Forgiveness and Addiction: Addressing Resentment, Guilt, and Shame in Recover

Richard Camino-Gaztambide, MD, MA
Psychiatry Training Director, MCG, AU
Brett Kaylor, DO – Addiction Medicine Fellow, MCG, AU
Jonathan Ek, MD – Addiction Medicine Fellow, MCG, AU
Eunice Malavé de Leon, MSW, Ed.D. – Southside Medical Center
Educational Objective:

1. Define forgiveness, review pertinent literature on forgiveness and describe the relevance of forgiveness in clinical practice.
2. Introduce some interventions with children, adolescents, adults that promote forgiveness.
3. Discuss possible benefits, and pitfalls, of utilizing the concept of forgiveness in clinical settings.
4. Encourage the use and understanding of the concept of forgiveness and application in clinical practice.
The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy

- Forgiveness is a personal response to having been injured or wrong, or a condition whose seeks or hopes is bestowed upon for having wronged someone else.”

- Forgiveness is goal directed, in other words, teleological. In the Christian tradition forgiveness is link with human redemption." 

- Morality assessment by the wrongdoer, by the victim… Includes relinquishing resentment or some morality inflicted anger." 

- The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy
Forgiveness & Religions: A few examples
Forgiveness in Christianity

• "Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven." Luke 6:37 (NIV)

• "Then Peter came to Him and said, "Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven." Matthew 18:21-22 (NKJV)

• In other words, do not hold anger, resentment, or desire of vengeance on those whom done things against you.
Forgiveness in Islam

• To receive forgiveness from God there are three requirements:
  1. Recognizing the offense itself and its admission before God.
  2. Making a commitment not to repeat the offense.
  3. Asking for forgiveness from God.

• If the offense was committed against another human being, or against society, a fourth condition is added:
  4. Recognizing the offense before those against whom offense was committed and before God.

http://www.islamonline.com/news/articles/6/Forgiveness_Islamic_Perspective.html
Islam and Forgiveness

• The Prophet was the most forgiving person. He was ever ready to forgive his enemies. When he went to Ta’if to preach the message of Allah, its people mistreated him, abused him and hit him with stones. He left the city humiliated and wounded. When he took shelter under a tree, the angel of Allah visited him and told him that Allah sent him to destroy the people of Ta’if because of their sin of maltreating their Prophet. Muhammad prayed to Allah to save the people of Ta'if, because what they did was out of their ignorance.\[174]
Forgiveness in Judaism

• “It is forbidden to be obdurate and not allow yourself to be appeased. On the contrary, one should be easily pacified and find it difficult to become angry. When asked by an offender for forgiveness, one should forgive with a sincere mind and a willing spirit . . . forgiveness is natural to the seed of Israel.”

• (Mishneh Torah, Teshuvah 2: 10)

• Nor is it necessary for the offender to apologize:

• “If one who has been wronged by another does not wish to rebuke or speak to the offender – because the offender is simple or confused – then if he sincerely forgives him, neither bearing him ill-will nor administering a reprimand, he acts according to the standard of the pious. “(Deot 6: 9)
Forgiveness in Judaism

• “When people lack the ability to forgive, they are unable to resolve conflict. The result is division, factionalism, and the fragmentation of a nation into competing groups and sects. That is why Joseph’s forgiveness is the bridge between Genesis and Exodus.”

• Rabbi Jonathan Sack in Covenant and Conversation 7th January 2006
Buddhism & Hinduism

• “Buddha said, If a man foolishly does me wrong, I will return to him the protection of my ungrudging love; the more evil comes from him the more good shall go with me”

• “Krishna's statement: A man should not hate any living creature. Let him be friendly and compassionate to all. He must free himself from the delusion of I and mine. He must accept pleasure and pain with an equal tranquility. He must be forgiving, ever contented, self-controlled, united with me in his meditation.”

DO OTHER SPECIES FORGIVE?

Some ethological and biological underpinnings
On Cooperation and Competition

• “Developments in psychology, neuroscience, behavioral economics, and animal behavior have begun to question the view, dominant until a decade ago, that animal life, and by extension human nature, is based on unmitigated competition.

• In primatology, the countermovement started with research into the survival value of friendships (8) and conflict resolution (9).” (de Waal, 2012)
Ethological findings on Aggression versus Reconciliation

• Behavior of bonobos fails to support traditional violence-based scenarios of human evolution.

• Deadly aggression among bonobos has thus far not been observed, neither in captivity nor in the wild.

