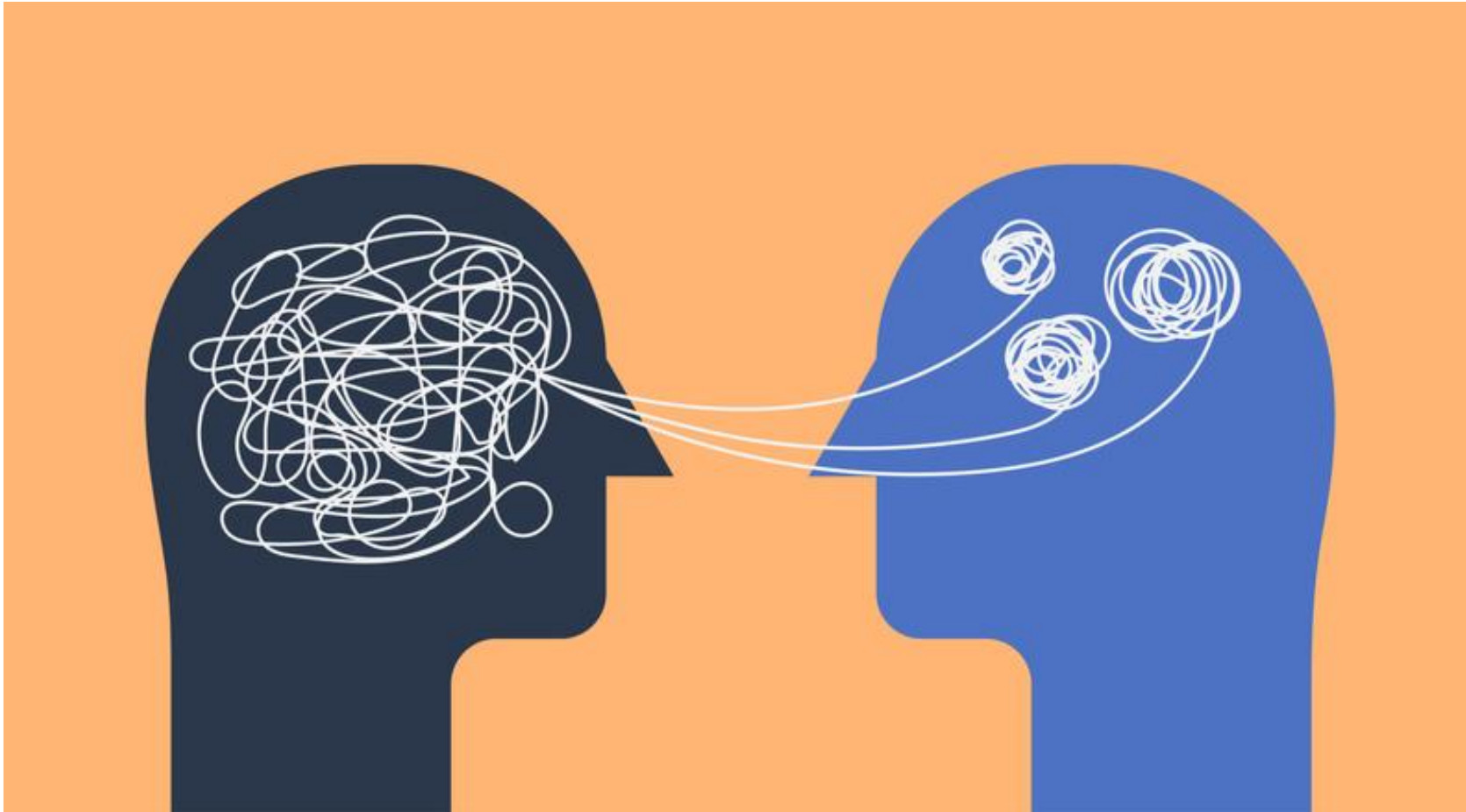
Among minors aged 11-17, vaping has doubled!

SUD (Substance use disorder)

Compulsive repetition of use despite negative consequences.



