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Prologue

People who have not been dependent on alcohol themselves, do not always know how to help the dependent person.

I have simplified and adapted this programme in order to make it an easy step-by-step procedure to follow. The CAD (Christian Action for Dependence) acquired a program that convinces the addicted person to admit that he has a problem.

I refer to the addicted person as a male person, but the intervention can be applied to a female person in the same way.

In America the programme is very successful and I, (recovered addict, who has been sober for the past 33 years) was also helped through this method and admitted that I had a problem. I decided, due to the success which is still being obtained, to publish it in order to help other addicted persons.

This program is not infallible, and must be adapted to accommodate specific situations, but the chance of failure is very small. Many of my personal experiences with addicted persons have been included in the programme, in the hope that possible questions which might arise, could be answered.

Although the method describes specifically how an addicted person to alcohol should be handled, the method can also be used for any other type of addiction (drugs- gambling, obesity, etc.)

The Author

1. MY HUSBAND AND MYSELF AND SNUGLING-UP

(Written by Pikkie Combrinck)

Yes, snuggling-up (lepel-lê) is stunning – but not with alcohol. I knew that this was lying between my husband (René) and myself, but I decided to participate because of the way my husband caressed, protected and snuggled – up to alcohol. At the beginning I was not sure whether he was abusing alcohol. I wanted to keep the peace and to protect my children – what would friends, neighbors and family say? Therefore I abstained from doing anything to stop his drinking.

I realized later that it was no longer just snuggling-up to alcohol and covering the affair with blankets. Alcohol was the BOSS in our home, and it was time to look for help. Who do you turn to? Who will understand? He is such a “nice” guy! Yes, he does drink, but surely all guys drink. If you drink until you go to sleep and in secret in the mornings when you get up-in order to get rid of most of the “trembling”, you should realize that THE WRITING IS ON THE WALL. Then I decided we cannot snuggle-up with alcohol any longer and that something had to be done fast! The lives of our whole family were being influenced badly.

It came to a point where I had to do something drastic, but the wrong choices were made every time. In the beginning I coaxed, but eventually accusations were passed back and forth, which did not do anybody any good. We could not solve the problem between us in this way. Everybody was consumed with guilt feelings. My husband felt guilty about what he was doing and he made me feel guilty, because somewhere I was doing something wrong ... why else was he drinking so heavily?

In this way it became a vicious circle. Then he PROMISED that he would stop, because HE COULD. Today I realize that he was very

scared of the withdrawal symptoms that he would have to endure. He was under the impression that we would remove all of the liquor immediately if he acknowledged that he had a problem. Three days later the same evil circle stared again. Today I know which was the correct method to use: I should have used the METHOD OF INTERVENTION.

A Knock on the door one evening opened new doors for us. That evening I was led by the Holy Spirit to be honest with my husband’s employer, and it was a turn for the better in our “snuggling-up” relationship. My husband was more surprised to see him than I was myself. To cut a long story short, his employer had realized that René had an alcohol problem and offered to help him. René of course denied this and looked at me, pleading with his eyes to help him. But that evening I was honest and put the problem out in the open in order to have it analyzed. No matter how shy I felt! I will never forget the shock and surprise on René’s face when I turned against him.

Jesus, as faithful as He is, made sure that it was the beginning of the break with alcohol for my husband.

And now, 33 years later, I can only say: “Thank you, Jesus!” We still like snuggling-up with each other, but definitely not with alcohol as our companion. Thank goodness that a method of intervention, as described in this book, does exist. IT WORKS!!

Lessons which I have learned while snuggling-up with alcohol.

- 1.1 Do not use the word alcoholic but refer to him/her as the dependent person.
- 1.2 A Rehabilitated person is a wonderful father, husband and friend.
- 1.3 Never run your husband down in front of your children: Alcohol is the scapegoat.
- 1.4 Stand by him when he tries to abstain, although you know it might last for 2 days only, encourage him and tell him that you are proud of him.
- 1.5 Everything will not be moonshine and roses when the rehabilitated person leaves the clinic. There is still a long road ahead. Be patient!
- 1.6 You have to learn to trust him again unconditionally.
- 1.7 When he wants to take over certain decisions and responsibilities, you have to stand back.

He may experience a major problem with deathly silence (“stilstuipe”) at times, and at other times he can not stop telling everyone how wonderful it is to be without liquor. This does tend to happen.

Obtain a hobby – do things together – he now has a lot of free time on hand. But most important and above all else:

LOVE AND SUPPORT HIM!

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF A DEPENDENT

Alcohol is used and abused by millions of people world-wide. This is an acknowledged means that allow people to “relax” and communicate socially. A social function is hardly ever held without alcohol. It is something that we will always have with us, and will be present **everywhere**. There is nothing wrong with this when the

alcohol intake is controlled. – when it is abused, it causes a lot of misery.

2.1 The alcohol problem

In South Africa, approximately half of the population consists of children under the age of 16. If one considers the drinking habits of the rest of the population, who are adults and most of whom can drink legally, then the nature of the alcohol problem in South Africa becomes a little clearer.

