

## **Co-Addiction Group Friends and Family of the Addicted**

### **The Problem**

Many of us came here tonight out of hopelessness and despair. Others of us came here in hopes of finding out how to get another person sober. Some may have grown up in alcoholic homes and may no longer be living with an active addict. Either way, we all share a common struggle in that our lives have been adversely affected by the actions, attitudes, and behaviors of another person's addiction. Some of these addictions include but are not limited to drugs, alcohol, sex, pornography, spending, and food.

Addictions don't just affect the addict, they affect the entire family. Many of us have convinced ourselves that there must be something more we can say or do to convince the addict to change, thus resolving our problems. We live under the illusion that everything would be fine if only they would straighten up and sober up.

In lacking understanding, we took matters into our own hands. We may have nagged, pleaded, enabled, or punished the one who is addicted. In our own insanity, we may have resorted to such behaviors as pouring out liquor, following them in an attempt to catch them in the act, rummaging through their personal belongings, searching their computer logs, and viewing their credit card bills.

Feelings of hurt, anger, and despair set in. Most of us have experienced embarrassment associated with the addict's behavior and have worked hard to protect the family secret. Those of us in this group understand the loneliness and frustration as perhaps few others do. Our countless attempts to change the person and the situation have left us physically and emotionally exhausted.

Many of us wrongly blamed ourselves for the addict's behavior. If only I was prettier, thinner, or more sexual, then he might not have turned to pornography. If only I would have met his needs, then he wouldn't have turned to the drugs or alcohol. Others have gone to the other unhealthy extreme by blaming the addict's behavior for every problem in the relationship.

The term co-addict refers to codependent behaviors. In essence, co-addicts are addicted to another person's behaviors. It is the process of allowing someone else's addiction to affect our serenity. In the end, our reactions to the addict's behavior have become just as sick as the addiction itself. Our well-meaning efforts have been part of the problem.

## *Celebrate Recovery*

### **The Solution**

As we work the 12 Steps and apply the Biblical Principles to our daily lives, we can and will change. We must first admit that our attempts to control other people have caused our own lives to become unmanageable. We must learn to accept the things we cannot change (the addict), and have the courage to change the things we can (ourselves). We may be powerless, but we are not helpless. We are not alone with our higher power Jesus Christ.

There is no guarantee that the addict in your life will change or sober up as a result of you working this program. However, what we can promise is that if you truly work the program with Jesus Christ as your Higher Power, you will know serenity even if they choose to stay active in their addiction. You will learn to "Live and Let Live". Your happiness will no longer be dependent on whether or not your friend or family member is sober. You will realize that God is doing for you what you can not do for yourself.

It works, by God's power, if you work it! Keep coming back.