

Inside My Dad Loves Me, My Dad Has A Disease by Claudia Black

Foreword

My Dad Loves Me, My Dad Has A Disease was originally written as a result of my work with young people who had a parent in treatment for their alcoholism. These children were learning at a very young age that it was not safe for them to openly talk about their family experiences. Art therapy was a wonderful medium for them to find the words and a voice in which to talk honestly. It was also a wonderful tool to not only share feelings, but problem solve, lessen denial, and to put words to that which was so confusing.

The original pictures were all drawn and the stories written by children ages five through fourteen that had one or two alcoholic parents. After many years and thousands of children using this workbook, My Dad Loves Me, My Dad Has A Disease has been revised to address the fact that today, if a child lives with addiction, it may not be alcohol addiction. The family member may be addicted to other drugs as well. Words have been rewritten, and some pictures changed and new pictures added making it possible for more children of addiction to experience their own recovery process.

The basic premise of this book is that chemical dependency is a disease — the alcoholic/addict is a sick person not a bad person. This disease affects not only the addicted person but those who love that person as well. This is a book that will help the “others” affected by chemical dependency to become well.

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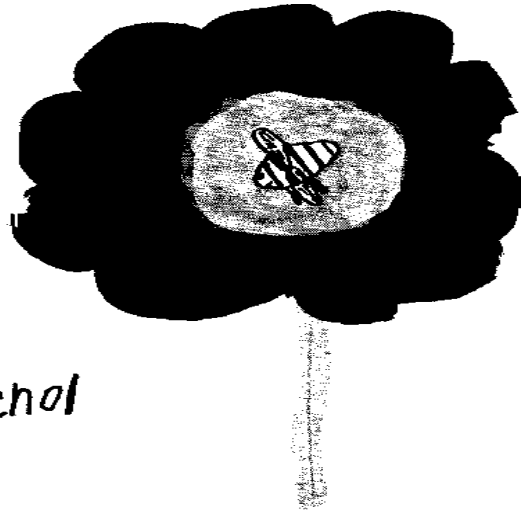
Excerpts

**Paper sticks to glue.
Magnets stick to metal.
Bees stick to flowers.**

An alcoholic/addict is stuck to alcohol and/or other drugs, such as marijuana, cocaine, heroin, crystal meth (amphetamines), or possibly prescription pills. There is a word for “being stuck;” the word is addicted. It means to have a habit that is very, very hard to break. Draw a picture of what you think addiction looks like.

My Bee is stuck to the flower
And can't get off.

like an alcoholic is stuck to alcohol



DENIAL— When you pretend that something didn't really happen, it's called denial. It's almost like telling yourself a lie. Sometimes addicted parents pretend that bad things didn't happen when they were drinking or using. They just push the bad things out of their mind. We often feel bad when these things happen, we deny how we really feel, too.

When my mom drinks I just pretend she doesn't. I never even talk about it.

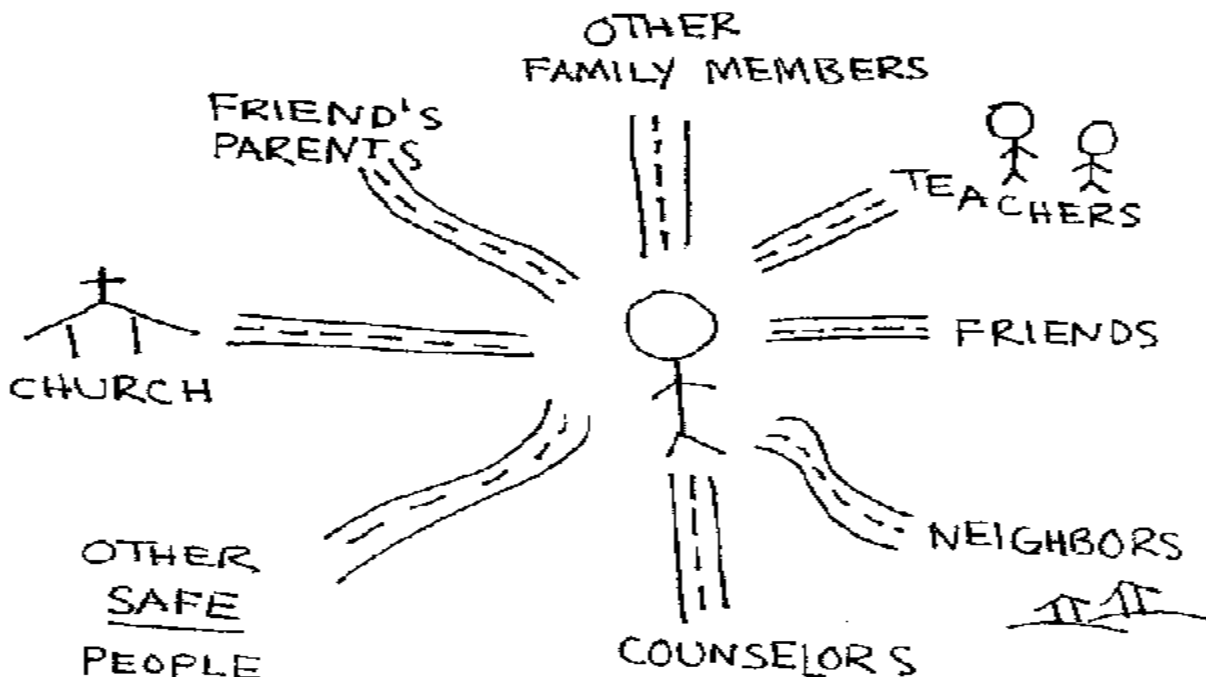




Sometimes parents do things that disappoint and embarrass their kids.

It is often hard to tell people about those times but if you can write a story or draw a picture, it may then be easier to talk about the problem.

Children of all ages can reach out to teachers and counselors at school. It can also help to reach out to other family members, friends, or a friend's parents. There are people who will understand your feelings and concerns. It is okay to ask for help.



Some things to think about . . .

Alcoholics/addicts can get well.

Alcoholics/addicts only get well when they stop drinking and using. Then the disease of addiction is said to be arrested. This means that the alcoholic/addict will be well as long as he or she doesn't drink or use.

Alcoholics/addicts need to ask other people to help them stop drinking and using. Often they go to a treatment program or to meetings such as AA, CA or NA for help.

Sometimes after they stop drinking or using, they have a relapse. If that happens, they can ask for help again and they can get well again.

Sometimes after our parents stop drinking or using, we have mixed feelings, like being scared and happy at the same time. That is perfectly normal, but it sure helps to talk about our feelings with someone else.

Whether or not the alcoholic/addict stops their drinking or using, the family members and friends can get help.