The Central Drug Authority Annual Report 2006-7 provides some interesting statistics, as can be seen below.

About 59% (or 19,2 million people) say that they don’t drink alcohol at the moment. Note that they don’t claim to be teetotal, but not presently drinking. Another 4,9 million drink occasionally and are considered low-risk drinkers, while 3,7 million are drinkers at risk. The latter would normally drink either nine tots of hard liquor or a litre bottle of wine, or two litres of sorghum beer (that’s about three quarts) every day. Put another way: woman in this category drink three standard units and men five standard units a day.

The real problem comes when one considers the six percent who are dependent on alcohol, those who cannot start their day without a ‘stiffener’ or a ‘regmaker’. These 1,97 million people, the old-time ‘alcoholics’, are the bane of the existence of the carers in our country.

When you consider that some 5,7 million people drink too much for their own good and the good of society, then the size of the alcohol problem becomes clearer.

To put it into perspective: In 2006, there were approximately 9,75 million cars on our roads and about 1000 are added to that total each day. There are about 9,25 million licensed drivers and some 60% of

them live in the Gauteng area. With a little bit of imagination, you can envisage that, of the 5,5 million cars on the road in Gauteng each day, something like one in 20 is being driven by someone who started the day with a shot of alcohol or one in ten is still drunk from the night before! Add to that the fact that binge-drinking over weekends is the norm for nearly a third of our population, then as many as one in 10 of drivers on the road on a Monday morning is likely to be still suffering the effects of the night before!

Be careful out there!

Alcohol is, and remains, the primary drug of abuse in South Africa. Indications are that between 7.5% and 31.5% of South Africans have an alcohol problem, or are at risk. A drinker at risk is one whose health is likely to be affected by drinking or who is, or is likely to become, a dependent or an alcoholic. Risk drinking during weekdays involves, on average, 7.5% of the population and is more prevalent over weekends ('binge-drinking'), with an average of 31.5% of those aged between 25 and 54 at greatest risk.

Alcohol abuse of this nature costs the country in the region of R10.1 to 14 billion each year. That's not the money that drinkers spend on their pleasure, but what it costs the nation in damages. Average per capita consumption of alcohol by the population approximates 20 litres per annum, ranking South Africa among the Top Ten in the world.

2.2 Total Amount of Alcohol Consumed

However, when one takes into account the number of people who currently consume alcohol (45% of males and 17% of females, with a mean of 31%), then the total amount consumed indicates that those who do drink, drink heavily. Total alcohol consumption amounts to approximately 20.1 litres per head of population. This is among the highest in the world.

To place that amount of pure alcohol into perspective, then translated into standard units, this means that the current nearly 10,1 million drinkers (approximately 7,15 million males and 2.84 million females) each consume on average per year:

- 196 six-packs of regular beer in 340ml cans containing 5% alcohol by volume, or
- 62 bottles of spirits in 750ml bottles containing 43% alcohol by volume; or
- 220 bottles of wine in 750ml bottles containing 14.4% alcohol by volume; or
- 666 cartons of sorghum beer in 500ml containers having 3% alcohol by volume.

Visualize a Nissan 1400 bakkie loaded to the brim with sorghum beer and you will see what the average drinker puts away per year!

Finally, South Africa falls into the group of countries exhibiting the most harmful patterns of drinking, as reported by the WHO report of 2002. Harmful drinking is indicated by the level of the population drinking first thing in the morning, drinking to intoxication, and drinking at times other than meal times, etc.

2.3 Types of Alcohol Consumed

Most frequently drunk is beer, followed by sorghum or African traditional beer, wine, brandy, other spirits, alcoholic fruit beverages, whisky, fortified wine and sparkling wine.

- Beer 43.3%
- Sorghum 24.7%
- Wine 12.3%
- Brandy 6.5%
- Other Sprints 4.4%

- Alcohol Fruit 3.4%
- Whisky 2.7%
- Fort Wine 2.4%
- Sparkling Wine 0.3%

The addicted person is not necessarily the person who drinks every day. There are many cases of week-end or even school holiday addicts! The most elementary definition of alcohol addiction is as follows:

It is a situation where a person has lost control regarding the intake of alcohol. He goes, e.g. to the club with the intention of having only one beer, but only stops when he is totally drunk.

C. J. Langenhoven characterized the addicted person very clearly in his book “Ons weg deur die wêreld” (Our way through the world).

“Dis moeilik om’n man wat drink tevrede te stel. As die bottel vol is, is dit nie na sy sin nie; en as hy leeg is, is dit ook nie na sy sin nie” (It is difficult to satisfy a man who drinks. He is not satisfied when the bottle is full, neither is he satisfied when it is empty.)

