

## Guidelines for Autobiography:

Although this does not have to be a novel, it is intended to allow those who will be reviewing your application to get to know you. The assignment is a critical part of your application process. Please be **thorough and provide sufficient detail** in order to convey to the personnel that are part of the selection process who you are as a person. Your Autobiography should be at least 3 to 5 hand written pages (at least 2 typed pages). The following areas should be covered in your hand written autobiography:

- Family members and your relationship with them
- Family history of alcohol or drug problems
- Other people who have been important in your life and why
- School – Describe your school years, how far did you go? Why not further?
- Experiences which made an impact on your life (painful or happy).
- Adult life – your relationships.
- Personal substance use history and any problems associated with your use.
- Work history
- Any legal or financial problems and how you dealt with them.
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- Any other information that you feel is important in your life.

Ideas on how to get started on your Autobiography

1. Start small. Make some notes on a large piece of paper about the big events and phases in your life, such as your schooling, college, first job, relationships and wedding. You could even construct a timeline. Include major world incidents as well, so you can relate them to your story.
2. Think of several short, easily digestible stories from your life you can tell that you believe would indicate how you will be successful as a Drug and Alcohol Counselor. They don't have to sum up your life all in one go, but anecdotes that demonstrate who you are or how you see the world are excellent information for an autobiography.
3. Split your life up into three to five major sections. These can be based around places you've lived, relationships, jobs or any logical division that you choose. Each section should start and end with a big turning point in your life. Order these sections chronologically, and they can form the framework of your story.
4. Think about what you want to say. It's important to take time before you write to decide what lessons you want the interviewer and school house to take away from your story. What has your life taught you? What advice would you give to people like you? What would you do differently? You won't be answering these questions directly, but your whole autobiography will tell the reviewers about your attitude to these issues.
5. Write. Start with your childhood or with some particularly vivid memory. Your three to five main sections will break down into the sub-sections that will form chapters. Write as though you were just talking to someone, telling the story of your life. Your voice should come through in your writing, as this will help reveal your attitudes. Don't try too hard when writing – just enjoy it.

Once completed please submit this autobiography along with Part I of your application packet to [thaddeus.a.judson.civ@health.mil](mailto:thaddeus.a.judson.civ@health.mil) and [kurtis.d.lett.mil@health.mil](mailto:kurtis.d.lett.mil@health.mil)