• Bonobos sometimes mingle across territorial borders, where they engage in sex, grooming, and play.

• They are known as the “make love, not war” primates for solving dominance issues through sexual activity (6).

• It has been suggested that these apes “may approach more closely to the common ancestor of chimpanzees and man than does any living chimpanzee” (7). (De Waal, 2012)
Examples of reconciliation

• Chimpanzees often kiss and embrace shortly after a fight within their group.

• “Methodologies comparing post conflict observations with baseline data to determine how species members behave in the presence versus absence of previous antagonism show that primates are generally attracted to former opponents, seeking friendly contact especially if they otherwise enjoy a mutually beneficial relationship.”

• Relationship value appears to drive post-conflict repair (10).” (de Waal, 2012)
Reconciliation in Other Primates

• “This reunion process has been reported for macaques, gorillas, golden monkeys, capuchins, and many other primates.”

(de Waal, 2012)
What about reconciliation in nonprimates?

- There are studies that have documented reconciliation in nonprimates, such as wolves, dolphins, and hyenas.
- “Reconciliation is a common social mechanism that would be superfluous if social life were ruled entirely by dominance and competition.”
  (de Waal, 2012)
Forgiveness in Clinical Practice
Definitions of Forgiveness

• Psychology:
  – “Is a person’s internal, psychological response to another person’s (or people) injustice. A person who forgives reduces resentment and offers beneficence to an offender, without condoning, excusing, or forgetting.”
  – In Forgiveness, the victim sees the wrongdoer with compassion, benevolence, recognizing that the wrongdoer has no right for it.
  – (P.395)
Forgiveness is an interpersonal transaction in which a forgiver chooses to abandon his or her right to retaliate against or withdraw emotionally from an offender after an offence.

Forgiveness is not forgetting, nor is it condoning; nor is it re-establishing justice or moral balance; nor is it reconciliation.
Worthington:

• There is a replacement of negative emotions regarding the transgression for positive ones.

• The model of forgiveness, cognition and behavior are thought to be concomitant with a primary emotional wound.

• E. Worthington *Journal of Family Therapy* (1998) **20**: 59–76
Three Aspects of Forgiveness

1. Forgiveness supposes the replacement of negative emotions toward the offender by positive emotions,

2. Forgiveness is a strictly dyadic process,

3. Forgiveness is not a process that devalues the forgiven person, but a process that encourage him/her to behave better in the future.

E. Mullet, M. Girard, and P Bakhshi.

European Psychologist, Vol. 9, No. 2, June 2004, pp. 78–86
Forgiveness and some overlapping concepts

- Reconciliation
- Pardon
- Removal of all penalty
- Atonement
- Empathy
- Guilt
- Shame
- Condoning
Relationship of Forgiveness & Reconciliation
(Adapted from Park & Enright 2000)

- Forgiveness & Reconciliation
  - Internal process of forgiveness and reconciliation
  - Example: a Truce

- Forgiveness Without Reconciliation
  - Positive internal process with no social or negative connection of the parties

- Reconciliation without Forgiveness
  - No positive internal or external relationship with the offender.

- No Forgiveness and No Reconciliation
Condoning

• The realization or belief that the behavior or wrongdoing may have an excuse or reason. Enright (1999)
What are the levels that wrongdoing and forgiveness could involved?
Can Forgiveness be a valuable and important tool in Clinical Practice

- PTSD
- Bulling
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Family Relationships
- Marital Relationships
- Domestic Violence
- Ethic Violence
Two Models of Forgiveness in Clinical Practice

Worthington and Enright
REACH Model of Forgiveness

- Five steps (REACH):
  - **R**ecall the hurt;
  - **E**mpathize with the one who committed the hurt;
  - **O**ffer the **A**ltruistic gift of forgiveness;
  - **M**ake a **C**ommitment to forgive;
  - **H**old onto forgiveness.

Enright Forgiveness Process Model

Four phases (In a 20 step process).

1. Uncovering Phase
2. Decision Phase
3. Work Phase
4. Deepening or Outcome Phase

Where is the Evidence for its use in Clinical Practice?
Forgiveness, Family Cohesion, and Alcohol Use

• In Study 1 (N = 190), participants reported lower levels of trust and forgiveness for family members who misuse alcohol.

• In Study 2 (N = 141), the authors present a model demonstrating family cohesion and trait forgiveness related to state forgiveness of an alcohol-misusing family member.

