

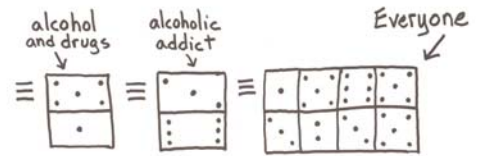
# Family Systems in Addiction Treatment

Claudia Black, Ph.D

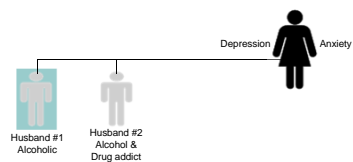
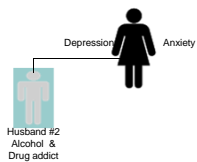
[www.claudiablack.com](http://www.claudiablack.com)

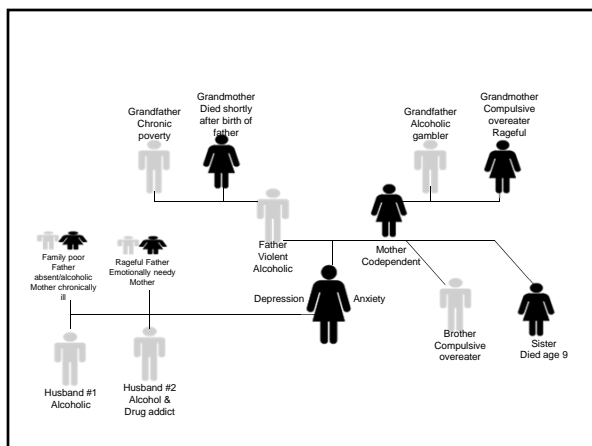
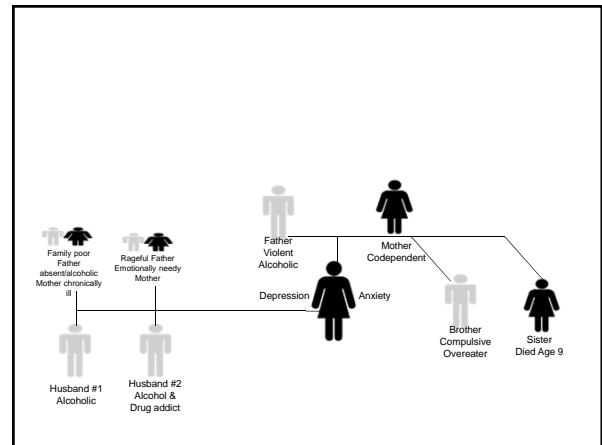
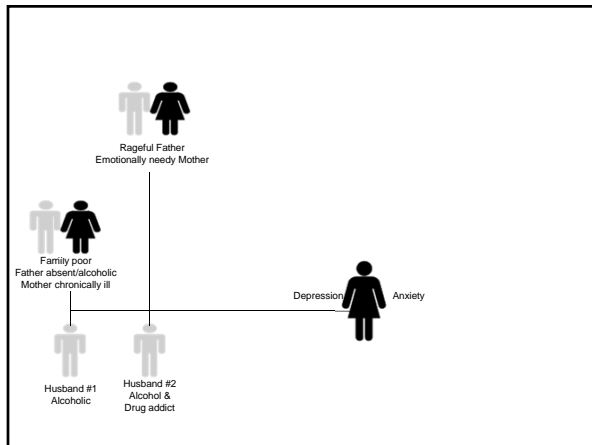
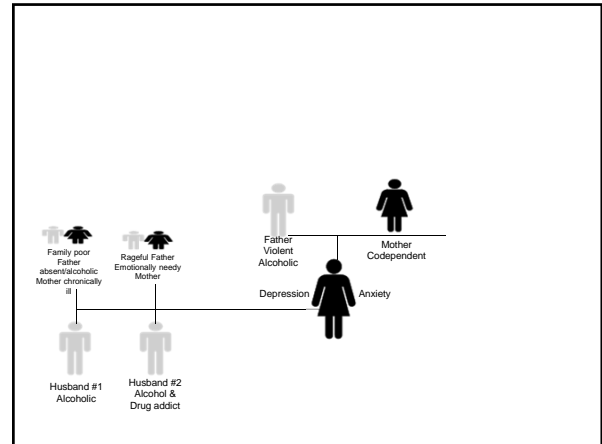
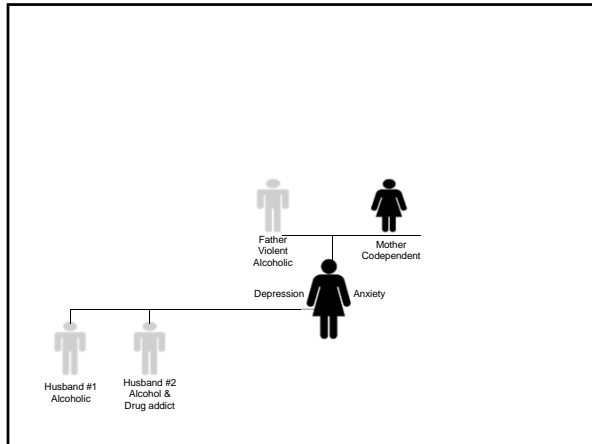
Senior Fellow and Addiction & Trauma Program Specialist  
The Meadows

