



Karen Gardinier

# Codependency

## ...there is a solution



By Karen Gardinier



## Codependency...there is a solution

This is for all the family members and loved ones of the alcoholic and addicts. I have a lot of friends and a lot of people that I really care about, who have family members that are drinking and using actively right now.

First, I am sorry, I know this is a devastating disease. I know several people whose kids are on the streets, they have tried to help them repeatedly, but their children are not yet ready. I can only imagine the pain that these people are going through knowing that their children are living on the street. These parents are experiencing a powerlessness that is indescribable. I know of another mother whose son is now doing prison time. She said at least she knows where he is at right now. That is what she says but I know it is exceedingly difficult for her. Many people reading this right now, have helped their family members over and over and over again just to be disappointed that they can not get well.

I worked with another woman who just lost her brother He had two kids and a lovely wife, and just could not get sober. It is so painful for the families. This kind of loss devastates the entire family...and community. She did not just lose a brother, her parents lost a son, his kids lost their father, his wife lost a husband, her kids lost their uncle... the ripple effect of this kind of loss is devastating.

All these people are the most wonderful parents and family members I have ever known. They have unconditional love. However, many of them have had to put their foot down and say, "Enough, is enough. I cannot do this anymore. You have to get well; we are not going to support this kind of behavior anymore." This is the hardest kind of love. That is the ultimate love.

If you are one of these family members, I just want to say there is support for you. This is a terrible disease and the powerlessness over it, it is just unbearable, however, there is an answer. I have seen people recover and go on to live happy and productive lives. Even though their families are still suffering from this disease.

It takes a lot of God to go on with your life. You are not alone. You need help as much as the alcoholic and addict need help. No one comes out unscathed from this disease, nobody. I have seen it make children neurotic. destroy families, destroys businesses, it destroys neighborhoods



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and schools. It is a terrible disease. I am telling you that there is support for you. There is a new way of life if you want it.

I have sent many people to Al-Anon, which is the family groups of Al-Anon, and they tell me, "I don't want to go there. I am not going to go there and listen to people. They're so depressed, crying about their loved ones." That is just your own illness of codependency trying to keep you stuck. You are going to need to decide to try something new and go to 10 meetings before you decide if it is for you or not.

Let me put it in a way you might understand. If a specialist told your loved one to go to meetings and they said they did not like them wouldn't you want them to go anyway? Wouldn't you want them to try anything to help save their life? If they went to one meeting and then told you, they did not like it wouldn't you beg them to please try some more? To just give it a chance. Well if it is good for the goose it is good for the gander!

The people I know in Al-Anon are some of the toughest people on the planet. These people will end up saving your life. You might not like them individually but in a group the message is powerful and lifesaving.

You never want to mess with a mother in Al-Anon! Or a wife, or a husband, or a father. These people understand love on a level, that is unbelievable. Their message is strong and powerful. And if you think that victims, and sad people go to cry about their loved ones in Al-Anon, you are mistaken. You are not staying for the meeting long enough. You are not listening and paying attention. You are going in terrified, judging. You want to be the martyr, the victim, whatever hat you are wearing that day. Perhaps you are the ultimately control freak. Whatever it is that you are trying to do, it's keeping you from an answer.

I always tell the alcoholic "You got to ask for help." It is the same with Al-Anon "You got to ask for help." Nothing changes if nothing changes. You cannot change the alcoholic and addict, but you can change yourself. That is where the power lies. That is where the power lies for every human being on the planet, right. Life is not what happens to you. It is how you react to it. No one is in charge of your actions and reactions but you. You cannot control anyone else.

Do not think that the alcoholic must get help for things to get better. They might not ever get help and get clean and sober. You, however, can get help. You need to change the way you are looking at this. Perhaps this will be the very solution that changes your life.



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It is the only hope you have. Go to Al-Anon, Google Al-Anon near me. And get to a meeting and go. Do not just go to one and judge, people go to five, go to twelve. Why not? Go to five or 12 meetings, and listen, read. Do what they tell you, have an open mind, be open, because if you get better that will help the alcoholic addict. It may cut their time out there in half.

Many people love their families to death. I have had this experience. This is the hardest thing you will ever do, putting your recovery first. Go to, Al-anon ask for help. There is an answer.