The basic characteristics of an alcoholic are inadequacy, unreasonableness and irrationality. He drinks in order to quench his thirst and the more he drinks, the thirstier he becomes. He drinks in order to feel good and the more he drinks the worse he feels. He drinks until he has a headache and then he drinks until the headache disappears and he gets a second one which is even worse. He loves liquor so much that you would think he would like to carry on for a long time, but instead he is in a hurry to drink himself into jail or the grave as quickly as possible, and then he will be forced to stop. He offers his body to satisfy his soul, and he offers his soul to satisfy his body and in the end he satisfies neither, but destroys both. His lust is his idol, and he tramples this idol beneath his feet. Because of this he destroys the joyful means of satisfying his lust. He thus shatters his purpose in every respect, he throws away everything which is

precious on earth for his one craving – his worldly goods, the happiness of his family, wife and children, his friendships, his standing in the community, his reputation, his honour and character, his morals and religion, his happiness, his mind, soul and body; and when he has given everything up in order to satisfy this one lust, then he cannot find any use for it or gain any delight out of it. There was a time when he drank to find happiness; out of despair he now has to drink in order to forget or make his unhappiness more bearable.

Let us not judge the man too harshly. To a certain extent we cannot help to despise him, because he has lowered himself into the deepest mud of degradation. But let us tread softly with our judgment. The poor man is very unhappy, even more so than the person who has the worst form of cancer. His ability today to resist temptation is precisely one of the most precious belongings that he has squandered. The costly price that he had paid for his happiness should be an indication to us regarding his weakness.

Perhaps there is still hope: perhaps not, but perhaps yet. Other people, who have fallen so low, have been able to rise again. Who knows, maybe one of us who are not prepared to cast the first stone, might be able to help him rise again. We might be able to give a husband back to his wife, a father to his children, a citizen to his country, his honour and fame to himself, his lost happiness and character.

God knows, and those who have experienced the release from such slavery, know the meaning thereof.

You reader, who do not know, thank God that you do not know. But because you do not know – do not judge – HELP!!

3. STAGES OF ALCOHOL DEPENDENCY

In the same way it is just as difficult to identify and generalize a specific dinking pattern as it is to pin-point addiction to alcohol.

Subsequently a description of the different stages of the development of addiction to alcohol follows.

3.1 STARTING POINT

a) Drinking pattern

The person drinks at social occasions and will now and then over-indulge. He is sorry when he causes an unpleasant incident, and promises not to do it again, although it happens more often.

b) Effects of drinking

i) Physical

The person returns quickly back to “normal”, but can experience a hangover the day after a heavy session (trembling and nausea) It has been proven scientifically that it takes 18 hours before alcohol is metabolized out of the person’s system.

ii) Psychological

The person feels that alcohol helps him to relax and communicates more easily.

iii) Social

He is accepted socially and after a party or function friends tease good-naturedly regarding his antics. He even feels like a hero when he sees how his friends enjoy his antics. His family sees it as isolated incidents, which happened due to circumstances at the occasion. (Everybody drank too much; surely they had reason to celebrate, etc.)

iv) Religion

He feels guilty about his antics and realizes that it is driving him away from God. The person often decides that they will not let it happen again.

3.2 ADVANCED STAGE

a) Drinking pattern

The person drinks more often (e.g. every evening, a couple of evenings per week or every week-end). His intake per session increases – he is able to drink more before it “catches” him. He creates more occasions to drink. He grabs for the bottle when he is upset. Although he still has a certain amount of control, he does not want to be without the bottle.

b) Effects of drinking

i) Physical

He returns reasonably quickly back to “normal”. After a heavy drinking session he experiences a hangover the following day – his hands tremble and he feels terrible, he is not able to eat breakfast. His physician notices certain symptoms and warns him, but the person minimizes the fact of his drinking problem by pretending that he actually drinks very little.

ii) Psychological

The person feels that alcohol enhances his personality. It lets him feel as he would like to be – self assured and “relaxed”, able to handle any situation. Other people are already seeing the danger signs.

iii) Social

His friends see him as one of the “guys” who can really have fun. They are always welcome at his home for a drink at any time. His family starts talking to him about his drinking, which results in serious arguments – “May I not even enjoy a drink anymore?”

iv) Religion

He experiences strong guilt feelings. He pretends that everything is well.

3.3 ACUTE STAGE

a) Drinking pattern

He has to drink more in order to experience the same effect. He often indulges too much and starts drinking alone. He promises to stop and might be able to do so for a day or more, but cannot persevere without alcohol. He changes his liquor “it is the brandy which does it to me, from now on I will only drink wine and beer.” He often decides that he will drink less, but after the first drink he indulges again. He experiences withdrawal symptoms after drinking sessions – trembling, biliousness, moodiness and even unaccountable feelings of fear. He realizes that he has been hooked, but thinks that he can stop the abuse himself. It is possible for him to be without it at times, but he loses control as soon as he takes the first drink. He often drinks a pick-me-up in the morning to get rid of the biliousness, trembling and the feeling of fear. He will even drink sparingly during the day to keep himself on a certain level, without the people at home and work realizing this. Constant pressure from his family and possibly his employer, results in many cases of him drinking on the sly. He hides liquor at home and at work and disappears from time-to-time in order to drink.

