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FAMILY SUPPORT INFORMATION SHEET

HOW CAN THE FAMILY MAKE THE ADDICTION WORSE?

Many families of addicts are *codependent*. Loved ones have the best intentions usually. However, a codependent relationship is a relationship that reinforces and *enables* an addictive behavior. Enabling an addict unknowingly makes it easier for them to use drugs by rescuing them from the consequences of their behavior. Ironically, enabling is typically a well-intentioned effort. We all learn by natural consequences, including those with addictions. When loved ones are enabling, they remove these natural consequences

Here are 3 common types of enabling;

THE SILENT SUFFERER

- Letting the addict steal money from the parent/spouse and not calling the police
- Saying nothing and or looking the other way and hoping the addict stops on his or her own
- Staying around and accepting abuse or neglect so as not to let the individual be lonely.

THE MESSIAH OR SAVIOR

- Performing the individual's responsibilities
- Finding treatment for the client without requiring the addict to take any responsibility for setting up treatment
- Making excuses for the individual to others
- Financially supporting the individual who continues to use drugs and does not work
- Providing free housing to the individual who is still using drugs.

THE CONSPIRATOR

- Buying alcohol for the alcoholic so as not to see him or her get sick.
- Using drugs and alcohol with the addict

How to break the pattern of enabling;

If you are involved with an addicted individual, become as independent of the individual. Develop new support systems for yourself. To the extent feasible, let the costs of addiction fall on the individual, not yourself.

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES OF ADDICTS

- **Al Anon**; 1-508-366-0556
- **Codependent No More** book by [Melody Beattie](#)
- **Marriage and Family Therapy**; check <http://www.mamft.org> for MA providers
- **SECAP Family Support Group at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center**; every Tuesday 6:15p.m. -8 p.m. free of charge, call 617-789-2574 for more information
- **Section 35**; legal tool requiring addict to get into treatment, check with your local courthouse for more details
- **Learn2Cope.org**; support group and website
- **Families Anonymous.org**
- **Coda.org**
- **Facing Codependence** book by Pia Mellody