NCADD
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE, INC.

Tips and Guidelines for Proper Intervention

For family members and friends concerned about someone's use of alcohol or drugs, there can be a great deal of confusion and frustration about what to do. The last thing we want to do is to admit that there's a problem……we just keep hoping things will get better or that they will just stop.

However, since addiction is a chronic and progressive disease, sitting back and hoping that things will get better can be very dangerous. If you are concerned, **NOW, not later** is the time to Get Help from someone specifically trained and successfully experienced in helping individuals and families with alcohol and drug problems.

Most of us approach, alcohol and drug problems from a common sense understanding of what we think might help. In fact, we often make the problem worse for us and the person we are concerned about.

Family Education: For friends and family, the first step is getting information and learning about what we are dealing with:

- How alcohol and drugs affect the person who is using (Learn About Alcohol, Learn About Drugs)
- How their alcohol and drug use affects you, the family and friends
- What you need to do to get the help and support that you need

For some individuals and families, the education process is enough to help support their efforts to get help for their friend or family member. But for others, it is clear that the person they are concerned about is incapable of admitting they are in trouble and need help. **Decades of experience have shown that intervention is a powerful tool to help.**

So, then – What is an Intervention? – How does it work? – Can it produce a successful result? - Can it fail? - Who gets involved? – Where do you begin?

What is an intervention? Intervention is a professionally directed education process resulting in a face to face meeting of family members, friends and/or employer with the person in trouble with alcohol or drugs. Intervention helps the person make the connection between their use of alcohol and drugs and the problems in their life. The goal of intervention is for them to accept help.

How does intervention work? As we discussed earlier, much of the intervention process is education and information for the friends and family. The opportunity for everyone to come together, share information and support is critically important. Once everyone is ready, a meeting is scheduled with the person everyone is concerned about.

Can intervention be successful? Absolutely. When done with a person who is trained and successfully experienced as an interventionist, over 90% of people make a commitment to get help.

Can intervention fail? Yes. But, as stated above, most interventions are successful. In some cases, a person may refuse help at the time of the intervention, but as a result of the intervention, come back and ask for help later.

Who gets involved in doing an intervention? NCADD and our Affiliates know that most successful interventions are professionally directed. The interventionist will work help you to determine who should be invited to participate in the intervention- parents, spouses, siblings, friends, co-workers etc. Making sure that the right people are involved is very important to the success of the intervention.

Where do you begin? It is first important to realize that intervention may not be necessary or appropriate for all families or all circumstances. You should contact your nearest NCADD Affiliate to find out what may be best for you or your family.

FOR MORE GUIDANCE ABOUT AN INTERVENTION GIVE NCADD OR AN AFFILIATE A CALL.