



## **LEARNING MODULE I**

### **Seminar # 5**

#### Four Primary Family Support Structures

**Learning Objectives:**

1. What is the issue.
2. How can the issue impact the family?
3. What are the options.

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### *What is the issue?*

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Imagine a healthcare system where everyone in the U.S. is a knowledgeable, savvy consumer of medical services and plays an active role in purchasing and consuming the services they receive. With the advent of healthcare consumerism – a movement to make the delivery of healthcare services more efficient and cost-effective – it may be here sooner than you think. But what is needed is an informed customer, one that understands where to find the right level of services, what to ask for and what to expect as the outcome.

When the family on a journey with Substance Use Disorders takes a position as being a healthcare consumer it transforms the entire dialog they will have from providers and will likely increase the success a family will have in getting what they need.

However, many providers do not ask much of those that use their services (i.e., the family members) in terms of how these families use their healthcare services. You come, they provide, you leave. This is a problem. The problem is that families are left out of the dialog, are prevented from being an advocate for their loved one and often the healthcare industry will use STIGMA to fend them away. It is unfortunate but true, and a family that is a healthcare consumer can break this unacceptable behavior on the provider's part.

So, the family has their work ahead of them, they need to understand in advance who is out in the community to help, what services do they provide, what should the family expect from each provider and how to get the most out of them.

To make better decisions, healthcare consumers are increasingly expecting – and demanding – better information and more transparency from healthcare providers. They are also asking for more of a partner relationship rather than a one-way dialog from medical provider to patient. The industry is not prepared to address these requests. But ask them we shall and provide it they must.

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### *How can the issue impact the family?*

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#### **The 4 Primary Support Structures**

The family cannot go through this journey alone. They will require extensive support during their loved one's road towards recovery. This support will come from *four primary resources* from within the community. Unfortunately, there is no single resource structure that provides all four, (i.e., a family substance use disorders case management company). In this journey the family will learn they are not alone, just the same, they will need to become their strongest advocate.

The family needs to see themselves as a *consumer of services* with purchasing power. This is a consumer type environment where the family is the consumer with ability to determine where money is spent, and the primary support structures (as resources) are selling their services for what the family will need.

Each entity has its own structure. These structures do not talk to each other, they do not collaborate unless within the same health system. In many cases accessing these structures can be incredibly challenging. The problem is many of these resources do not understand the family's holistic needs. They are set up to provide just their services, but not necessarily for all the exact needs of the family. Because the support structure is complex, and these resources lack an understanding of a family whole needs, it is best to use a model that can extract what the family needs from each resource. This is done in the same way a family chooses between other purchased services, they do their homework first, then act to buy.

1. **The Family Support Structure:** The family members are their own, best resource support structure. They need to get educated, organized, and networked. This is their responsibility.
2. **The Local Faith Organizations Support Structure:** The Church is a resource support structure for the family members based on each individual member faith practice.
3. **The Community Agency Services Support Structure:** The Community (professional services, Medical, Govt agencies and Non for Profit) is a support structure for the family members, and their loved one.
4. **The Healthcare System Support Structure:** The healthcare support system is extensive, covering mental health, addiction services, community agencies like home health care and urgent care, hospitals and emergency medical services. The list goes on and the family members need to know what each provides, how and when to access them.

### **Aligning Expectations:**

These support systems are here to help the family, but they have expectations too. They expect when their family calls, they are prepared to use these services, the family understands what they need and has a clear understanding of the problem they are seeking to solve. Therefore, before you pick up the phone, take time to research what the agency offers, and match it to what your family needs. Do your homework and you will get more from the service provider.

### **Getting Organized**

The family needs to see the value of *those who are here to help*. By having the providers resources proactively listed in their organization binder, they are pre-planned and ready to use what is available. Their list of contacts with names, title, phone numbers, and email will be valuable when created ahead of the time. Consider purchasing the book: *The Family Solution Finder Local Resource Connections*. by Roy P. Poillon on Amazon.com

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## *What are the options?*

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By completing a The Family Solution Finder Local Resource Connections worksheets the family is a step ahead.

### **The 3-D's Coping Skills Model:**

- 1 Identify the Issue.
- 2 **D**etermine a Solution using a Family Transformational Response Model
- 3 **D**evelop a Decision using a Family Values Based Decision Making Model.
- 4 **D**esign a family Plan of Action.

From this initial work using the Family Solution Finder Learning Series worksheet, the family understands their selected issue, has determined the solution, and has developed a decision on the best way to respond. They are now ready to seek the assistance from outside their family using the local community.

### **The Family**

Communities have a great influence in a family's life. Just as plants are more likely to thrive in a garden with good soil, plenty of sunlight and water, families are more likely to thrive in supportive communities. However, of all the resources available to a family, The Family is its own best resource for support. Once unified with a plan, the family can seek services and programs from the community that best match their needs.