a) Effects of drinking

i) Physical

Withdrawal symptoms, as mentioned, occur. Acute damage to the liver, brain (“mental black outs”) and other organs occur. An unbalance of sugar, salts, fluid, vitamins are caused. In some instances, due to withdrawal, he starts seeing illusions (D.T.’s). He sleeps without really resting and is tired when he wakes up. He is short tempered, irritated.

ii) Psychological

Due to the pressure that is put onto him to stop drinking, he withdraws to the pub/club where he always feels welcome. He feels as if his own people are beginning to hate him. He becomes unrealistically jealous of his wife. He distrusts his wife and can even accuse her of external affairs. His lies in respect of his drinking, his finances, his work, and finally feels so threatened that he considers suicide. The unaccountable feeling of fear results in him waking up soaked with perspiration and he feels as if everyone and everything is a threat to him. Eventually he is unable to “face the day, without a few drinks”.

iii) Social

The following can happen due to his drinking:

His wife:

She withdraws from the community and no longer invites friends home, neither does she accept invitations to friends. She even tells lies in respect of her husband, in order to protect her own honor. She becomes moody and is shy about what is happening. She starts accusing herself regarding the possible cause of her husband’s drinking. She feels aggrieved at the unkempt appearance of her husband and in certain instances, the liquor perspiration smell that clings to him, but she still remains with him because of the children and hopes that a miracle will take place. She clings to the image of the man she had married.

His children:

The schoolwork of the children begins to deteriorate and you seldom see them at home. They no longer invite friends home. They experience the crisis surrounding their father in a terrible way. The arguments, embarrassments into which he plunges them, the stories

about him amongst their friends, result in them becoming unsure, shy and they retreat into themselves. They become rebellious, argumentative and irritated. It can happen that the little ones start wetting their beds, they have nightmares, bite their nails, perspire a lot, become obsessive, have stomach cramps and even try to gain attention by acting in a negative way. (They do things that they had never done before). They choose the “easy” way out: They avoid Dad!

His work:

His colleagues start avoiding him at work. A greater responsibility is placed on them due to the deterioration of his work, and they often have to tell lies in order to keep him out of trouble. He, who used to be the “soul of the party” is no longer invited to their homes and they dread being at a party/function where he will be present. His constant visits to the toilet or storeroom outside, make them realize that he has a problem, but how can they talk to him– they abuse alcohol as well!. The permanent smell of peppermint or medicine to disguise the smell of liquor and his many apologies regarding stomach problems, irritate them extremely. They eventually hand him over to his employer with an attitude of: ”We feel sorry for his wife and children, but he will have to bear the consequences, if he does not want to listen”.

His friends:

He loses most of his friends. He no longer fits in with them, because according to him, their way of drinking is far too slow. Due to the situations at home and work, some will visit the pub or club on a regular basis. It is the only place where they are welcomed with open arms and where people are willing to listen to how “unfairly” life is treating them. Others find secret hiding places for their liquor around the house and garden and slips away at every possible occasion to have a drink.

iv) Religion

His feelings of guilt prevents him from attending church and he avoids all forms of contact with his pastor/minister. In certain instances he might wish for a good relationship with God, but at the same time he blames Him because he will not help him to get out of the swamp. He regards the Christians as hypocrites who are posing behind the mantle of religion, while they also drink and do even worse things than him.

The drinking pattern of the addicted person does not always develop strictly according to the tree stages. In most of the cases they over-lap in many aspects.

Summary

STAGES OF ADDICTION TO ALCOHOL

	Starting Point	Advanced Stage	Acute Stage
Drinking pattern	Social now-and-again	More often	Often/every day, weekends
Physical	Quickly back to normal	Quickly back to normal/hangover	Hangover/withdrawal symptoms
Psychological	“Relax and can communicate easily	“Enhances personality” self-assured	Feelings of guilt, unrealistically jealous, feels threatened, tells lies, feeling of fear
Social	Accepted socially	“Soul of the party” Family talks to him	Wife and children “withdraw” Employer/minister talks to him – (confrontation)
Spiritual/Religion	Feels guilty, tries to correct	Feels guilty – pretends that things are going well	Avoids church, God and the minister. Sees religious people as hypocrites

4. REACTIONS OF DEPENDENTS

Having seen the different stages of addiction, it is important to know how alcohol can influence a person after we have seen the different stages of addiction – maybe you will then understand why the addicted person does certain things and does not seem to be sorry or shy about what he has done.

ALCOHOL LOWERS THE INHIBITION OF A PERSON

It is a well known fact that alcohol “soothes” your conscience. A person will be prepared to tell a naughty joke, cheat on his wife, or even commit a crime after enough drinks. Thus enough alcohol will cause a person to act in a totally different way than what is normally. The quiet, introvert, for example then becomes the rowdy person who does not care what he does or says.