Addiction vs Dependence

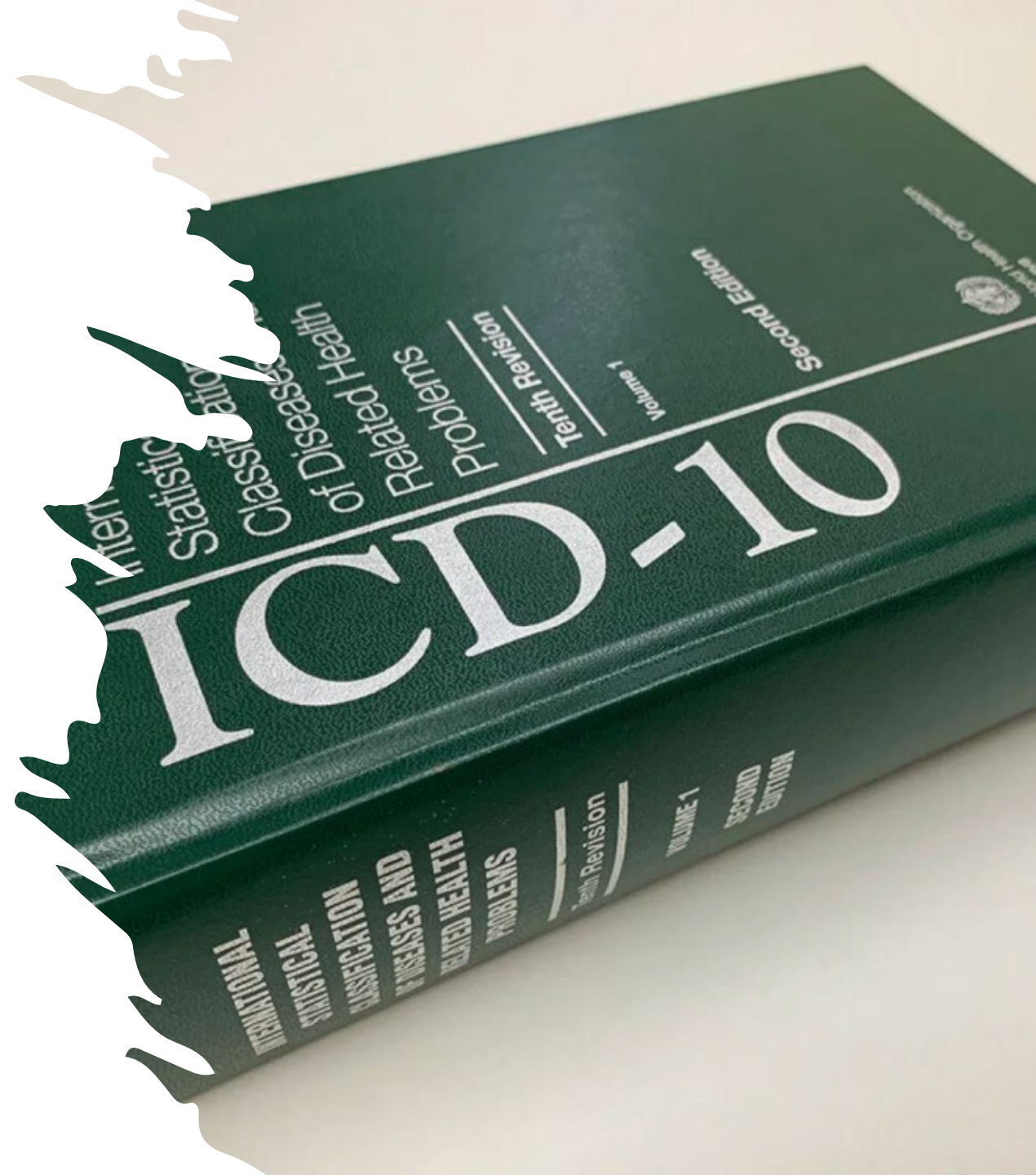


Substance use disorder diagnostics by DSM - 5

1. Taking the substance in larger amounts or for longer than you're meant to.
2. Wanting to cut down or stop using the substance but not managing to.
3. Spending a lot of time getting, using, or recovering from use of the substance.
4. Cravings and urges to use the substance.
5. Not managing to do what you should at work, home, or school because of substance use.
6. Continuing to use, even when it causes problems in relationships.
7. Giving up important social, occupational, or recreational activities because of substance use.
8. Using substances again and again, even when it puts you in danger.
9. Continuing to use, even when you know you have a physical or psychological problem that could have been caused or made worse by the substance.
10. Needing more of the substance to get the effect you want (tolerance).
11. Development of withdrawal symptoms, which can be relieved by taking more of the substance.

