

INTERVENTION WEBINAR

How Dysfunctional Family Roles Affect Recovery Outcomes



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Mike has an extensive history of helping families treat addiction. He is an authority in addiction treatment and remains dedicated to providing hands-on expertise at our clinic.

 Starting Soon

How Dysfunctional Family Roles Affect Recovery Outcomes

The Bigger Picture

- The loved one may be the identified problem, but the family system often becomes part of the recovery environment.
 - Addiction and mental health struggles create chaos. The family's responses can either support change or unintentionally preserve the crisis.
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What Enabling Provides



- Enabling is not only about what it gives the loved one. It is also about what it gives the enabler.
 - Enabling may provide temporary comfort, reduced conflict, emotional relief, a sense of purpose, or the feeling of being needed
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How the Family Becomes Flooded and Divided

- Addiction can push the family into survival mode.
 - Family members may become emotionally flooded, reactive, resentful, avoidant, controlling, or divided over what to do next.
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Why “Just Talking to Them” Often Fails

- A conversation alone rarely changes a system organized around fear, resentment, avoidance, and emotional survival.
- Talking may address the surface issue, but it often misses the family dynamics underneath.



The Substance User and Enabler



- Two roles often anchor the crisis:
 - **Substance User**
 - a. Creates chaos, deflects accountability, and often positions themselves as the victim.
 - b. Keeps attention focused on the crisis rather than change.
 - **Enabler**
 - a. Reacts to chaos by providing comfort, rescue, excuses, or protection.
 - b. Reduces consequences and urgency for treatment.
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The Martyr and the Hero



- Some roles look like sacrifice or responsibility, but they can still interfere with change.
 - **Martyr**
 - Suffers loudly, asks for help, but may reject solutions or make excuses.
 - Delays action and preserves an identity built around crisis.
 - **Hero**
 - Tries to save the day through control, achievement, or being “the fixer.”
 - Can undermine professional guidance or family alignment.
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The Scapegoat, Lost Child, and Mascot

- Other roles develop as attempts to gain attention, escape pain, or reduce tension.
 - **Scapegoat**
 - Acts out, rebels, or becomes another visible problem.
 - Distracts the family and absorbs blame.
 - **Lost Child**
 - Withdraws, isolates, or disappears emotionally.
 - Signals unmet need while remaining overlooked.
 - **Mascot**
 - Uses humor, optimism, or diversion to create normalcy.
 - Provides temporary comfort that can postpone action.
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No One Chooses These Roles Intentionally



- Dysfunctional family roles develop over time. They are usually survival responses, not deliberate choices.
 - The issue is not blame. The issue is whether the pattern is still helping or whether it is keeping the family stuck.
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How Roles Affect Recovery Outcomes



- Dysfunctional roles change the conditions around the loved one.
 - They can reduce urgency, divide the family, protect the crisis from consequences, create mixed messages, and make treatment harder to initiate.
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When the Family Changes, the Recovery Environment Changes



- Families cannot control whether a loved one accepts help, but they can change the conditions that surround the loved one.
 - When the family becomes educated, aligned, and willing to change, solutions become clearer and easier to execute.
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From Chaos to Clarity



- Intervention is not about controlling a loved one. It is about helping the family let go of the belief that control is the solution.
 - If your family is stuck in repeated attempts that are not working, professional guidance can help.
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Stop Accepting Excuses and Start Getting Help

Questions? The Floor Is Yours!

Prefer to talk in private? Get in touch below:

Call Us: 1 (888) 291-8514

Chat with us: family-intervention.com
