

PRIORITIES OF TREATMENT

It has become accepted that there are priorities in treatment and that these priorities should be addressed in order. The priorities are as follows:

1. **Substance use:** If you have significant substance use, it is very important that you get control of this immediately.
2. **Mood symptoms:** These involve things such as depression, mood instability or other symptoms associated with mood such as poor concentration and attention, low energy, etc.
3. **Anxiety:** This is where you feel keyed up and on edge. You might become irritated or difficult with people.
4. **Everything else:** This includes relationship issues, job difficulties, trouble with your children, lingering issues from your past.

It is interesting to note that most people see their difficulties from 4 to 1 instead of from 1 to 4, in other words, they see most of their difficulties as related to “everything else” and rarely acknowledge their anxiety, depressive or substance use difficulties. If you can accept these priorities in this order it will make your treatment more effective.