

The Importance of Family Involvement in Addiction Treatment

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May 5, 2022

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Alcohol and Drug Addiction Resides in the Brain

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- Alcohol and drug use is not a result of moral failure or weakness
- Addiction is essentially a Traumatic Brain Injury and is to be treated as such
- In sobriety, the neurotoxins of the drugs/alcohol leave the brain and it begins it's healing process
- Chances of maintaining long term sobriety are higher with proper treatment and engagement in up to a year or more for full brain healing

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Alcohol and drug use is seen on a spectrum

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Non-use	Experimental Use	Social or recreational use	Regular Use	Problematic Use
Not using substances at all	The person tries substances for the first few times	The person seeks out and uses a substance for a social occasion	Substance use has become a regular part of the person's life	Use of substances has a negative impact on the person's daily life and may be affecting their physical and/or mental health

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Dual diagnosis

- Substance abuse and addiction is often seen as the result of, or part of mental health disorders
 - PTSD
 - ADHD
 - Mood Disorders
 - Anxiety related disorders
 - Schizophrenia

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STAGES OF RECOVERY

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NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH AND ENTERHEALTH ADDICTION DISEASE MANAGEMENT MODEL

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Family suffering from Addiction

- Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse (as victim or perpetrator)
- Poor self esteem
- Difficulty managing anger
- Mental health disorders such as anxiety or depression
- Medical illnesses
- Marital problems, divorce
- Own addiction

It is just as important for family members to complete and obtain treatment as it is for their loved ones in Recovery treatment (Urschel, 2009)

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Dysfunctional Family Patterns

- Dysfunctional parents may overcorrect or emulate their parent’s dysfunctional behaviors
- Growing up in these environments, family members perceive it to be normal
- Unhealthy signs
 - lack of empathy
 - Poor or nonexistent communication
 - Excessive criticism
 - High expectations or perfectionism
 - Fear or unpredictability
 - Need for control
 - Denial of problems
 - Physical, sexual or emotional abuse
 - Addiction in one or more family members
 - Untreated mental health needs

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Unhealthy Situations of Dysfunctional Families

- Vacations and holidays are stressful
- Parents having separate rooms, co existing
- Rarely bringing friends to the home-concern of fear and embarrassment
- Your family lives in silence-silence is not to be used as punishment, it disregards another person’s worth
- You experience role reversal-taking on parent responsibilities
- You get double messages-family members say one thing and do another
- Experience triangulation-family member confides in one family member about another family member
- You are used as a pawn-one family member tries to get you to dislike the other family member or obtain information
- You are punished, not disciplined-punishment involves enforcing penalties which impacts the ability to form opinions or question authority. Discipline involves training/teaching approach
- Neglectful behavior- family members are dismissive and unavailable in the form of lack of boundaries, empathy or structure.
- You experience unpredictable or abusive behavior-quick to blame, alter the truth, disown each other, treat unfairly

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- Teasing goes too far
- Witness constant conflict-the environment feels dogmatic or cult-like, which is not uncommon with strict religious beliefs or cultural requirements that are strict or demanding
- You feel no sense of privacy-family members feel they have a right to know more than they do
- You have witnessed substance abuse, mental illness and other problem behaviors go untreated

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Individual in Treatment

- Understand-the past cannot be changed, and dysfunction can be present at the core of family relationships
- Develop boundaries-loved ones cannot be controlled or changed, therefore learning to develop healthy boundaries with loved ones
- Let go of the past and live in the moment-it's possible to maybe salvage some of their relationships by growth/repair in treatment yet some relationships are past point of repair
- Protect selves and well being-clients and families can form healthy new relationships and/or repair current ones

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FAMILY THERAPY



- Teach the family about the disease of addiction
- Help addicts and their families reconnect
- Differentiate between helping versus enabling

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Family Tips for Support

- Acceptance of reality
- Importance of self care, healthy selfishness
- Learning to approach with care vs. control
- Self honesty
- Being helpful, not enabling
- Understanding your loved one
- Don't wait for a crisis

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Family Support Options

- Individual therapy for support, own mental health needs and/or substance use
- Involvement in loved one's treatment process (i.e. family therapy, family groups)
- Al-Anon
- Smart Recovery for Families
- AA meetings for family support
- NAMI (National Alliance for Mental Illness)

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THANK YOU

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