• State forgiveness was related to trust in that family member and, subsequently, higher levels of perceived misuser drinking refusal efficacy.

Table 1

Positive Psychology in the Context of Substance Abuse and Suicidal Behavior: Forgiveness and the Twelve-Step Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forgiveness phase</th>
<th>Corresponding aspects of the twelve-step model adapted to substance abuse and suicidal behavior</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enright (UDWD₂)</td>
<td>Worthington (REACH)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncovering</td>
<td>Recall</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision</td>
<td>Empathy; Altruism; Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deepening</td>
<td>Hold On</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1&lt;sup&gt;d&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steps 2 &amp; 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Steps 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, &amp; 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acceptance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Surrender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Personal moral inventory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appropriate self-disclosure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Active submission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Willing to make amends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Making amends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proactive self-awareness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consistent pursuit of higher power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Service and 12-step–based lifestyle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>a</sup> See AA (2001).  <sup>b</sup> See SA (2010).  <sup>c</sup> See also AA (1981, 1998).  <sup>d</sup> Although Uncovering and Recall are overwhelmingly associated with Step 1, they also are likely associated with Steps 2–12, albeit to a lesser degree.

The Spirituality, Forgiveness, and Purpose (SFP) model of recovery

• The Spirituality, Forgiveness, and Purpose (SFP) model of recovery proposes that forgiveness and purpose in life may mediate the spirituality-recovery relationship. As a preliminary step in exploring this theory, a cross-sectional investigation of 277 clients of the Australian Salvation Army Rehabilitation Service Centres was performed.

• A multiple regression found that forgiveness of others, forgiveness of self, receiving forgiveness from others, and receiving forgiveness from God predicted resentment.

• Furthermore, multiple mediation analyses found that forgiveness of self and receiving forgiveness from others and God mediated the relationship between daily spiritual experiences and purpose and engagement in life.

Effects of forgiveness therapy on the residents’ recovery.

- The study determined the Recovery includes the residents’ level of risk of relapse and gratitude.
- The participants of the study were the residents admitted for drug treatment and rehabilitation in a government-based drug rehabilitation center in the Philippines.
- The experimental group (N=29) was exposed to a 12-session forgiveness therapy whereas, the control group (N=29) was exposed to traditional method of treatment and rehabilitation program.
Effects of forgiveness therapy on the residents’ recovery.

• The results show that forgiveness therapy decreased the level of risk of relapse and increased the level of gratitude of the experimental group.

• However, the level of risk of relapse and the level of gratitude of the control group did not change.

• The study implies that the participants who underwent forgiveness therapy sessions showed improvement in their recovery than those who were exposed only to traditional treatment method of the center.

The study tested theorized mediators (acceptance, conciliatory behavior, empathy) of the relationships between shame and guilt with self-forgiveness. A cross-sectional sample of 133 individuals (74.4% male) receiving residential treatment for substance abuse completed self-report measures of shame, guilt, self-forgiveness, and the mediators. Results: Consistent with previous research, guilt had a positive association with self-forgiveness, whereas shame was negatively associated with self-forgiveness. Acceptance mediated the guilt and self-forgiveness relationship and had an indirect effect on the shame and self-forgiveness relationship. Conclusions: These findings emphasize the importance of targeting acceptance when trying to reduce the effects of shame and guilt on self-forgiveness. McGaffin, B. J., Lyons, G. C. B., & Deane, F. P. (2013). Self-forgiveness, shame, and guilt in recovery from drug and alcohol problems. Substance Abuse, 34(4), 396–404. https://doi.org/10.1080/08897077.2013.781564
Side Effects of Forgiveness
Forgiving the Self Deters Readiness to Change Among Gamblers

• Self-forgiveness is generally understood to be a mechanism that restores and improves the self.

• In the current study, we examine the possible deleterious consequences of forgiving the self among gamblers—specifically in regard to gamblers' readiness to change their problematic behavior.

• At a large Canadian university, 110 young adult gamblers' level of gambling pathology was assessed, along with their readiness to change and self-forgiveness for their gambling. Participants were 33 females and 75 males (2 unspecified) with a mean age of 20.33.

• Results revealed that level of pathology (at risk vs. problem gamblers) significantly predicted increased readiness to change. Self-forgiveness mediated this relationship, such that level of gambling pathology increased readiness to change to the extent that participants were relatively unforgiving of their gambling.