Alcohol and drugs are like dominoes. They knock down the person who knocks down everyone including themselves.



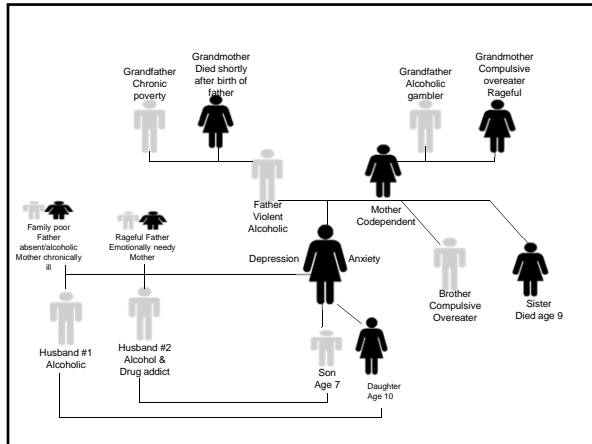
Each time we focus on the addict without focusing on the family, we are in denial that we are breaking the cycle of addiction.





## Therese's Family of Origin Issues

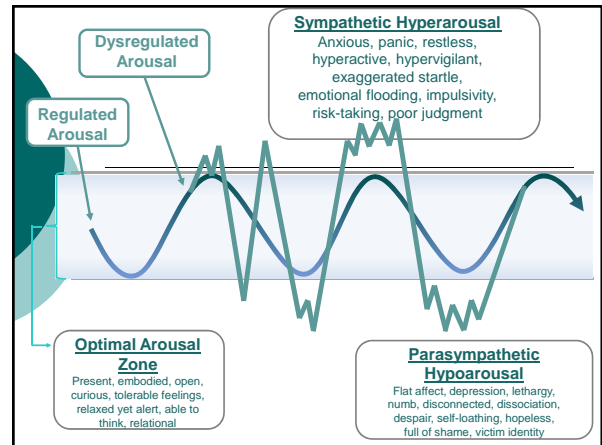
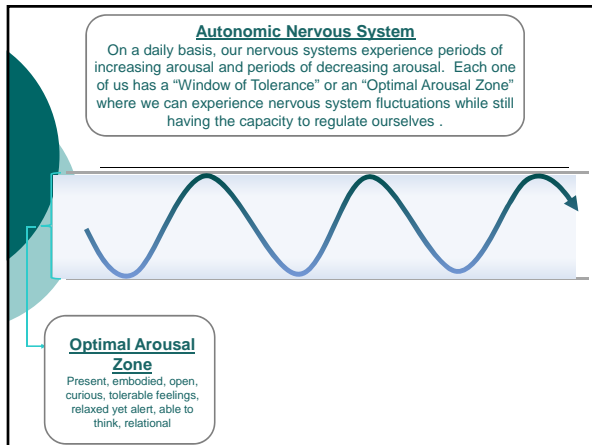
- Overlook (deny, rationalize, minimize) behavior which hurt deeply
- Appear cheerful when hurting
- Make excuses for the hurtful behavior
- Avoid conflict to minimize further anger
- Tolerate inappropriate and hurtful behavior
- Prioritize the needs of other over own
- Caretake others
- Fault self for family's problems
- Discount own perceptions, give others benefit of the doubt
- Believe no options are available
- Believe she is at fault, it is her job to find the answers
- Not ask for help
- Accommodate



