

**THE NEW FAMILY
RECOVERY SOLUTION**

RETHINKING ADDICTION



written by Jeff Jones

Preface: Is This Book for You?

Do you think there's room for improvement in the traditional way in which families approach addiction?

Are you tired and stressed from trying to support someone living with addiction? Maybe there are early signs. Maybe they have been in and out of treatment facilities. Maybe you've said, "I can't do this anymore."

This book is for you.

Re-thinking Addiction: The New Family Recovery Solution invites you to expand how you think about addiction. You'll learn new information that challenges traditional recovery models while gaining tools you can use every day. The flow of chapters offers a sequence of actions that promote healing within your family and create potential for:

- Family change that ripples out to the individual in addiction
- Confidence that you've done everything within your power
- Living beyond the symptoms of addiction in the family

What Makes This Book Different?

The book doesn't tell you what to think. Instead, it invites you to expand how you think about addiction.

While reading, you will discover:

- Early education about how addiction affects families
- New language that reframes addiction and your situation
- Non-toxic, non-addictive substances that support brain function under stress, helping families better manage worry or anxiety, while assisting individuals in recovery to reduce cravings and prevent relapse
- The role of spiritual or religious foundations in supporting transformation
- Guidance for creating decision-making criteria, tracking what works, and learning how to adapt so families can make the best choices together

Learning a New Language

Because traditional addiction and recovery language negatively labels behavior, you will encounter new language that expands the context and invites new ideas. Ideally, you'll slow down, think, and consider a new way to think about your loved one in addiction, yourself, and potential solutions.

Here are a few examples:

Old Term	New Term	Why This Matters
Addict	Individual in addiction	Centers around the person, not the condition
Enabling	Enabling health	Recognizes the power to reinforce recovery, not just addiction
Family disease	Families stronger than addiction	Shifts from blame to resilience
One-size-fits-all recovery	Expand thinking to make next best decision	Emphasizes choice and tailored approaches
Black-and-white thinking	Both/And thinking	Opens space for nuance and multiple truth

Here's a breakdown of new terms and ideas that you may reference anytime you're not sure where to start when confronted with a challenge.

Individual in addiction: Instead of "addict," we'll use "individual in addiction." We won't use "disorder," as it reinforces addiction solely as a medical issue. Some conditions do require medical care but not all.

Enabling health: Traditionally, "enabling" means supporting the addiction. Here, it also means supporting recovery. Families can enable health by choosing actions that promote stability and healing.

Separating addiction from your loved one: From Getting to Yes, we borrow the idea of "separating the person from the problem." When we separate the addiction from our loved one's essence, we stay connected to who they truly are while setting boundaries and enforcing consequences that protect the family.

Addiction disruption: Recognizes that the source of conflict lies in the addiction, not in the person.

Trickle-down: Refers to how genetics, learned behaviors, coping strategies, and family strengths pass through generations.

Impersonal and personal patterns: Impersonal patterns are cultural habits of thought and behavior. When these pass into a family, they become personal, and often unconscious, patterns.

Families stronger than addiction: When a family unites around its own rules instead of addiction's rules, it becomes stronger than addiction while staying connected to the individual in addiction. The phrase "addiction is a family disease" implies that behaviors caused by stress are abnormal. They are not. They are human responses to a chronic, chaotic situation.

"How a family does family together" means every family has its own way of functioning. Recognizing your family's unique strengths and weaknesses helps you see where old patterns might reinforce addiction—and how to shift them.

"Making your best decision" reminds us that two things can be true at once, and we can weave multiple truths into choices that serve everyone's well-being.

Black-and-white thinking limits options. This rigid thinking, amplified by addiction, spreads through families.

Both/And thinking invites multiple perspectives and broader solutions. This book represents one perspective on addiction through a family lens; the traditional recovery model is another. Holding multiple truths expands possibilities when it feels like there are none.

