

The *Loved Ones Group* Newsletter

an educational resource for those who are concerned about a loved ones alcohol or drug use

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Are you concerned about a loved one's alcohol or drug use?

We want you to know, you are not alone. The Loved Ones Group is a free, education-based service and supportive program that provides information about the brain disease of addiction, as well as how you can help loved ones who may have an addiction problem. Each edition of this newsletter will offer information, support, testimonials and resources designed to help loved ones encourage the addicted person to seek treatment with a goal to embrace a long-term recovery lifestyle.

For more information about the Loved Ones Group contact Robin Looney, Director of Family and Community Services for The Counseling Center, Inc. at 740-354-6685, ext 8010.

Inspiration

"A joy shared is doubled... a sorrow shared is cut in half."
Seek support: sharing experiences widens one's horizons and opens new and better ways to deal with the chemical use of another. There is no need to solve problems alone. In fact, addiction is bigger than any of us and impossible to address in isolation.



A New Relationship by Ed Hughes

I am often asked by loved ones, "If I quit rescuing or enabling my addicted loved one, then what kind of relationship will I have with them?"

This question comes from a place of fear. As the loved one realizes that most of their relationship with the addicted person is about the loved one's role in helping, fixing, paying for things, and even rescuing, then without those activities there might not be any relationship at all.

It is often true that when a loved one stops enabling, the addicted person might stop calling or contacting them altogether. This is the nature of addiction. Addiction is only focused on what it needs and what role others can play in providing those needs. So, it is critical for loved ones to create a "new" relationship with the addicted person, one that is based upon relationship and not role. This new relationship will have distinct boundaries established by the loved one. A few examples of those boundaries are:

- I will not provide any financial support. Our conversations cannot be about you asking for money.
- I will not talk about your problems. I can't solve your problems, and you need to discuss your problems with someone who can help you with your addiction.
- I will not argue, nor will I defend myself.
- A relationship is a two way street, so conversations need to be an equally sharing experience. So, be ready to hear about my day, my life.
- When I say "no," I will not explain why I said no, nor will I change my mind.
- If you tell me something disturbing, such as "I might kill myself," I will take action to notify the appropriate law enforcement agency.

Again, these are just examples. The point is that it is necessary and helpful to require a relationship that is not about you reacting to the drama of addiction. This new way of communicating will also place you in the position to provide some new messages that are directed toward an acknowledgment of the addiction and the need to seek help from treatment professionals. Loved ones can be powerful messengers of hope, information, and direction, but only if they are not serving in the role of rescuing and enabling.



Ed Hughes is one of the originators of the Loved Ones Group. He is a licensed, Independent Chemical Dependency Counselor for the State of Ohio, and served as Executive Director of The Counseling Center, Inc., from 1989-2013. He is currently CEO of affiliated Compass Community Health. Mr. Hughes earned a B.A. in Sociology from Ohio University and a Master's of Public Service Counseling from Western Kentucky University, and has written a companion book titled *Baffled by Addiction*.

• **Loved Ones Groups meet in Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky.**



Family Story

Emotions of a Loved One (Mother)

During the time my son was using, I felt every emotion a mother could feel including anger, fear and disappointment, as well a sense of personal failure. One time in particular, I was in the emergency room with my mother and I knew the ER doc was the son of a friend. That was one of my lowest times, when I said to my husband, "my friend's son Eric is an ER doc and my son is an addict."

I recalled as a six year old my son's words, "when I grow up I want to be a doctor." He had been in the Navy six years, trained as a Field Medic and graduated from Marshall University with a degree in Healthcare Management. He could have been a physician, or actually, anything he wanted. His life really began to unravel and spiral downward in May of 2014. It took me until July that year to talk him into a Christian based rehab. I dropped him off and a few days later, he said he had to go to the Veterans Administration and asked me to pick him up.

After the VA doctor's appointment, he refused to go back to rehab, even though that would mean incarceration, because it was in violation of his parole. It took five weeks and admittance in two behavior health facilities before I was able to talk him into going back to rehab in early September (2014). I knew he needed God in his life to battle this addiction. I personally don't see anyone battling this beast without the love of our heavenly father.

Now that my son was settled, it was time to work on my own mental health. An article in the Ashland Daily Independent newspaper told of a local church and a "Loved Ones" support group. This educational/support series was exactly what I needed. Those in attendance were just like me, disappointed, broken, loved ones trying to understand addiction. What I learned was a springboard in restoring my broken spirit and reaching out to help others at my own church as a mentor to young women addicts. I also help teach young men and women in transition in another program in the Ashland "Neighborhood".

God has given me a gift, my relationship with my son has been fully restored, and now I can help other "Loved Ones" understand. My son has been clean almost two years, following 6 months of rehab, and is working as residential staff at that same rehab helping other young men understand what it takes to get clean. He also is Tristate, Director of Rogue Ministries helping homeless veterans and the homeless community get off drugs and off the streets.

- Dianna

Recovery Story

"Struggle Within" by Jarrett Withrow

Addiction is a line you don't wanna cross take it from me.
My life out of control living in misery.
Hide it all away on a closet shelf
Find the problem in a mirror just an image of myself.
My mind is dark, a place I don't like to go.
Emotions so deep problems so strong,
Why me Lord, what did I do wrong?
On a path of destruction on my way to the pen
Suffering my past and a life full of sin.
Using my addiction for a place to hide
Not wanting to admit I'm powerless inside.
Storms of life come and go,
Get high today and deal with it tomorrow
But tomorrow never comes just keep it all inside
Hurt so deep, I contemplate suicide.
Not knowing the pain I've caused to others that care
Living life, dangerous, blaming God for this life I feel is unfair.
No hope for the future can't let go of the past,
Life is a mere dream that moves so fast.
Drugs no longer work I can't get high,
Looking back thinking most of my life has passed me by,
Got to get a grip, give in and admit
My life is outta control and I cant take no more of it.
I'm ready to get help, help is what I need
Ready to start over I'm hungry let me eat.
I pray to God to help me, and I'm starting to see
With a little acceptance I can be free.
Now that I'm clean, free of dope
With God on my side, I'm full of hope.
I found my purpose in life and it's to live
God, you have my all what better could I give.

-2008

Loved Ones Group for Teens



L1GTeen.com is an informational website for teens who are dealing with addiction in their family. The website features videos and links to information about coping strategies and education on the disease of addiction.

www.L1GTeen.com

The Portsmouth, Ohio Loved Ones Group is on hold for the summer. Meetings will resume in the fall. For more information or alternate meeting locations, call Robin at 740-354-6685, ext 8010.