DOES HE NOT REALIZE WHAT ALCOHOL IS DOING TO HIM?

Many people cannot understand how somebody, when under the influence of alcohol, can be prepared to make such a big fool of him or themselves. The tragedy is that this unhappy person is not always aware of what he is doing.

Enough alcohol can cause “mental black-outs”. It is a situation where the drinker is in such a state that he can remember little or nothing about what he had done. The alcohol not only blurs his mind, but an excess of alcohol can cause a black-out, that leads to the situation/fact that on the following day he can really not remember what he had done. In such a state a person can even commit murder and although it might seem as if he had acted in a “normal” way, but when he is

confronted, will not remember anything about the horrific incident. That is why this person cannot always see what alcohol is doing to him. In most cases he only remembers the wonderful feeling that the first few drinks caused. This behavior is not excusable, but it does explain why he cannot always understand what the alcohol is doing to him.

The addicted person often reacts, heavily when you talk to him about his drinking problem – why?

STATEMENTS THAT IRRITATE THE DEPENDENT

In spite of the fact that the dependent person cannot, in many cases, remember what he had said or done, the following statements do cause excessive reaction:

“You are a total alcoholic who does not care for me or the children at all”

Remember many people see an alcoholic as a person who has lost everything (a tramp). Although he drinks uncontrollably, he has not gone down that far. He still loves his wife and children.

“I will take my children and possessions and leave if you do not stop your guzzling!”

Animals guzzle, not people, so why does he react so heavily? He feels that you think that he is as bad as an animal. Be careful of threats which you are not going to carry out. Later he will not even take notice of the threats.

To talk about “my children” is enough to make him understand that the children are against, and rejecting him.

“You are drinking for too much”

According to you two or three drinks are “too much”; according to him it is not.

“Are you drinking again? When are you ever going to stop? Supposedly when we have lost everything!”

Remember, he is hooked and does not know how to come out of it. He is definitely not trying to “drink” all of your possessions “away”, although it does seem like it.

“Is it really necessary to drink again? You know what happened last night!”

He certainly did indulge the previous evening, but an unbearable lust has caused him to drink again.

“You are bad, good for nothing!”

He is not so bad – it is the alcohol that is doing it to him. **Never attack his personality, only his actions.**

This person who is addicted to alcohol is too shy to admit it, and is tortured by guilt feelings. Although he might realize that he has a problem, it is often that he is too proud to admit it, or too scared of the withdrawal symptoms, should he stop, which add to his guilt feelings. Although it might not look like it, he can see how his drinking is influencing himself and his family, and he feels guilty about this. The only way to get rid of the guilt feelings is to drink – it blurs his mind and allows him to forget everything that bothers him for a time. Thus he is furious when you talk about his drinking, because he feels so guilty. He also uses his outbursts as a weapon – because you keep quiet – in order to retain the peace.

5. PREPARATION FOR THE INTERVENTION

Now that you have more knowledge regarding the cause of this actions and his experience thereof we come to the important section dealing with: How can I get him so far as to realize that he has a problem with alcohol?

It is important that he must realize that his drinking problem is busy destroying himself and the people who are precious to him. You will have to confront him in love and with facts, in order to show him what his drinking is causing.

Prepare yourself by doing the following:

KEEP RECORD OF HIS BEHAVIOUR

In order to get the dependent person to realize that he has a problem with alcohol, you have to confront him with the facts. It is very important to write down the **day and date** when he is under the influence, what he **says** and **does**, what his actions was and what his exact words were. You have to keep on doing this, even if it takes a month or longer to assimilate the facts. It will be your strongest weapon during the intervention.

The daily recording of his actions might look senseless, but if you follow this program faithfully, you will eventually be thankful with the end result. **Under no circumstances should the addicted person be aware of, or see, these notes. Please do not, even through heated arguments, let him know what you are doing. The element of surprise is of utmost importance.**

INVOLVE THE FOLLOWING PERSONS

a) Children

If you have children (married or still at home) you have to tell them what you are going to do and get them involved. Let each of them write down an incident which hurt them the most through the actions of the dependent person.

b) His best friend

If he still has a good (sober) friend, he should also be involved. Ask him to write down incidents as well that will indicate that the dependent person has a problem.

c) A Rehabilitated person

It would be of great value if a person who has already trodden the road of addiction, and has overcome this problem, to be present. He can talk to the dependent person about his experience, and can help him (dependent person) to identify himself with dependency to alcohol.

Contact: The Christian action for Dependence (CAD). Your local minister/pastor will be able to help you with their addresses and telephone numbers.

d) His employer

People are often scared to involve the employer or departmental head; because they fear the person might be dismissed. In most cases the employer is aware of this problem and will definitely help that the dependent person can go for treatment. He would in any event have dismissed the person, if the work was not satisfactory – and is likely to end his services if the addicted person could not overcome his problem with alcohol.