## Healthy Parenting Practices

- Basic needs of safety, food, shelter
- Appropriate role modeling
- Warm and supportive relationship between the parent and child
- Parental monitoring and supervision
- Maintaining awareness of the child's peer relationships
- Understanding the child's individual risk level
- Establishing appropriate parent child communication

Amelia Arria, Ph.D.





## Emotional Abandonment

**Abandonment**

When you have to hide a part of who you are in order to be acceptable/ to protect self.

**When you have to hide:**

- Your mistakes/ vulnerabilities
- Your feelings
- Your needs
- Your accomplishments/ success

## Emotional Abandonment

When you cannot live up to expectations of significant other due to expectations being unrealistic.

When someone is disappointed with you they attack your whole being, worth, and value versus what you did or did not do.

When another expects you to be an extension of themselves, fulfilling their dreams.

When another is not willing to take responsibility for their feelings, thoughts, and behaviors but expects you to take responsibility for them.

When parents' esteem is derived through child's behavior.

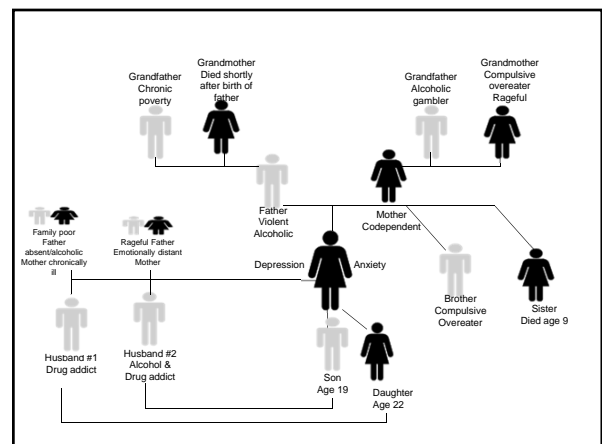
When children are treated as peers with no parent child distinction.

*Dear Lord –  
Be good to me, the sea is so wide and my  
boat so small.*

Epigram for the National Children's Defense Fund

## Trauma Repetition

1. Doing something self destructive over and over again, usually something that took place in childhood and started with a trauma
2. Reliving a "story" from the past
3. Engaging in abusive relationships repeatedly
4. Repeating painful experiences, including specific behaviors, scenes, persons and feelings



## Therese's Family of Origin Issues that impact her parenting

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- Overlook (deny, rationalize, minimize) **irresponsible** behavior which hurt deeply
- Appear cheerful when **confused**, hurting
- Make excuses for the **irresponsible** hurtful behavior
- Avoid conflict to minimize further anger
- Tolerate inappropriate and hurtful behavior
- Prioritize the needs of others over own, **diminish her own needs, not expect respect for self**
- Caretake others, **not take care of self, allow others to take advantage of her**
- Fault self for family's problems
- Discount own perceptions, give others benefit of the doubt
- Believe no options are available, **remain in victim position**
- Believe she is at fault, it is her job to find the answers, **not hold son accountable**
- Not ask for help, **don't want help, only wanting to stop**
- Accommodate, **anything to avoid conflict, anything to feel loved**

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- Family no longer means just the wife, it means partners, husbands, wives, step-parents, grandparents, siblings and children (young and adult)
  - Address the immediate crisis
  - Create a continuum of services to intervene with long-term consequences

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- Be trauma informed
  - Go beyond educational framework
  - Assist family members in recognizing their part of the addictive system

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We all need to take responsibility where we can.

***Thank you for making a difference.***