When Memory controlled us, we are the puppets of the past.
Forgiveness, Addictions and Families

Eunice Malave de León, EdD, MSW
License Clinical Social Worker
Southside Medical Center
No Disclosures or Conflict of interest
Objectives

- The participants will have an understanding of the impact that Substance Use Disorder (SUD) patients have on their families, especially on spouses and/or partner.
- The participants will learn the frequency that SUD is related to domestic violence.
- The participants will understand the importance of asking about domestic violence.
- The participants will learn some of the benefits and pitfalls of forgiveness in therapy especially in those involve in domestic violence.
Family problems

- Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Violence
  - Heavy alcohol and drug use (CDC)
    https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/riskprotectivefactors.html

- When a family member has alcohol use disorder, there is an increased chance of domestic violence.
  - Domestic Violence: physical, psychological, emotional and sexual
Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Violence

**Individual Risk Factors**
- Low self-esteem
- Low income
- Low academic achievement
- Young age
- Aggressive or delinquent behavior as a youth
- **Heavy alcohol and drug use**
- Depression
- Anger and hostility
- **Antisocial personality traits**
- **Borderline personality traits**
- Prior history of being physically abusive
- Having few friends and being isolated from other people
- Unemployment
- Emotional dependence and insecurity
- Belief in strict gender roles (e.g., male dominance and aggression in relationships)
- **Desire for power and control in relationships**
- Perpetrating psychological aggression
- **Being a victim of physical or psychological abuse (consistently one of the strongest predictors of perpetration)**
- History of experiencing poor parenting as a child
- History of experiencing physical discipline as a child
Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Violence

Relationship Factors

- Marital conflict-fights, tension, and other struggles
- Marital instability-divorces or separations
- Dominance and control of the relationship by one partner over the other
- Economic stress
- Unhealthy family relationships and interactions
Domestic Violence and SUD

“Nearly 40% child victimizers reported that they had been drinking at the time of the crime.

Among drinkers, about 50% reported that they had been drinking at least for 6 hours before the aggression.”


- 66% of perpetrators of domestic violence had been drinking.

- Among spouse victims, 75% of incidents reportedly involved an offender who had been drinking.”

Domestic Violence, Alcohol and Substance Use are Strongly Associated
Cycle of Abuse

1. Tensions Building
   Tensions increase, breakdown of communication, victim becomes fearful and feels the need to placate the abuser.

2. Incident

3. Reconciliation
   Abuser apologizes, gives excuses, blames the victim, denies the abuse occurred, or says that it wasn’t as bad as the victim claims.

4. Calm
   Incident is “forgotten”, no abuse is taking place. The “honeymoon” phase.
Family, Violence, and Forgiveness

- Feelings of anger, shame, guilt, resentment, and rejection are frequently present by the family, especially the spouse or partner.

- These same feeling may also occur in the patient, which frequently “justifies” his or her actions.
Forgiveness in the Family

- It is essential that before considering a process of forgiveness in women, she can recognizes that she is not responsible for the domestic violence.
- Feelings of guilt and shame are common in spouse or partner and frequently they take the blame for the situation.
Task of Forgiveness

- Forgiveness has a specific task:
- To help people overcome resentment, bitterness, and even hatred toward people who have treated them unfairly and at times cruelly.
- In other words, forgiveness is a specialist in quelling that kind of anger that debilitates the injured or wounded individual.
  - (Enright & Fitzgibbons, 2015)
Task of Forgiveness

- The use of forgiveness can play an important role in marital and family therapy because conflicts with anger are common presenting, as well as chronic, problems.
- Works for uncover anger and to assist in its resolution from present and past hurts.
Additional tools

- Assessment of the family (couple, children ... is needed and one way to approach this is with genogram (McGoldrick & Gerson, 1985).
- Genograms can reveal SUD patterns in visual way and help to obtain family details of substance use without directly asking about the problem thereby decreasing defensiveness. (Lender, 2013).
Stages in Family Developmental Cycle
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Developmental task</th>
<th>Impact of SUD</th>
<th>How we do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married without children</td>
<td>Healthy marriage with boundary from family origin</td>
<td>Poor communication, impairment of emotional and physical intimacy, increased  conflict</td>
<td>SUD Counseling, couple therapy, Al-Anon, Nar-Anon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family with school-age children</td>
<td>Fitting into the community of school age families. Encourage children education</td>
<td>Ed needs of children not met. Possible domestic violence, conflict at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-age parents</td>
<td>Rebuild the marriage. Maintain ties with younger generations</td>
<td>Marital conflict, adult children may disconnect from parents and not want them to be around their young children</td>
<td>Connect with community activities,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Carter and McGoldrick’s model of the stages of the family, 1989)
More strategies: explore feelings

