***Present an argument for your stance with respect to the first controversial issue regarding substance-related disorders: Is it possible for individuals with substance-related disorders, such as those who abuse alcohol, to moderate their use instead of taking the abstinence approach to treatment? Support your argument with evidence from this week’s required Learning Resources.***

The notion that total abstinence should be the goal for people who abuse alcohol or drugs is sort of outrageous. In fact, the idea can be so pervasive that most people actually end up relapsing. This is however the method that most treatment centers use to treat substance abusers. I don't believe the amount of alcohol or drug use is actually the root of the addiction nor should it be the solution. Alcohol is so highly addictive I'm not certain people are even capable of abstaining completely (Comer, 2016). Also, unlike drugs illegal status which makes them harder to procure, alcohol is totally legal making it available at every corner, literally. With very volatile withdrawal symptoms, people can have seizures, lose consciousness, have a stroke or even die (Comer, 2016). This may not be the healthiest approach if it leads to those symptoms There are current studies to use ‘moderation management “to help treat alcohol abuse. This could help immensely for the people I spoke of that suffer from severe withdrawal symptoms. There is evidence that this approach of limiting drinking as opposed to cutting it out completely works better for problem drinkers (Jaffe, 2011). For them it is easier to control the alcohol consumption as opposed to abstinence. Participants in the study were able to reduce their blood alcohol content by almost 50% (Jaffe, 2011). Also, the number of problems that were associated with their drinking reduced as well. Obviously, it would be great if individuals could just stop drinking completely. However, I think that is a bit unrealistic and progress should always be the goal, however small. It is important to remember that with these clinical treatments the goal is improvement. So, although the substances are still getting used, if limiting alcohol or drugs can help better than abstaining from them completely it should be an option. With all of that being said, limiting drinking can assist on the crusade to giving up alcohol completely.

***Present an argument for your stance with respect to the second controversial issue—namely, is a substance-related disorder a disease? Again, support your argument with evidence from this week’s required Learning Resources.***

All the evidence from this week's resources leads me to the conclusion that yes, substance related disorder is a disease. This conclusion is substantiated around the effects that drugs have on us. Whether they are depressants or stimulants both have adverse effects on our brain. The Mayo Clinic describes substance use disorder as a disease that effects a person's brain and behavior at least to an inability to control the use of illegal or legal drugs or medication. This includes alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and other drugs. When drugs are ingested, they attack the neurotransmitters in our brain (Comer, 2016). Different drugs have various effects on the brain. The more the drugs are taken the neurotransmitters decrease actually making the person need a decrease in the amount of drugs to achieve the desired effect (Comer, 2016). This explains how tolerance for drugs are developed and what in turn makes them a disease as opposed to just a habit. Persons can know they are addictive and despite the harm on themselves they continue to use. When it comes to risks and consequences substance abuse can lead to risk of organ damage or death (Comer, 2016). Anything that can do this should be considered a disease. Also, much of the treatments for these substance abuse disorders are the same as those for other diseases such as emergency room, inpatient rehabilitation, or private doctors.

# References

Comer, R. J. (2016). *Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology.* New York: Worth Publishers.

Jaffe, A. P. (2011, March 9). *Abstinence is not the only option.* Retrieved from Psychlogy Today: https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/all-about-addiction/201103/abstinence-is-not-the-only-option