Experience has shown that the contribution of the employer adds significantly to the rehabilitation of the dependent person, and

provides respect for the person who can overcome his problem. In any case, sick- or vacation leave, as well as costs for possible treatment, would have to be negotiated with the employer. It would be an advantage if the employer could also note the facts of the situation.

d) Minister/Pastor

Depending on the religious level / spiritual beliefs of the dependent person, the minister/pastor (church leader) should also be involved. He does not have to record the facts.

It is important to involve an “outsider” (rehabilitated person, employer, minister) or preferably all three. The rehabilitated person usually has experience in steering the conversation and can ensure that it stays with the problem and does not get out of hand. The affected person is also more willing to listen and discuss the problem when the above-mentioned three persons are present.

6. SET THE SCENE FOR THE INTERVENTION

a) Set the date and place

After you have discussed the matter with all of the parties, and you have **sufficient facts**, you have to decide, in consultation with the other persons, the day/evening on which you will confront him with these facts. It is important to choose a time when he is usually sober (or when he has not yet started drinking). Use a good reason to get him to the specified place, e.g. “the minister/employer would like to see you after work,” or ask the minister/employer to arrange the appointment.

Choose the correct venue, one where you cannot be seen or disturbed by other people, or be disturbed by the telephone or cellphone (unplug it or switch it off).

b) Determine the following during the intervention

Decide beforehand what would be said and in which order it will be done. If there are small children present (6-10 years), decide what they would be saying (e.g. “Dad, I love you very much, Dad). Do not force them to bring up incidents against their will. One sentence can hit very deeply. It will be great if you can “practice”: the intervention beforehand. Do not answer aggression with aggression. It is important for the addicted person to understand at all times that the intervention has been arranged because you love him.

HE MUST NOT BE INFORMED OF THE REAL REASON OF THE APPOINTMENT.

c) Prevent Pot-holes

Try to avoid the following pot-holes during the conversation:

- i) Do not use the word **alcoholic** during the conversation
- ii) Do **not get cross**, no matter what the addicted person says.
- iii) Do **not get impatient** with the addicted person
- iv) Do **not laugh at** what the addicted person says
- v) Do **not look down** on or scorn him
- vi) Do **not compromise** in respect of getting help for the problem.

d) Answers regarding certain statement/questions

Due to the confrontation, the addicted person will react and might ask the following questions or make the following statements.

“Is this a conspiracy against me?”

Answer: No, it is because we love you that we have decided to talk to you.

“You are a lot of hypocrites – I know you hate me”

Answer: All of us would not have gone to the trouble of getting together, if we hated you.

“Who are you (e.g. friend) to talk to me, your drinking is much worse than mine?”

Answer (Friend): We are not here to discuss my problem, but yours. We would like to help you.

“You (e.g. child) are the last one who can talk about problems. How many problems have you caused?”

Answer (Child): Dad I am sorry for what I have done. We are here to discuss your problem Dad, not my past. Please Dad, allow us to help you. We love you, Dad.

“Why are you involving my employer – do you want me to lose my job?”

Answer: (Employer) Actually I am here because I care for you and would not like to see you losing your job.

“Do you think that I am an alcoholic?”

Answer: We are not saying that you are one, but when you look at the facts you will have to agree that you do have a problem.

“In other words you are saying that I am bad, worthless”

Answer: We did not say that you are bad, but the alcohol makes you do ugly things.

“It is easy for you to talk, you do not know what I am going through”

Answer: That is why we have to talk to you, to see how we can help.

“O.K. I do have a problem, but I will stop on my own, it is not necessary to go to an institution”

Answer: How many times have you tried to stop on your own but have not been able to do so – give us a chance to help. Many people have tried to stop on their own but failed and did agree afterwards that an institution was the best way to help them.

“They will scorn me at work when they hear that I am going to the Wine School”

Answer: Do you think they will scorn somebody who is big enough to agree that he has a problem and would like to do something about it?

“Will you, not be ashamed when everybody knows that I have gone for treatment, not be ashamed?”

Answer: No, because everybody already realizes that you have a problem, and we are ashamed about what you do when you are under the influence of alcohol.

e) **He should be confronted with the facts.**

Once again it is important that he should be confronted with the details (including time, day, date and place of his actions. The facts should let him realize that he has a problem and should receive help. **The conversation has to be conducted in such a way to let him realize that he has to act now. In order to help himself – not because of his wife, children, job or other people.**

7. THE INTERVENTION PROCESS

The dependent person has probably been looking subconsciously for help over a long period of time. He has so many guilty feelings that he does not know with whom he can talk and whether he will be able to overcome his dependency. These facts usually assist the dependent to admit that he has a problem. Ask in prayer that the conversation will progress well.

7.1 THE CONVERSATION (INTERVENTION)

Experience has proven that it is desirable that an impartial (rehabilitated person) person should start the conversation. He explains why you are gathered and makes sure that the dependent person understands clearly that it is an action of love – because you

really care for him and he does not realize what he is doing to him.