- Spouses can be encouraged to share the impact of the substance use on their family system. (Amends)
- Ask questions about if the current living situation is physically safe or if there have been past or present incidences of domestic violence.
Encouraging spouses to share their feelings related to their experiences in the family is important as it helps them to break the silence so often associated with living with an SUD, and it can also increase their awareness about cognitive and behavioral patterns that contribute to the SUD.
REACH Forgiveness of Others
(Worthington)

R = Recall the hurt.
Remember the acts of violence and assign true responsibility on the aggressor.

E = Empathize with your partner.
Understand how substance use impact its users, without condoning wrong doing.

A = Altruistic gift.
Understand forgiveness as an unselfish, altruistic gift, to the other and one self.
REACH Forgiveness of Others
(Worthington)

C = Commit.
“Today, I forgave [person’s name] for hurting me.”
Commit to let go of resentment, anger, and hurt.

H = Hold onto forgiveness.
Persevere in an ongoing compromise of understanding and forgiveness.
Enright Stages of Forgiveness

- **Uncovering Phase**
The individual becomes aware of the emotional pain. Characteristic feelings of anger or even hatred may be present. Individuals may experience considerable emotional distress. However, as the anger and other negative emotions are brought out into the open, healing can begin to occur.

- **Decision Phase**
The individual now realizes that to continue to focus on the injury and the injurer may cause more unnecessary suffering and begins to understand that a change must occur to go ahead in the healing process.

  An important first step at this point is to forego any thoughts, feelings or intentions of revenge toward the injurer.
Enright Stages of Forgiveness

**Work Phase**
Here the forgiving individual begins the active work of forgiving the injurer. This new way of thinking is undertaken not to excuse the injurer of his/her responsibility for the offense, but rather to better understand him/her and to see the injurer as a member of the human community. Often, this new understanding may be accompanied by a willingness to experience empathy and compassion toward the offender.

**Outcome/Deepening Phase**
In this phase the forgiving individual begins to realize that he/she is gaining emotional relief from the process of forgiving his/her injurer. The individual may discover a new purpose in life and an active concern for his/her community. Thus, the forgiver discovers the paradox of forgiveness: as we give to others the gifts of mercy, generosity, and moral love, we ourselves are healed.
Forgiveness Therapy (FT)

- The use of forgiveness therapy (FT) comparing with an alternative treatment (AT) for emotionally abused women who had been permanently separated for 2 or more years, was significantly greater improvement than AT. (Reed & Enright, 2006).
- FT has implications for the long term recovery of post relationship emotionally abused women (Reed & Enright, 2006).
Treatment of SUD is always contextual

- Individuals with SUDs cannot be understood and treated effectively without considering the impact on the whole family. The earlier we can intervene in the progression of an SUD, the better the outcomes for all family members. (Lander, 2013)
Safety First! The family and spouse need to take actions that prevent further violence.

Forgiveness is not a panacea, the right time, the right persons, the right situation needs to be consider.

Forgiveness is NOT the same as reconciliation.

We do not force forgiveness on anyone.

Like medications, psychotherapy and counseling can have side effects.

Forgiveness is a pathway that includes an education process.
Resources

- Resources: 24 hour free and confidential information and treatment referrals in English and Spanish Call 800-662-HELP (4357) or 800-487-4889 (TTY)
- [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
- [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)
- [www.samhsa.gov/treatment](http://www.samhsa.gov/treatment)


Family problems

- Substance abuse/dependence causes stress on the family, which can lead to many family problems: effects on children, marital problems, legal problems and financial problems.
Forgiveness, Addictions and Families

EUNICE MALAVÉ DE LEON, MSW, EDD
LICENCE CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER
SOUTHSIDE MEDICAL CENTER
No Disclosures or Conflict of interest
Family impact

- Family are impacted by individuals with addictions, as they return affect the individuals suffering from addiction. Frequently, feelings of anger, shame, guilt, resentment, and rejection are present.1 (Families and sud article)

- When one person in a family begins to change his or her behavior, the change will affect the entire family system.
Family impact

- Family are impacted by individuals with addictions, as they return affect the individuals suffering from addiction. Frequently, feelings of anger, shame, guilt, resentment, and rejection are present.1 (Families and sud article)
- When one person in a family begins to change his or her behavior, the change will affect the entire family system.
Family impact