Substance use disorder diagnostics by ICD -10

1. A strong desire or sense of compulsion to take the substance.
2. Difficulties in controlling substance-taking behaviour in terms of its onset, termination, or levels of use.
3. Progressive neglect of alternative pleasures or interests because of psychoactive substance use, increased amount of time necessary to obtain or take the substance or to recover from its effects.
4. Persisting with substance use despite clear evidence of overtly harmful consequences, such as harm to the liver through excessive drinking, depressive mood states consequent to heavy substance use, or substance-related impairment of cognitive functioning. Efforts should be made to determine that the user was actually, or could be expected to be, aware of the nature and extent of the harm.
5. A physiological withdrawal state when substance use has ceased or been reduced, as evidenced by: the characteristic withdrawal syndrome for the substance; or use of the same (or a closely related) substance with the intention of relieving or avoiding withdrawal symptoms.
6. Evidence of tolerance, such that increased doses of the psychoactive substance are required in order to achieve effects originally produced by lower doses.





So addiction is more about the behavior
than the psychoactive substances...

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

- Addiction. Is it curable?
- **NO**

- Is it treated?
- **Yes**

- Is the treatment successful?
- **40% - 60%** (6-12 month remission)

National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)

- More than 23 million adults in the United States have struggled with problematic drug use (George F. Koob, Ph.D., NIAAA director)
- About 10 % can receive treatment, and of those who receive, 40-60% relapse within 1 year (NIDA director Nora Volkow).
- Tobacco/nicotine addicts, more than 50% of them are trying to quit every year...
- But success rate is just about 6%
- Why???

