

**Family Addiction Recovery -  
The Alcoholic Went to Rehab, Now What?  
By Peggy L. Ferguson, Ph.D.**

You got him or her checked in. Now what happens? The treatment center staff is probably not going to call you to consult with you about the goals that should go on the treatment plan. You may not even hear from the treatment center staff for awhile. But in the meantime, probably within 72 hours, there is a good chance that you will hear from your significant other saying, "Get me out of here". The beloved, that you worked so hard to get into treatment, may have a whole host of complaints, ranging from having to have a roommate, not getting to keep cell phones or computers, lousy food, incompetent staff, and not being a "real" alcoholic or addict like the other people in treatment.

Despite any pleading, protestations, and promises to stay clean and sober without treatment, in most circumstances, one of the worst things you can do is to "rescue" them from treatment. If you leave them there and let the process work, chances are good that by the end of their treatment stay, they won't want to leave to come home.

When the staff or your significant other calls to ask you to come and participate in treatment, don't hesitate. The treatment center staff is not going to blame you for the alcoholic/addict's addiction, not even if the addict is your child. With living in "survivor mode" for so long, you owe it to yourself to participate in a treatment experience that can truly change your life--for the better. If you must look at participating for the sake of your significant other, look at that way, but go and participate. Do whatever you have to do to make it happen. Go with willingness, open-mindedness, and honesty.

While you are there, listen for what pertains to you. When you catch yourself wondering if your significant other has heard what you just learned, let it go. Acquire knowledge for yourself, and don't worry about "spoon feeding" it to your alcoholic or addict. Resign from being in charge of the addict's recovery and approach the family program from the frame of reference, "What can I get out of this week?"

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