A tried and tested manner is to ask the addicted person whether he is aware of the Law 20 of 1992. Most people are not familiar with this legislation and it is an ideal way to show that the intervention should really be seen as an act of love. The person that starts the conversation, then explains in detail what is contained in the law and shows that his wife could have followed this way if she wanted to get rid of him quickly. In reality the conversation is taking place because she loves him. If the addicted person does understand the implications of legislation, the impartial person will then carry on by saying the following, e.g.

“Let us hear why your wife thinks that you might have a problem”. She once again underlines that she is doing it for him out of love. Then she reads all of the facts (time, date and place of the incidents and his exact words, e.g. exactly what he did, that she has written down). After that the children and another people follow.

The golden rule is: Use all of the facts and **DO NOT GET CROSS**, even if he insults you. You have to do it in love.

In most cases the addicted person crumbles and agrees to treatment. Arrangements for his admittance to an institution should be made immediately. If the intervention takes place after hours, the institution can still be contacted and arrangements be made. (The night staff will be able to assist in this regard). Arrangements for leave etc. can be made afterwards if the conversation is conducted during the evening. It is important to act immediately if he agrees to treatment.

Everything is not lost if he refuses to go for treatment. A sword is now held over his head. He realizes that his family, friends and everybody at work are aware that he has a problem. If the employer is present he should intervene and put pressure on him. If he should ask for another

chance to stop by himself it can be granted, **but on the condition that the first time he drinks, he has to go for treatment.** Everyone present is witness to this condition.

This condition HAS TO BE ADHERED TOO strongly. The first time he drinks, he MUST go for treatment. No second chance will be given. Experience has shown that if this condition is not adhered to, the chance for treatment might be lost forever.

Admission to a Clinic

Excellent clinics exist in our country. (A list of names is supplied on the last page.) You should give him your total and whole-hearted support during the time of his treatment in the clinic. Do not be shocked if he if he keeps on drinking until he is admitted for treatment. This is not abnormal. He is experiencing heavy withdrawal symptoms and alcohol is the only way known to him to suppress it. The clinic will assist with information concerning the treatment (clothing, treatment program, visiting times etc.)

Pray for him

It is important that such a person changes his way of life in order to really get rid of the his dependence on alcohol. When the crutch he has been leaning on so strongly; alcohol; is taken away, it is important to provide another form of support or crutch – somebody who he can trust at all times. The only One that will never change or leave him is Jesus Christ. It is important that you should pray that the dependent person will turn to Jesus. (That he will accept Him as Savior and Redeemer) Only then will he be released form the desire for alcohol – forever!

Pray that he will be willing to talk about his problem during the conversation. Many people shrink back at the mere thought of a

confrontation due to experiences of the outbursts from the addicted person when his problems were discussed.

Remember, prayer is a mighty weapon in your hand, use it in faith and you will be delighted with the results.

I have assisted many people with this method in the past on different persons from a variety of professions and positions in all levels, of society. During these sessions I have never experienced uncontrolled aggression or outbursts. It has also never been reported to me that the dependent person has physically and verbally abused his wife after the intervention. Several doubts were uttered beforehand and on some occasions. I was even warned that my safety could not be guaranteed, yet nothing came of the warnings. The reason for this is that:

1. Prayer. Intercessions pray and God works through the Holy Spirit in the heart of the person to make him complacent during the session.
2. The surprise element. The addicted person is totally unaware of the intervention. He is also not aware of the method. He is totally overcome, even shocked, during the intervention (This is well illustrated by my wife in Chapter 1).
The situation – a strange person who handles the session, all of the people present, even the presence of the minister, catches him unawares.

IT IS THUS OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THE ADDICTED PERSON DOES NOT KNOW WHAT IS BEING PLANNED AND SHOULD NOT SEE THE BOOK OF FACTS, BEFOREHAND.

3. His drinking is no longer a secret.... Everybody knows! Now there is a sword hanging over his head and he realizes that according to law 20 of 1992, the state might send him for treatment at any time.

8. QUESTIONS AFTER REHABILITATION

8.1 Joining a Group

Situations arise in the beginning which the rehabilitated person may find difficult to handle, and it that might even lead to a relapse – “under these conditions it surely is not worth staying sober”. His wife, or any other person who has not tread the path of the addicted person, does not always know how to help him under these circumstances. It is then of the utmost importance that the rehabilitated person should contact people, who have had similar problems and who have survived “unmanageable” situations. These persons are with the Christian Action for Dependence (CAD). Your minister/pastor can help with their addresses and telephone numbers. The persons who can be contacted and the numbers of the CAD are available on the website – www.cad.org.za

It is in such a group that they share their experiences and their hope the members of the group and encourage each other to stay sober. Experience has taught that a rehabilitated person finds it much easier to stay sober, when HE IS INCLUDED IN A GROUP. Here he finds himself on a weekly basis with people who really care for him. They accept him just as he is, not because of his good position or his wealth. In a group he has the opportunity to share the problems which seem to be unbearable with others and to find solutions for them. He finds himself amongst persons who really understand his struggle and are prepared to support him at all costs – even to stay with him through the night when the craving for a drink attacks him.