Sobriety vs Abstinence



Medications for substance use disorders

Nicotine Addiction

- Nicotine Replacement Therapies (NRT)
- Bupropion
- Varenicline

Alcohol Use Disorder

- Disulfiram
- Naltrexone
- Acamprosate

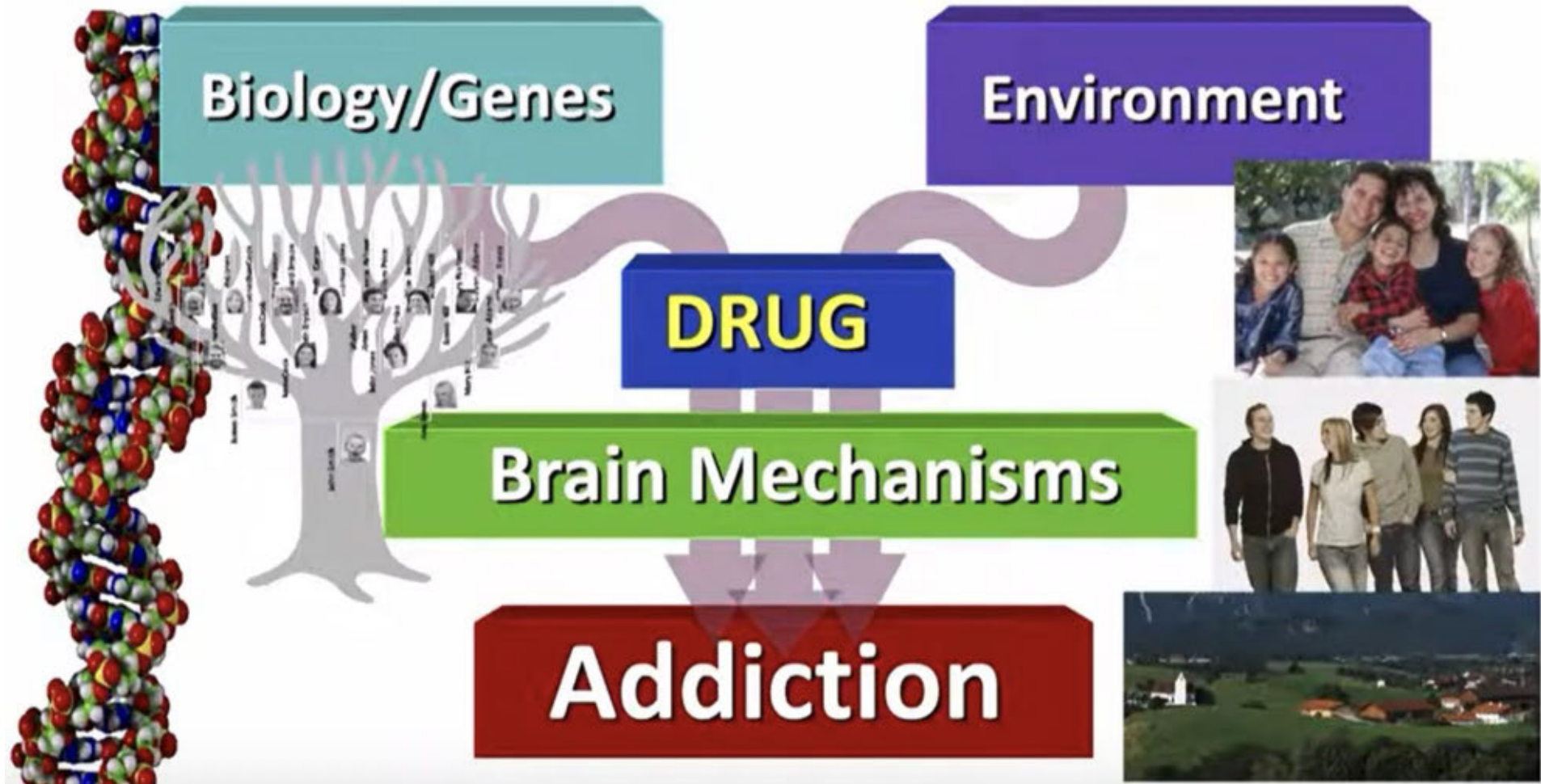
Opioid Use Disorder

- Methadone
- Naltrexone
- Buprenorphine



Addiction involves multiple factors

By Dr. Nora Volkow



Addiction and co-occurring mental disorders

- In 2022, almost 1 in 4 adults aged 18 or older had any mental illness in the past year (59.3 million or 23.1%) (NSDUH, 2022).
- Among adolescents aged 12 to 17 in 2022, 19.5% (or 4.8 million people) had a past year major depressive episode (NSDUH, 2022).
- According to the 2022 National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), about half of addicts also have other mental disorders.



