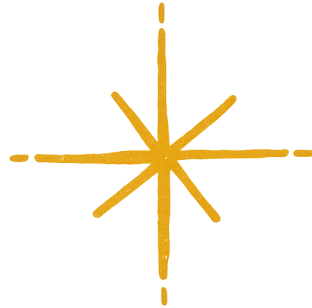




True North Interventions

The Missing Piece in Addiction Care: Working With the Family System

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Addiction Treatment Often Focuses on the Individual

But addiction does not exist in isolation—it exists within a system.

When the family system is not addressed:

- Progress is harder to sustain
- Relapse risk increases
- Families remain dysregulated

This guide offers a practical lens for integrating family systems into your work.

The Gap In Treatment

Common Oversights:

- Families are excluded or minimally engaged
- Education is provided, but not integration
- Clinicians focus on the individual without addressing systemic patterns

Result:

Treatment happens in a vacuum.

A Systems Lens

Instead of asking:

"How do we fix the individual?"

Ask:

"What is happening in the system that maintains this pattern?"

Key dynamics:

- Roles (rescuer, scapegoat, peacekeeper)
- Communication patterns (blame, counter attack, passive aggressive, self-righteous)
- Boundary breakdowns (on both sides)

Clinical Shifts

1. From Individual Focus → System Awareness

Include family dynamics in assessment and planning.

2. From Education → Integration

Help families apply concepts, not just understand them.

3. From Crisis Management → Pattern Disruption

Focus on interrupting cycles, not just stabilizing moments.

Three Questions That Change Everything

Use these in sessions:

- “What role do you find yourself playing in this dynamic?”
- “What happens when you try to step out of that role?”
- “What would a boundary look like here?”

Family Session Structure

A simple framework:

1. Set intention (clarity, not blame)
2. Identify patterns
3. Introduce one shift
4. Practice language (boundaries, communication)
5. Close with one actionable step

When Families Shift, Outcomes Change

True North Interventions provides:

- Training
- Supervision
- Consultation

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