1. **In the Preparation**, a family will find the best results from using the Nine by One worksheet listed Appendix One. This will provide the necessary steps to understand the organization and what they provide.
2. **In the Needs Inventory**, a family will see exactly what they need. This clarity will help them to describe to others what services more clearly will help them the best.
3. **In the Services Inventory**, a family will identify what services are available where they can be found and how to access these providers.
4. **In the Family Plan of Action and Needs Matched to Services**, a family will act on the collected information. This knowledge will then be applied to a plan and their knowledge will become a source of empowerment.

### **The Faith Organizations**

Churches will vary in their structure and support of the family needs for their journey with substance use disorders. By taking a church-by-church inventory from within the local community, identify what services each offers and make a list for future reference. Be assured, each is different.

### **The City Services**

There are many resources available to the family from their city, county, and state departments. Often these are categorized by topic, i.e., Law Enforcement, Social Services, Mental Health, Public Safety, and department of educations. The list is extensive and therefore the search is complex.

It is best if the family first completes a community mapping (see seminar # 17 in the Family Solution Finder Learning Series. This will help the family to narrow down their match making of the right level of care, to the correct department. The outcome will be a better fit of resources for the family, less frustration and stress during the search and it allows those who are here to help do their work better in meeting the family needs.

The two recommended workbooks are: The Family Solution Finder 3-S's Coping Skills Workbook Learning Module III, and The Family Solution Finder Local Resource Connections Workbook Learning Module IV. By including these books as the main framework towards seeking assistance the family will have significantly increase their success as an outcome.

Take for example High Schools: They have a High School Guidance Counselor, teacher, and School Principal. All of these with the family therapist can be brought together to support the family plan in how they will respond to an issue. Think of the advantage for the family to have all four working as one to support the next steps on what the family is seeking to achieve.

### **The Healthcare System**

One of the first steps a family will need to take when dealing with the healthcare systems is, get a diagnosis. The diagnosis drives all decisions, eligibility to receive services and access to benefits. The second step the family needs to take is to contact their prayer to find out exactly what services are covered, who is in network and how eligibility and authorizations for services are qualified for and completed. This gives the family purchasing power and empowerment to select the right level of services from the best available provider. Once these two steps are taken and learning module I-IV workbooks are completed for this issue, the family is ready to seek assistance from the healthcare systems in their community. They are empowered to act.

The Family Solution Finders Learning Seminars Workbook has practical exercised to strengthen the family for taking the above recommended steps.

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## *Create a Family Plan of Action*

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Supportive communities that are nurturing to families will have the following:

- List of their services, most likely you will find this on their website.
- Access to learn more about their organization, most likely a phone number, email address, on-line chat room is available.
- A point of contact that will answer questions, usually provided upon your request by calling them.
- A program application. Typically, these forms require the applicant provide documents of proof based on their qualifying criteria. Sometimes finding these documents is stressful. It is better to have them organized before you need them. All the above should be included to the family plan of action and in your “Family Solution Finder 3-D’s Coping Skills Workbook binder.

### **Preparation is About Taking Baby Steps**

As in building a house, it is important to have a good plan, hire the right people to help you prepare your work before getting started. The same is true with a family in a journey with SUD.

- Expect things to move slowly in the beginning. The first step is to introduce your family to the organization, let them introduce their services.
- Let them review your information, while you review their information.
- The family will need to understand (clearly) how this organization or agency processes its workflow. Learn each step of their process.

It is only after taking these initial “Baby Steps” that a family will be in position to ask for help.

### **Share your plan.**

- Set up a meeting to review with the organization how their services fit into your *family plan of action*. You will likely find them to be helpful in making other suggestions and these ideas may be in addition to your original thought. It helps them to help you when they know what you want to accomplish.
- Ask if their service provides any collaborative sharing between their clients, discussion groups, seminars, or special topic discussions.

### **Use the family Plan of Action.**

Take each section and place your findings into your plan of action. By doing this, all your organizing activity becomes a useful tool. This step also allows other groups and people the same information so they can better help you in your tasks. People will be more able to help your family, if they have a clear understanding of what you family is planning to accomplish.

Most of your work in dealing with this issue will be from completing the section for the Family Solution Finder 3-D's Coping Skills. Be sure to complete each task to gain the most in developing your family plan of action.

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### *Conclusion*

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The good news is there are providers, services, and programs for every issue you will face in a journey with substance use disorders. Your challenge comes from finding them at the time they are needed. Or take the time now to identify your local community and what they offer.

You are a consumer of services, do your homework prior to needing the service. Your life will be less stressful, you will be able to better stay on budget and the journey can be experienced from a vantage point of growth, yours and theirs.