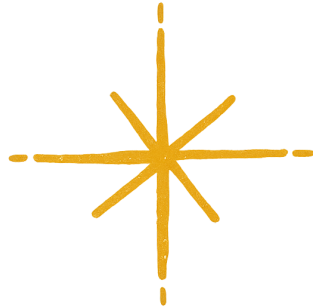




True North Interventions

5 shifts families can make when addiction
is in the home

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When Someone You love is Struggling With Addiction, It Changes Everything

It changes how you think.
How you respond.
What you tolerate.
What you fear.

Most families don't realize it's happening—but over time, life begins to organize itself around the addiction.

You start trying to manage it, prevent it, fix it.

And the more you try...
the more out of control it feels.

This isn't because you're doing something wrong.

It's because addiction doesn't respond to control.

It responds to something else.

Addiction responds to shifts.

When we understand addiction differently, we can respond differently—and that's where change begins.

Before We Begin

There is something important to understand:

You did not cause this.

You cannot control it.

You cannot cure it.

But you are not powerless.

Families have more influence than they realize

but only when that influence is focused intentionally.

Here are 5 intentional, focused shifts families can make when someone they love experiences an addiction.

SHIFT ONE

From Trying to Control → To Building Influence

Control often looks like:

- Monitoring
- Threatening
- Pleading
- Trying to manage outcomes

It comes from fear—and it's completely understandable.

But control often creates resistance, secrecy, resentment and distance.

Influence looks different.

It sounds like:

- "I care about you, and I'm not going to participate in this."
- "I'm here when you're ready for help."

Control pushes people away.

Influence creates the conditions for change.

SHIFT TWO

From Reacting to Crisis → To Responding With Intention

Chronic stress causes families to live in urgency.

Everything feels immediate.

Everything feels like it needs a response *right now*.

These reactions are **automatic**, often unconscious, **responses to trauma** and can inadvertently contribute to the progression of addiction.

Responding requires:

- Slowing down
- Emotional awareness
- Stabilizing the nervous system
- Support
- Self-compassion

You do not have to match chaos with chaos

SHIFT THREE

From Self-Abandonment → To Integrity and Alignment

Abandoning our values and guiding principles to maintain the stability of the family system is one of the hardest patterns to break—because it comes from love.

But over time, repeated attempts to “rescue” others can:

- Delay necessary consequences
- Reduce accountability
- Deprive loved ones of the opportunity to develop the skills needed to effectively manage their mental health
- Contribute to your own diminished self-worth and burnout

Boundaries are not punishment or abandonment.

They provide clarity and protection for both parties.

Examples:

- “I will not give you money.”
- “You can come home when you are sober.”

What you allow will continue.

SHIFT FOUR

From Carrying It Alone → To Letting In Support

Many families live in silence.

Out of shame.

Out of fear.

Out of denial

Out of not knowing who to trust.

Addiction thrives in isolation.

Support might look like:

- A clinician specializing in addiction & family systems
- A support group
- One safe, trusted person

It is not possible to support recovery alone.

SHIFT FIVE

From Shame → To Understanding

Shame sounds like:

- “How did this happen?”
- “What did I do wrong?”
- “What will people think?”

Shame keeps families stuck in repeated cycles of dysfunction.

Understanding creates movement.

Addiction is complex.

And when you understand it differently,
you respond differently.

*We begin to adjust our own behaviour to disengage the system
that allows addiction to progress.*

Where To Start

Not with all five.

Just one.

Ask yourself:

- Where am I trying to control instead of influence?
- Where am I reacting instead of responding?
- What boundary am I avoiding?

Then start there.

Small shifts made with intention and support change systems.

This Is Not Easy Work

Loving someone with an addiction will challenge you in ways nothing else will.

But there is a way to stay grounded in the middle of it.

There is a way to stop losing yourself.

There is a way to respond differently.

When we understand addiction differently, we can respond differently—and that's where change begins.

And when families shift—
everything around them begins to shift too.

If You're Ready for Support, You Don't Have to Do This Alone

At True North Interventions, we help families:

- Move out of survival mode
- Regulate the nervous system
- Reclaim their authenticity
- Create lasting change in the family system

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