



The Family & Substance Use Disorder

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FAMILY

- A family is a group of people related by blood or marriage or a strong common bond, such as those descended from a common ancestor or a husband, a wife, and their children. Other types of families are single-parent families, gay families, and extended families.
- We will consider a family to consist of a husband, a wife, and their children (the traditional family).

The Healthy Family

➤ Most families are basically healthy, and family members are usually happy, working, contributing members of society.

➤ Curran has identified 15 traits of a healthy family:



1. *The healthy family communicates and listens.*

2. *Healthy family members affirm and support one another.*

3. *The healthy family teaches respect for others.*

The Healthy Family

4. *A healthy family develops a sense of trust.*
5. *The healthy family has a sense of play and humor.*
6. *A healthy family shares responsibility.*
7. *A healthy family teaches a sense of right and wrong.*
8. *Rituals and traditions abound in the healthy family.*
9. *A healthy family has a balance of interactions.*
10. *A healthy family has a shared religious core.*

The Healthy Family

11. *Members of a healthy family respect each other's privacy.*
12. *A healthy family values service to others.*
13. *Shared meals and conversation are valued.*
14. *The healthy family shares leisure time.*
15. *A healthy family admits to and seeks help with problems.*

The Addicted Family

- A addicted family develops **a denial system** and **specific rules**, and members tend to assume specific, unhealthy roles.
- The addicted person becomes the central figure around which family members organize their behaviors and reactions.
- This family system becomes unpredictable, chaotic, and frightening.

The Addicted Family

Some of the most common ways addiction affects the family include:

- 1- *Conflict Among Family Members*: Addiction can lead to negativism.
- 2- *Financial Distress*: addiction can lead to problems at work.
- 3- *Instability Within the Family System*: People suffering from addiction are often unreliable.
- 4- *Mistrust, Lying, and Stealing*: addicts may turn to lying and stealing to hide and support their drug use.
- 5- *Shame and Denial*

The Grief Process

- Families with a member who is addicted to alcohol often grieve the loss of the loved one they once knew.
- They may go through the five stages of grief—denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.
- Denial of the problem is often the longest of these stages and may prevent the chemically dependent member from receiving help for years.

The Grief Process

- ▶ Enabling plays a major role in family denial. Enabling is a process whereby well-meaning family members unwittingly allow and even encourage irresponsible and self-destructive behavior by shielding the alcoholic from the consequences of his actions.
- ▶ They simply ignore evidence of alcohol abuse.

The Grief Process

- Spickard and Thomson identified three important factors that contribute to the family's distorted perception of reality:

1. *Isolation.*

Shame and embarrassment build a wall of silence around each individual member and gradually cut off all but superficial communication.

2. *Emotional turmoil.*

Guilty, ashamed and embarrassed, fear and anxiety, depression.

3. *Centricity.*

keep a bad situation from becoming worse, rationalizations



The Spouse of an Addict

- Addiction has negative effects on the spouse. The spouse may have feelings of hatred and self-pity.
- She may avoid social contacts, suffer exhaustion, and become physically or mentally ill.
- Often the spouse has to perform the roles of both parents.
- Addiction is one of the major reasons for divorce.
- The spouse of an alcoholic often becomes codependent.

Choices

- ▶ The spouse of an addict has three choices.

Leave

Stay and Do Nothing

Stay and Take Steps :

- ✓ She can educate herself about addiction.
- ✓ The spouse of an addict should learn to separate her own personal growth and happiness from the addict.
- ✓ She should attend support meetings.
- ✓ It is important for the spouse to share her concerns with the addict.
- ✓ If the spouse defines a boundary, she should define a clear consequence and be ready to follow through.

Things the Spouse Can Do to Help Her Children

- *Give Children Hope That Things Will Get Better*
- *Keep Children Safe*
- *Keep Things Normal as Possible at Home*
- *Look for Problems*
- *Teach Them Addiction Is a Disease*
- *Know When to Get Help*

Intervention by Confrontation

- Intervention by confrontation consists of two steps:
 - Preparing for the confrontation
 - The actual event itself
- The purpose of direct confrontation is to convince addicts of the effects of their destructive behavior and insist that they get treatment.

A family prepares for a confrontation

➤ *Step 1: Consult a professional.*

Every intervention team should have a substance dependence counselor or a physician familiar with the process to supervise the preparation and direct the actual confrontation.

A family prepares for a confrontation

► *Step 2: Choose members of the team.*

The most strategically important members of the intervention team are the spouse, an employer, and the addict's physician.

Individuals that should be excluded include:

- those whose psychological state is too fragile
- anyone likely to berate the alcoholic or preach moralistically,
- family members too angry or full of hate to perceive the alcoholic as a sick person in need of help.

A family prepares for a confrontation

➤ *Step 3: Choose the data.*

With the help of the professional, each team member selects three or four examples of the addict's inappropriate behavior. These should be as detailed and as current as possible.

➤ *Step 4: Choose the time.*

Team should confront the addict when he is sober or at least as sober as possible.

It may be necessary to schedule the meeting early in the morning.

A family prepares for a confrontation

- ▶ *Step 5: Hold a practice confrontation.*
- Members of the intervention team need to meet at least once, and preferably twice, to rehearse the confrontation.
- During these meetings, the professional plays the role of the addict, and team members practice giving their evidence in a detached, nonjudgmental manner.
- They also practice how they will respond to the addict's manipulation, evasion, or anger.

A family prepares for a confrontation

- *Step 6: Investigate treatment options.*
- Team members by now should have investigated local treatment options for types of programs offered, the costs of each, and their appropriateness for the particular addict.
- A suitcase should have been packed. If the intervention is successful, there should be no delay in getting the addict into treatment.

The Confrontation

- Family members, the professional, and significant others assemble at a planned time. Once the addict arrives, the facilitator speaks first, explaining to the addict why they have gathered and asking him to listen without speaking for a while.
- When everyone else is finished speaking, the addict will have a turn.

The Confrontation

- As rehearsed, each person then speaks directly to the alcoholic, sharing facts, events, and personal reactions to that person's behavior, telling how it has adversely affected him or her.
- Members then share options for help.
- The group should be prepared for the addict's tearful acceptance, anger, hostility, counter accusations, or bolting from the room.



The Confrontation

If the intervention is unsuccessful, the family has three options:

- They can convince the alcoholic to stop drinking, having him sign a contract agreeing to enter treatment if he drinks again.
- They can continue to live with the actively drinking alcoholic, in which case they should continue to work on their own recovery by attending Al-Anon and Alateen meetings.
- In many states, the family can obtain a court order to commit the alcoholic to treatment against his will.



Thank you for your attention