Learning a New Language

As a Nutritional Recovery Life Coach and Family Coach, my goal is to inspire you to rethink old perspectives of addiction and recovery. For decades, I have helped others find hope and healing, while giving practical solutions they can apply in everyday life. While reading, I hope you will slow down to hold the tension of the opposites long enough to consider new perspectives and gain new insights when you apply these concepts to your individual situation.

My work focuses on helping families:

- Identify practical, actionable solutions for navigating life alongside addiction
- Traditional recovery strategies to fit the family's unique situation so they feel supported and empowered
- Create healthy home environments that promote informed decision-making and long-term stability
- Access trusted referrals to professionals who align with their specific needs
- Receive ongoing support through check-ins that guide whole-family recovery across the 3- to 5-year journey toward resilience and healing

Re-thinking Addiction: The New Family Recovery Solution is an invitation to shift perspective and encourages families to see themselves as active participants in recovery.

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The author and publisher make no guarantees regarding results, which will vary by individual. The examples and testimonials shared represent unique experiences and are not intended to guarantee similar outcomes.

Introduction

*"Whether you think you can or you think you can't,
you're right." – Henry Ford*

Addiction in My Family

Like some of you, I was born into a family of secrets and complicated relationships. One that stood out most was me, my Grandpa Earl (the individual with addiction who showered me with love and attention), and my mom who hated him. It didn't feel safe to love my grandfather in my mom's presence.

Like many families with an addicted loved one, relationships are confusing. Each person orients around the addiction in different ways, with different triggers, and seemingly different motives. This happened so much in my family that it did not make sense.

Unintentionally, I became a young, curious *"family detective."* It was safe to ask some questions of my mom, for example, *"Why do I have to go to sleep?"* but it was not safe to ask others, for example, *"Why do you hate my grandfather?"*

Family Addiction Dynamics Create Distorted Thinking

As I got older and asked more questions about Grandpa Earl, my mom's response often was, "Jeff, the only thing you need to know is your grandfather was an alcoholic."

I knew there were positive aspects to him that my mom could not see. I was sad she didn't recognize them. As a child and teen, I felt I had to choose to love my grandfather or my mom. I felt the risk of losing my mom's love if I openly expressed love for my grandfather in her presence.

How my family talked about and solved problems was the first shaping of my thinking, beliefs, and view of the world. I became an expert at hiding my true self. Splitting my allegiance depending on who was present became an unconscious strategy to feel safe.

Over time I recognized that this confusing dynamic with my mother and grandfather was the breeding ground of what is called codependency. That label left me feeling bad about how I learned to love. This distorted thinking also persisted for decades. Initially it appeared as self-talk such as, "***As a child, I should have had better boundaries, just say no to that love.***"

It wasn't until becoming a therapist that I received education to question that unrealistic assumption.

Then I began to see the negative impact of the chameleon strategy:

- Discounting myself
- Doubting myself and trusting outside "truth" more than my own
- Following rules even when they made no sense to me
- Aspiring to other people's beliefs and standards
- Apprehension to take a stand outside the norm

Searching for Answers

As I matured, I believed academia held answers for understanding and healing addiction's relational dynamics. I added credential after credential: a license in counseling, certifications in addiction counseling, intervention, mediation, and mental health and addiction nutrition. Even though my interest was families, addiction, and trauma, my early jobs focused on the individual in addiction.

In agencies and treatment centers, services for families were an afterthought. Many professionals used shaming language when talking about clients and

their families. That language seemed to perpetuate the very cycle of addiction we aimed to break.

My first awakening to how entrenched shame was came when a professor said to me, "*So, you want to work with drunks and junkies?*"

I was shocked. Even though my own alcohol and drug use had not reached treatment center levels, I took his comment personally. My sensitivity to negative labels didn't seem normal.

Eventually, decades ago, I found a spiritual school that provided a light to follow and a path to find and live in one's true nature. Because my upbringing enabled not knowing or trusting myself, I devoured the verbal wisdom shared there. Listening was easy; personal growth work was harder, took time, and was unpredictable.

With each insight my initial thought was, ***OMG, now I know the truth.***

Although I was progressing, I became curious about the mind's tendency to search for one "***right***" answer and then close off to new information. That curiosity began to form the healing system presented in this book.

