Parent Coach Training: The Invitation to Change Approach


Jeffrey Foote, PhD, Co-Founder, Co-Executive Director,

CMC: Foundation For Change

www.cmcfffc.org  212-683-3684
519 8th Avenue, 9th Floor
New York, NY 10018
CMC: Foundation for Change has the singular goal of getting effective and accessible evidence-based tools to the families of those struggling with substance use. We work with both families and professionals to change the cultural conversation around substance use, providing evidence-based strategies that help families engage with and foster change in their loved ones.
The CMC: Foundation for Change Coaching Initiative

Coaching initiative: In collaboration with the Partnership For Drug Free Kids, CMC:FFC has been developing a national self-help, peer-to-peer phone coaching network for parents. Through this network, parents in need can get individual coaching utilizing peer experience as well as scientifically supported ideas and strategies.

Goals:
• Address the huge unmet need for help among families
• Facilitate the dissemination of evidence-based principles of change
• Act as a counterforce to the culturally accepted stigmatizing view of substance use issues
• Contribute to changing the conversation
Why are we doing this?
What We Hear

So sorry to bother you...

I’m calling about my 24-year-old son

He got out of rehab a week ago

He and his girlfriend OD’d 5 days ago

He’s still in the ICU

Unfortunately she didn’t make it
Percentage Meeting Substance Dependence Criteria by Age

(SAMSHA National Survey on Drug Use and Health 2016)
Who’s Getting Help? Not Many!

Needing Treatment but NOT In Treatment
(National Survey on Drug Use and Health: 2015)
What Kind of Help Do We Provide?

DSM-5 Disorders: Seeking Help
(NESARC-III; 2012-2013)
How Well Trained Are Providers?

Counselor training in EBTs in private substance abuse treatment centers  (Olmsted et al, 2012)
The Toll It Takes

Deaths by Overdose in the US

- All Drugs
- Any Opioid

Year: 1999 to 2017
Collateral Damage

For every 1 person with a substance use disorder, 4 loved ones are negatively impacted

- Family member impact? Across the board: financial problems, health problems, work productivity, relationship conflict, increased depression and stress, decreased happiness levels...etc etc etc

- The other big impact? Families “go underground” and become isolated due to shame, anger and despair.

- The net effect? Families suffer.
Typical Recommendations

For those concerned about them:

● Go to Al-Anon, Nar-Anon (“detach with love” & “stop enabling”)

● Do an intervention/send them to wilderness camp

● Let them “hit bottom,” it’s the only way they will change

● On the level of community and media discourse... Here is what they’ll hear...
Defining the Treatment Problem

● Vast majority of families with children using substances will not come into contact with treatment professionals.

● Among the families that seek help, few will come into contact with evidence-based treatments.

● Scarcity of treatment professionals trained in EBTs; multitude of issues in this lack of training.

● Part of a larger cultural context in which substance use is viewed predominantly through a traditional “disease” lens.
In Summary...Our “Why”

- Substance use can be a devastating problem
- Most people are not getting help
- Services and training are poor
- Families often suffer tremendously
- Families have no idea what to do
- Families are often given tools that are not what they need, or that are not effective
- There are tools that help, and families can learn them

Our coaching “north star”
Let’s Try This Another Way!

**Parent Peer Coaching Initiative:** To set up a grassroots parent coaching network, where parents can talk to parents!

**Where:** Across the country, through phone coaching, in-person parent led groups, and online resources

- **Mission:**
  - Through parent to parent coaching, to provide families with ideas and approaches that work
  - To relieve the isolation and anguish so often experienced by families
  - To provide real hope for these families
An Alternative Approach: A Parent to Parent Support Network
Initial Coaching Network Goals

● Develop coaching model for lay people (parents) utilizing evidence-based concepts and strategies found in several EB approaches:
  • Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT)
  • Motivational Interviewing (MI)
  • Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT)
● Crack the code on sustainability of a “self-help” network
The Invitation to Change Approach: A Map

Helping with Understanding: A new perspective
Behaviors make sense
One size doesn’t fit all...everyone is different
Ambivalence is normal (and to be expected)

Helping with Action: Tools to encourage change
Communication tools - Helping red lights turn green!
Behavior tools - Catch ‘em being good!

Helping with Self-Care: It’s a Marathon, Not a Sprint
Start with self-compassion
“Willingness” - picking up the coin
Practice, Practice, Practice - taking the time to learn
The Whole Picture

Helping with Self-Care

Helping with Understanding

Helping with Action

One size does NOT fit all

Humans need positive reinforcement
Behaviors Make Sense
If I Told You.....I Could Help You:

● Mellow out
● Feel less depressed
● Feel good
● Take away boredom
● Help your physical pain
● Make you excited
● Help you socialize
● Let you feel part of something
● Help you focus and concentrate
● Help you lose weight
● Cut your anxiety way down
● Make you funny
● Help you appreciate others
● Get you a good sleep
● Help you to face the day
They speak of my drinking, but never of my thirst.

-Scottish Proverb
One Size Does Not Fit All

One size does NOT fit all
One Size Does Not Fit All

How complex is a person?

I am... depressed/struggle with learning/socially anxious/impoverished/brilliant/insecure/emotionally unstable/traumatized/almost done with college/prickly/likeable/angry/unemployed/from a divorced family/not from a divorced family/working at a great job/isolated/have lots of friends/never succeeded/very successful/approval seeking/anxiety ridden/ADHD/selfish/generous/shy etc.........
Ambivalence is Normal
Helping With Action! Tools to Encourage Change

- Communication Tools: Helping Red Lights Turn Green!
- Behavior Tools: Catch ‘em Being Good!
Helping With Action: What Impact Do You Want to Have?
Communication Tools: Helping Red Lights Turn Green
Communication is a powerful tool...words matter

Positive communication can:
- turn down the heat
- encourage positive behavior
- shift ambivalence/being on the fence and open lots of doors

Negative communication (confrontation, shouting, labeling etc) generally closes doors

Seeing the red and green lights is a great start!
Behavior Tools: Catch ‘Em Being Good!

Humans need positive reinforcement
Behavior Tools: Catch ‘em Being Good!

Increasing Positive Behaviors

• Reinforcement requires noticing a behavior you like and rewarding it – *It's not just being nice.*

• This increases the likelihood that the behavior will happen again, or even increase! Central to behavior change.

• Reinforcement helps strengthen **Positive Opposites:** encouraging alternative behaviors to take root which may compete with the rewards of substance use.

• Reinforcement helps develop a sense that the world can be rewarding when sober; even more than when using.
Helping With Self-Care: Self-Compassion
Willingness: Being a Parent

What matters to me as a parent in my relationship with my child (values)?

What are my uncomfortable/painful feelings and thoughts during this struggle?
“Between stimulus and response there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.”

Victor Frankl
Helping With Self-Care: Practice, Practice, Practice!
The Whole Picture

Helping with Self-Care

Helping with Understanding

Helping with Action

One size does NOT fit all