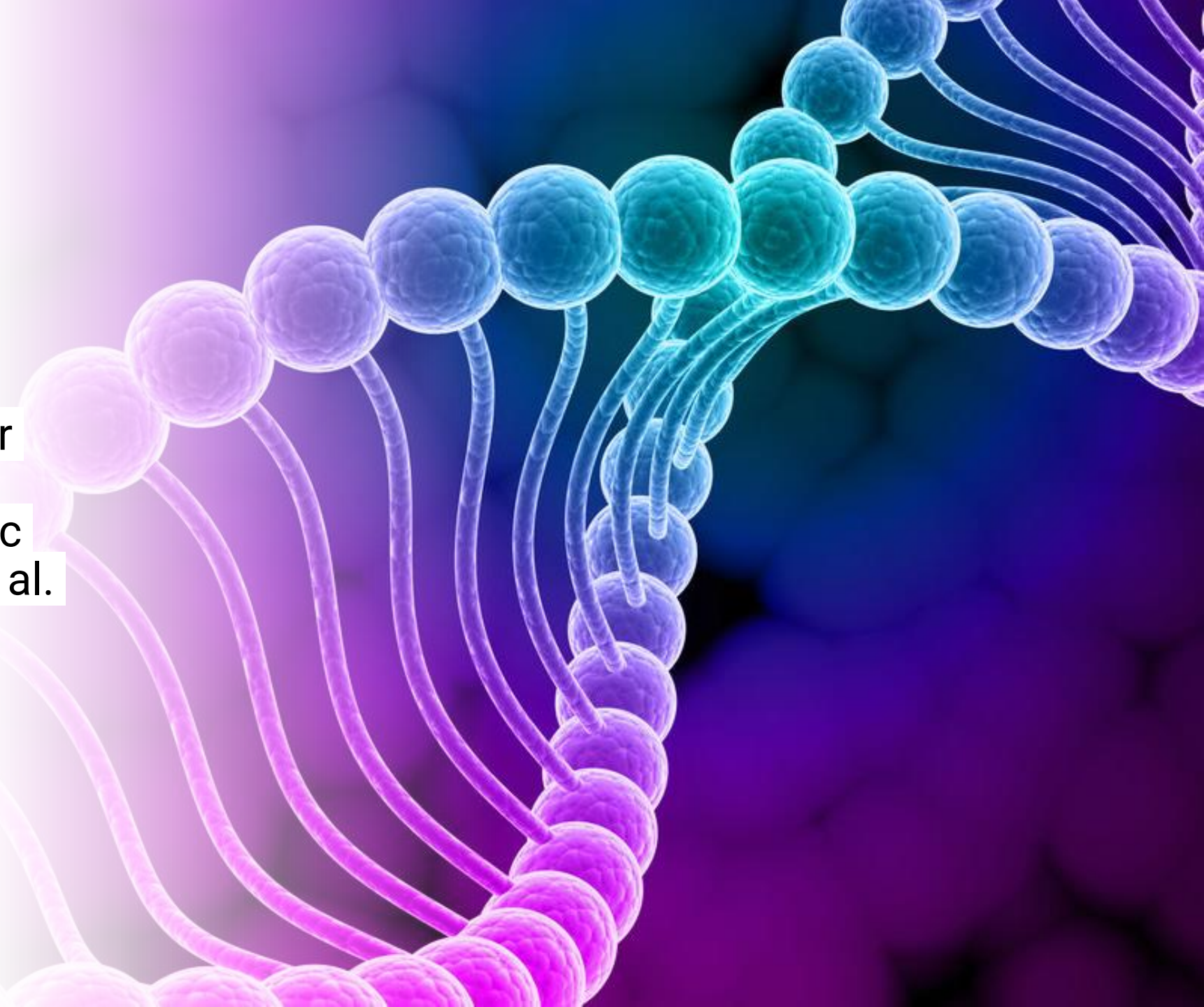
Mental disorders & nicotine/tobacco users

- Among US adults in 2019, the percentage who reported past-month cigarette smoking was 1.8 times higher for those with any past-year mental illness than those without (28.2% vs. 15.8%) (NSDUH, 2020)
- Smoking is believed to be more prevalent among people with depression and schizophrenia because nicotine may temporarily lessen the symptoms of these illnesses, such as poor concentration, low mood, and stress (Aubin HJ et. al., 2012; Minichino A et. al., 2013; Wing VC et. al., 2012).



Genes

- An estimated 50-75 percent of the risk for nicotine addiction is attributable to genetic factors (Berrettini et. al. 2012)
- Epigenetics



Protective factors

- Social support
- Resilience
- Sleep
- Nutrition
- Physical activity



Nora D. Volkow, M.D., Director NIDA:

In the past, the FDA had accepted abstinence as the only possible solution. It still is the case, but now they are willing to negotiate alternative outcomes.

Abstinence is a quite difficult goal to reach, and only a few percent of individuals achieve it at once.

Others may eventually achieve abstinence with repeated treatment, which could take years.

In the process, we can identify treatments, that would improve patients' outcomes and prevent them from consuming large amounts of drugs and therefore decrease the risk of overdosing or death. Also, it reduces the risk of other adverse medical effects or negative social consequences.

Currently, we are aiming at clinical trials of medication options that could be beneficial to individuals even if they don't achieve complete abstinence.

* - presented at the Uniting the Global Community to Face the Challenge of Addiction conference which took place at the ADNEC, Abu Dhabi, on 13th May, 2022.

Harm reduction

- Answer for yourself
- Cost of treatment
- Example of methadone program
- Nicotine/tobacco alternatives



Serenity prayer

*God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I **cannot change**;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.*