Traditional Thinking About Intervening on Addiction

There are unspoken expectations under many family relationships. Without interruptions to disrupt them, these expectations may never become problematic. Families with addiction have a greater chance of unspoken expectations becoming damaging. Addiction is a problem; however, it is also an opportunity for the family to grow. The family did not sign up for this opportunity, yet they are responsible for their choices.

With few exceptions, addiction is slow and gradual. When it is in our own family, the roller-coaster progression can be hard to recognize until it is out of control. Family communication strains. Too often we assume our loved one will do what they say, then learn they cannot. Addiction in a family also brings cultural shame that trickles into family shame.

Even though many factors contribute to an individual's drinking or drug use, we look for a simple solution. Mainstream messages promote a simple answer: addiction is one person's problem and that person must fix it.

Learned behaviors create relationship dynamics that reinforce addiction, because addiction is rarely addressed from a whole-family perspective they stay hidden. Although addiction is common, families often keep it secret to avoid judgment from peers, professionals, or other family members. Families can

feel overwhelmed and shamed by our current solutions to recovery.

Misguided assumptions also exist, such as families "should" recognize and acknowledge problematic use, they "should" be able to share their perspective, and the person in addiction "*should*" value that message enough to change. The family "*should*" be able to convince them to stop.

You don't have to agree with these "*shoulds*" to know there is room for improvement in how we intervene. This book offers a new perspective.

You also don't have to accept this new perspective to rethink the old premise and be inspired to try different strategies. Trying a new technique once or twice, not seeing immediate results, and concluding nothing can be done will not serve you or your loved one. It will only confirm what you already think you know.

Why Re-thinking Addiction Is Needed

Care systems include thousands of compassionate people who do their best. Huge kudos to these groups. However, the system has room for improvement. For example, for years roughly 300 people have died each day from overdose or addiction-related causes. Why is this acceptable?

Our system's ability to change these statistics moves slowly. Families on the frontlines are optimally positioned to change these numbers, but only when they think differently, speak differently, and act differently in their homes. Ideally, they receive the support they need.

This book is written so one person in a family can begin to make incremental changes within themselves, their relationships, and their family. Your change impacts everyone, including the individual in addiction. It is a process, not an event.

The Beginning of Your Healing

Below are short summaries of the chapters and how they help you re-think addiction. Let's begin with what you have the most power to change: how you think.

Mixed Messages About Addiction examines how addiction has been thought of over time and how cultural consensus limits the boundaries of our reality.

Black-and-White Thinking shows how extremes become the default response to mixed messages. Addiction amplifies this tendency in the person in addiction, and it spreads to family and professionals.

Both/And Thinking introduces an expanded thinking process anyone can learn and practice to slow down and make well thought out informed decisions.

Both/And Decision Making focuses on personal criteria so you can make your best decisions. Expect more support while learning and less as you progress toward mastery.

Enable health within One's Body (EH1) is the first step in a three-step healing process applying Both/And thinking. It raises awareness of the nervous system and also suggests non-toxic, non-addictive substances as a first line of defense to minimize normal symptoms from living with addiction.

Enable health within One's Relationships (EH2) uses Both/And thinking to address classic family addiction patterns and how to communicate love and concern for the essence of your loved one without enabling the addiction.

Enable health within One's Family (EH3) applies EH2 strategies to the whole family. It shows how a family can create family rules of engagement to become stronger than addiction's rules and cultural mixed messages.

Later chapters address resources for those living with abuse, harm, or violence. You'll also find answers to common family questions, address frequent issues, and criteria for finding treatment that aligns with your values.

The final chapter, Making Your Own Best Decisions, teaches how to blend thinking with action so Both/And thinking continues to guide you individually and as a family.

From the perspective of a therapist turned coach, I see families positioned to change statistics through a grassroots family approach that redefines recovery. This book is not a quick fix. It requires slowing down to expand your thinking, recognizing impersonal patterns that have trickled into your family, and being gentle with yourself as you begin to change.

Let's begin.