Healing the Wound

The Family’s Journey Through Chemical Dependency

By Matt Karayan, MA, LADC
We will find that in our attempts to change the chemically dependent person, we change. We take on their characteristics. We become like them.

That is why, to get healthy will be about “us” changing the way “we” interact with them rather than “us” trying to find crafty ways to change them.
Part I
The Problem

First we must clarify;
What is the problem?

What does Insidious mean?
1. Attractive but...waiting for a chance to harm

2. Seductive but...designed to entrap

3. Subtle but...working or spreading harmfully in a stealthy way
A Preoccupation with

1. getting it
2. having it
3. and making sure they have more for later
Cunning
Baffling
Powerful
Preoccupation

- Compromised values, lie, cheat, steal
- Manipulate
- Blame
- Relationship, employment, legal, financial, educational issues
- Rationalize, justify, minimize, excuses
- Angry / argumentative / aggressive
- Moody / depressed / anxious / paranoid
- Lack follow thru, unpredictable
- Isolate / avoid / secretive
- Lack empathy / self centered
- Spiritual issues
- Out of control
Guilt by association

What did I do wrong?

In Alanon there are three principles that help the family understand and heal their relationship with the chemically dependent loved one.

The first principle is “You did not cause it”
The second principle

Not only did you not cause it, you also...

“can’t control it”
Enabling behaviors are those things we do in an attempt to help the chemically dependent person...that actually helps them do their addiction better!

This also describes the family's insanity!

Enabling behaviors

- Give them $ for rent, to pay bills, gas, groceries, to bail them out of jail, etc
- Lie to them and for them / excuses
- Keep secrets for them and from them
- Avoid and isolate
- Become moody, depressed, anxious and paranoid
- Walk on “egg shells” around them
- Become angry and argumentative
- Make bargains and threats
- Buy it for them
- Use with them
- Deny the truth of the matter

Cunning
Baffling
Powerful
Preoccupation

- Compromised values, lie, cheat, steal
- Manipulate
- Blame
- Have relationship, employment, legal, financial, educational issues
- Rationalize, justify, minimize, excuses
- Angry / argumentative / aggressive
- Moody / depressed / anxious / paranoid
- Unpredictable, lack follow thru
- Isolate / avoid / secretive
- Lack empathy / self centered
- Spiritual issues
- Out of control
Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again (such as enabling), while expecting or hoping for different results.

You persist with self defeating behaviors by helping them do their addiction easier. Why?
The most common answer I hear is...

“Because I love them”

But the real answer is its opposite!
“Because I am afraid”

Afraid of institutions, jails, their insanity, and death.

But even more . . . afraid to see them suffer and there is nothing you can do about it!

**Enabling behaviors**

- Give them $ for rent, to pay bills, gas, groceries, to bail them out of jail, etc
- Lie to them and for them / excuses
- Keep secrets for them and from them
- Avoid and isolate
- Become moody, depressed, anxious and paranoid
- Walk on “egg shells” around them
- Become angry and argumentative
- Make bargains and threats
- Buy it for them
- Use with them
- Deny the truth of the matter

**Fear!**

**Cunning**

- Compromised values, lie, cheat, steal

**Baffling**

- Manipulate
- Blame

**Powerful**

- Have relationship, employment, legal, financial, educational issues
- Rationalize, justify, minimize, excuses
- Angry / argumentative / aggressive
- Moody / depressed / anxious / paranoid
- Unpredictable, lack follow thru
- Isolate / avoid / secretive
- Lack empathy / self centered
- Spiritual issues
- Out of control
Insanity:

Telling ourselves we are “trying” to protect them from their consequences out of “love” when we are actually “trying” to protect them from their best teachers...their consequences out of “fear”

Consequences are their best teachers because that is what will “interrupt” a cunning, baffling, powerful, preoccupation.
Because you didn’t cause it, nor can you control it, “your solution for you” will be... *for you to change the way you interact with them.*

“The change you wish to see in the world starts with you”

Mahatma Gandhi

*In the light of changing you, what is true support?*
In our attempts to change the chemically dependent person, we change. We take on their characteristics. We become like them.

Therefore, to get healthy will be about “us” changing the way “we” interact with them.

How have we changed in our attempts to change them?
Enabling behaviors

- Give them $ for rent, to pay bills, gas, groceries, to bail them out of jail, etc
- Lie to them and for them / excuses
- Keep secrets for them and from them
- Avoid and isolate
- Become moody, depressed, anxious and paranoid
- Walk on “egg shells” around them
- Become angry and argumentative
- Make bargains and threats
- Buy it for them
- Use with them
- Deny the truth of the matter

Fear!

Cunning
Baffling
Powerful
Preoccupation

- Compromised values, lie, cheat, steal
- Manipulate
- Blame
- Have relationship, employment, legal, financial, educational issues
- Rationalize, justify, minimize, excuses
- Angry / argumentative / aggressive
- Moody / depressed / anxious / paranoid
- Unpredictable, lack follow thru
- Isolate / avoid / secretive
- Lack empathy / self centered
- Spiritual issues
- Out of control
Anger and attack

You are never angry for the reason you think!

Your focus on what “you think” another "should" do (when they don't) is what brings you resentment / frustration.

If you want change, you change the way you interact with them.

"The change you wish to see in the world starts with you."

Mahatma Gandhi
The fact that “No thought leaves its source” is why karma is instant.

Forgiveness is not pardoning someone for what they did to us... it is us forgiving ourselves for how we decided to view what we thought was done to us!
Lies That Justify Enabling Behaviors

1) It is within my power to change you.

2) It is up to me to help you avoid pain.

3) I protect you because I love you.

4) I am in charge of how my child interprets their life situations.

5) I am responsible for my child's self esteem.

6) My child uses mood altering chemicals because they have low self esteem.

7) My child should have every advantage or I've handicapped them.

8) Fighting / conflict in the family means I am not a good parent.

9) I cannot say "no" because you might not think I love you.

10) My child needs me to be a friend.

11) My rescuing behaviors keep you safe from harm.

12) If I do not rescue you, I am abandoning you.

13) When I rescue you, my life is easier.

14) I can love you into sobriety.

15) If I make your life easier, it might help you stay sober.
Now that they are sober...

What does support look like?

Part III

Detachment

With

Love
Let go, let God
Courage to change
July 26th

The dance . . .
In Alanon we learn that you are not responsible for another person's disease or recovery from it. In other words...

“you cannot cure it”

Part IV

Co-Dependency
The three demons who stole happiness

Co-dependency is the belief you can find happiness in someone or something outside of you.

What are the investments we seek for happiness and security?
Dealing with fear!
Courage to Change
January 10th