The Family’s Story
A Narrative Approach to Embracing Long Term Recovery
Addicts & Alcoholics

- First words that come to mind when you hear: addict or alcoholic

- Diagnosing can be difficult due to our own stereotypes
Addicts & Alcoholics

● Grocery List

Example:
Treatment

- How do people get there
- What’s the “angle” for people to engage in treatment
- “Rock Bottoms”
What can they get in treatment...

- Medical Clearance
- Understand and building skills for their moods
- Introduction to 12 step programs
- Being comfortable without the substance
What can need help after treatment...

- Being in a person’s own environment
- Daily stressors
- Being around loved ones
- Meeting expectations of loved ones
Recovery

- What is recovery?
- Hard to define
- Families usually have an old view
In the face of serious and sometimes potentially deadly problems, the idea of hearing or telling stories may seem a trivial pursuit. It is hard to believe that conversations can shape new realities and meanings of our lives. But they do… Language can shape protagonists and events into narratives of hope, change, and restoration. (narrativeapproaches.com)
The Problem is the Problem

- "You're an addict" versus "You have an addiction"
- When we mesh the person and the problem into one, they lose identity
Re-Authoring Stories

- Before we can re-author, we have to understand
- Sympathy v Empathy (Brene Brown example)
- Understand their story
- Understand your story
- Work together to re-write
Thing should be this way...

- The power of should
- What we prefer versus what we is reality
- This can be drastically different in recovery
Let’s Map It

- Remain curious (even with things we don’t want to hear)
- Be willing to share your experiences
- Listen for progress in the story
- “Wait, you’re telling me you used for 5 years straight. You never tried to stop, even once?”
- Be vulnerable
New Stories

● How can we adapt as a family to help everyone?
● If they got medical treatment for it, then how can we treat it like any other chronic disease?
Recommendations for Family Members

- Seek help, whether individual therapy or support groups
- Your voice is important
- Be engaged and active in treatment if you're willing
- Set boundaries and stick to them
- Be willing to accept change
Questions?
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