- Family are impacted by individuals with addictions, as they return affect the individuals suffering from addiction. Frequently, feelings of anger, shame, guilt, resentment, and rejection are present.¹ (Families and sud article)

- When one person in a family begins to change his or her behavior, the change will affect the entire family system.
Effects on children:

Increased risk of the following problems

- Alcohol misuse: they are about four times more likely than the general population to develop alcohol problems (Schuckit, M.A., An overview of genetic influences in alcoholism. Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment, 36(1); S5-14, 2009).
- Conduct problems: They may feel frustrated and have an increased risk of aggressive behavior and crime.
- Academic problems: learning difficulties, lower concentration and disruptiveness.
Legal problems: Problems such as unpaid bills, driving under the influence, and crime

- Financial problems: Loss of a job and money; a family member may forget to pay or ignore bills because of substance abuse/dependence
Marital problems

- Domestic Violence: physical, verbal, emotional, sexual abuse
- Marital problems: when a family member has alcohol use disorder, there is an increased chance of domestic violence.
Family systems theory and attachment theory are theoretical models that provide a framework for understanding how SUDs affect the family. (Lander, Howsare and Byrne, The impact of SUD on families and children from theory to practice, 2013)
Individuals with SUDs cannot be understood and treated effectively without considering the impact on the whole family. The earlier we can intervene in the progression of an SUD, the better the outcomes for all family members. (Lander, 2013)
strategies

- Assessment of the family (couple, children ... is needed and one way to approach this is with genogram (McGoldrick & Gerson, 1985).
- Genograms can reveal SUD patterns in visual way and help to obtain family details of substance use without directly asking about the problem thereby decreasing defensiveness. (Lender, 2013).
More strategies

- Know the developmental stages of the family (aging family, family with teenagers).

Fred Luskin’s Model of Forgiveness
Stanford Forgiveness Project

9 Steps

1. Know exactly how you feel about what happened and be able to articulate what about the situation is not OK.
2. Then, tell a trusted couple of people about your experience.
3. Make a commitment to yourself to do what you have to do to feel better. Forgiveness is for you and not for anyone else.
4. Get the right perspective on what is happening. Recognize that your primary distress is coming from the hurt feelings, thoughts and physical upset you are suffering now, not what offended you or hurt you two minutes – or ten years – ago. Forgiveness helps to heal those hurt feelings.
8. Remember that a life well lived is your best revenge. Instead of focusing on your wounded feelings, and thereby giving the person who caused you pain power over you, learn to look for the love, beauty and kindness around you. Forgiveness is about personal power.

9. Amend your grievance story to remind you of the heroic choice to forgive.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Developmental task</th>
<th>Impact of SUD</th>
<th>How we do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Married without children</td>
<td>Healthy marriage with boundary from family origin</td>
<td>Poor communication, impairment of emotional and physical intimacy, increased conflict</td>
<td>SUD Counseling, couples counseling, Al-Anon, Nar-Anon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family with school-age children</td>
<td>Fitting into the community of school age families. Encourage children education</td>
<td>Ed needs of children not met. Possible domestic violence, conflict at home</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-age parents</td>
<td>Rebuild the marriage. Maintain ties with younger generations</td>
<td>Marital conflict, adult children may disconnect from parents and not want them to be around their young children</td>
<td>Connect with community activities,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Adapted from Carter and McGoldrick’s model of the stages of the family, 1989)
More strategies: explore feelings

- Spouses can be encouraged to share the impact of the substance use on their family system.
- Ask questions about if the current living situation is physically safe or if there have been past or present incidences of domestic violence.
Encouraging spouses to share their feelings related to their experiences in the family is important as it helps them to break the silence so often associated with living with an SUD, and it can also increase their awareness about cognitive and behavioral patterns that contribute to the SUD.
Know the structure of the family (i.e. blended family).

Provide treatment referrals for family members where appropriate: family therapy

Inform about Al-Anon, Nar-Anon, Alateen for family members

If there are safety issues with regard to children, spouse or the elderly, Child Protective Services, Elder Protective Services or Shelter referral may be needed.
Resources

- Resources: 24 hour free and confidential information and treatment referrals in English and Spanish. Call 800-662-HELP (4357) or 800-487-4889 (TTY)
- [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov)
- [www.niaaa.nih.gov](http://www.niaaa.nih.gov)
- [www.samhsa.gov/treatment](http://www.samhsa.gov/treatment)