



North Star
1834 East 55th Street
Cleveland, OH 44103

ORIANA HOUSE, INC.

Family Matters

Oriana House, Inc. Family Matters Program

Information & Inspiration from a Family Member

Love! Love made me do it. For four months I took his phone calls, visited him when possible and truthfully enjoyed the peace of knowing he wasn't running with his "friends." I knew he hated where he was—RIP. I knew he didn't like the people he was surrounded by. And, I knew he didn't like how he was being treated. But, I also knew he needed to be there in order to make the right steps for change.

When I got the call I was happy and reluctant to be invited to attend the Family Matters session. I immediately felt supported and fascinated. I haven't missed a session. I've continued attending even after my son's return home. The staff has been incredibly supportive and patient with my questions.

From these meetings I've been educated about what he and we are going through. I've learned how to set boundaries and how to communicate differently. I've learned that addiction is the enemy, not him. He was released from RIP a little over one week ago. At the meeting just before his release, I asked Kelly and Mary if I could continue attending Family Matters meetings. They seemed surprised but pleased and assured me that attending the meetings while he's out will help reinforce what I've learned.

Now that we'll be living the tough situations I have real life application.

Some of what I've learned is common sense, but still much needed advice. For example, "the three C's"—I didn't cause, I can't cure, and I can't control this. As a parent, that's the hardest to sink in. He's young. He's my baby. I want to fix it. Then having to evaluate my actions and decide—am I an enabler? Or, am I helping? I admit it's a combination of both. Now I have to change, too. Be patient. Be understanding. Set boundaries and hold him accountable. I know I can do it. I believe he can do it, too.

Some things I wish I had known earlier in the process. Some things I'm just happy to learn now. I find this program hugely beneficial to the recovery process. When explaining to friends and family what Family Matters is it's difficult to find the right words. I compare it to Al-Anon, but better. He's learning and I'm learning along with him, but for me.

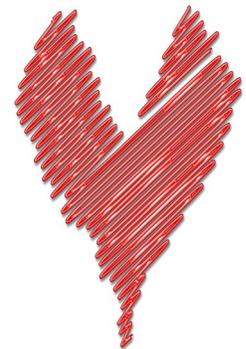
The staff is open and honest. They are engaging and witty. They are patient and kind. I can't speak for other "loved ones" as we're called, but I get the feeling that most people really are benefitting from this worthwhile opportunity.

Just last night I was able to apply skills I've learned from the sessions. I needed time to process. I needed space be-

tween my son and me to think. He seemed surprised by my hesitation and even asked what I was doing. I was able to tell him that I was using the tools I've learned and he respected that. We were then able to continue with level heads and reach an understanding.

I know we'll continue to struggle. I know we'll disagree. I'm counting on the skills we've both learned to get us through it.

The Family Matters program is also a great resource for understanding the other requirements, classes, and resources available to them. I feel the sessions have allowed me a glimpse into his Oriana experience and the realization that there is hope for him and our family. I will continue to attend Family Matters sessions and share this resource with others.



Rebuilding Relationships

Rebuilding relationships involves learning new ways of relating and interacting with others. Many social skills must be relearned. Many of your social skills were probably learned while drinking or using. It may be difficult to use these skills while sober. Communication must be reestablished. Communication is the ability to express your thoughts and feelings clearly to another and to understand the thoughts and feelings of another.

Practicing the following will help you improve your communication skills:

1. Be a good listener.
2. Help those speaking to you by giving verbal and non verbal encouragement while listening.
3. Do not dominate the discussion.
4. Give total attention to what is being said, rather than thinking about how you will answer what is being said.
5. Express yourself in ways to send meaning to others, rather than impress listeners with how smart you are.
7. Be open and honest in what you are saying, but also sensitive to the feelings of others in the conversation.
8. Be careful to speak clearly and in words that will be understood by the listener.
9. Try to identify feelings and thoughts of others in the conversation, and make sure to check in with them.

Full recovery involves a resolution of family, work, and social problems created by active chemical dependency. Forgiveness is a necessary part of healing relationships. Recovery involves developing new and more meaningful social networks.

Learning to Live Again by Miller, Gorski & Miller

Boundaries

From the author Melody Beattie, *Beyond Codependency and Getting Better All the Time*, a boundary in recovery describes primary characteristics of codependency. What she is referring to is that a person has a difficult time defining where they end and other people begin. They have an unclear sense of selves. For example, they find it difficult to define the difference between their feelings and someone else's, their problems and someone else's, their responsibility and someone else's.

Often they find that they are responsible for others, making it difficult to distinguish themselves from others, making the lines blurred. The word "boundary" is also used to describe an action, as in setting a boundary, meaning setting limits with someone. Often when they say this they have decided to tell someone they can't use, hurt, or take what they have.

They can't invade or infringe on us in a particular way. When asked what happened to my boundaries, boundaries are not something you are born with. Boundaries may have been taught by your parents and developed through society.

What you find is others have built walls instead of boundaries and others with holes in them. Abuse, humiliation, shame, substance abuse, damaged boundaries leave gapping holes where violation has occurred. However, without boundaries relationships will cause us fear.

To read more about boundaries refer to *Beyond Codependency*.

Codependency.

Cleveland Family Matters Quarterly Schedule

July

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|-----------------------|-------------|
| July 1 | 6:00-8:30pm |
| Multi-Family Pot Luck | |
| July 8 | 6:00-8:00pm |
| July 15 | 6:00-8:00pm |
| July 22 | 6:00-8:30pm |
| Multi-Family Pot Luck | |
| July 29 | 6:00-8:00pm |



August

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|-----------------------|-------------|
| August 5 | 6:00-8:00pm |
| August 12 | 6:00-8:30pm |
| Multi-Family Pot Luck | |
| August 19 | 6:00-8:00pm |
| August 26 | 6:00-8:00pm |

September



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|-----------------------|-------------|
| September 2 | 6:00-8:30pm |
| Multi-Family Pot Luck | |
| September 9 | 6:00-8:00pm |
| September 16 | 6:00-8:00pm |
| September 23 | 6:00-8:30pm |
| Multi-Family Pot Luck | |
| September 30 | 6:00-8:00pm |

*Patience accomplishes its object,
while hurry speeds to its ruin.*



- Sa'di

Recommended Readings

Beyond Codependency
by Melody Beattie

Forgiveness
by Dr. Simon and S. Simon

Learning to Live Again
by Miller, Gorski & Miller