The group provides help to persons who are still hooked as well, which gives the rehabilitated person the opportunity to carry forward the message of release and victory. This is an excellent therapy because by helping others, he is also helping himself to stay sober. The work in respect of prevention that is done by the group, the

church councils, woman action groups, woman’s clubs, schools and other organizations, allow the rehabilitated person to talk about the miracle which had taken place in his life and to show others the dangers of abusing alcohol. This positive attitude helps to handle or deal with the drinking problem that he has, in a positive manner.

In the group he is taught how to handle life according to the following guidelines:

- I look at myself honestly and discover my faults, weaknesses and sins.
- I admit that alcohol is a problem in my life.
- I accept responsibility for my problem and undertake to work on it.
- I confess that I cannot overcome the problem in my own strength, therefore I take refuge in Jesus Christ, my Savior and Redeemer.
- I experience and accept that I need my fellow persons and that God allows them to help me.
- I answer to the merciful work that is done by God in my life, in order to put my life according to His will. It includes the recovery of my relationship with myself, my family, fellow persons, and work, church and most important with God.
- I make peace with the past and set as a goal for my future; a sober, clear-headed and useful life.
- I will chase this goal with all of my dedication and strength that is available to me.
- I accept to build a mature personality and to learn and grow.
- I become a witness regarding the redemption with which Christ has made me free and carry the message of freedom out to those who are still caught-up in the bonds of slavery.

Being a member of a group serves as a barometer regarding the soberness of the rehabilitated person. Other members of the group can see when somebody becomes negative and they can act quickly,

before such a person has a relapse. When one of the members stays away from a gathering without a reason, they look him up, because the possibility of him having a relapse is strong. My personal experience in respect of being a member of a group:

- **It keeps me humble.** We deal with people from all walks of life. **You realize once again how serious this problem is and that you cannot stay sober by your own strength.**
- **By helping others, I can share that which I have received free from Jesus Christ with others.**
- **Our group consists of true friends who support and encourage each other to stay sober.** Here you find people who are truly interested in you, not only in respect of your soberness, but also in other aspects of your life

9. DOES HE REALLY HAVE PEACE OF MIND?

Treatment in an institution for a drinking problem, is the first step to a new life for the ex-addicted person. Although you, his wife may have shared the last part of the treatment with him, there might be doubt in your mind. You are happy about the change that has already taken place in him, but the experience that you went through while he was drinking, is still fresh in your memory. Although you have been assured by the clinic, you still wonder: Is he really happy now that he is no longer drinking?

To stop drinking is certainly not easy. The “crutch” (alcohol) on which he depended has been taken away from him and he now has to deal with daily frustrations, disappointments, and pressures, without it.

It is also possible that difficult days might lie ahead. It can happen that a longing for a drink could overwhelm him at the most unexpected times. Fortunately this is no reason to panic. Help him immediately to phone one of the rehabilitated friends or to visit them,

or tell them over the telephone, about the feeling that he is experiencing. Several people have been helped in this way to prevent a relapse. It works when he is really honest about what is happening to him and to share it with a rehabilitated person. That is also why it is so important to join an organization like the (CAD), as already mentioned in the previous chapter.

Experience has shown that a winning recipe does exist, i.e.: If he has turned away from his old ways and gain his strength against alcohol day by day from Jesus Christ, then he will really be happy in his new life. He might even experience the first couple of months like a honeymoon! During this period he might try to get every person who drinks to stop, and would even like to remove people, if it was practical, from pubs, in order to get them converted!

To sleep well, wake-up sober and to see how his relationship with God is improving everyday is a wonderful experience for him. Every day that he can get through without liquor is a victory and at night when he has his quiet time, it is with a deep feeling of thankfulness that he thanks God, that He has helped him not to drink that day.

There are also instances during the first few months of being sober, that the ex-addicted person will try to convert his family from their “wrong ways” – which can have a negative, affect on them. “How can he who has lived in such hideous way for years, now come and preach to us?” Remember, the change (miracle) that has taken place in his life is radical – the person addicted to liquor of yesterday, is sober today, proud because he can now again take his place in society and look everybody straight in the eye. He finds this new life so wonderful that he would love to see others experience it as well.

As he grows in his “soberness” (to build a personality without alcohol) it will also become easier to handle and overcome the problems that he experienced at the beginning. It also no longer matters to him what happened in the past, he lives only for today –

tomorrow is in the future and he does not worry about it. He knows that He who has given him the strength not to drink today, will also be there tomorrow if he asks, he will again receive the strength to stay sober. He also realizes that it is very important not to drink, because then he can handle any problem, he can again gain the trust of other people and above all, build on his relationship with Jesus Christ.

His continuous telling of how happy he is to be rid of the problem, is also proof that he is really happy not to be drinking anymore. There is of course a difference between the person who is sober (happy) or dry (miserable). Somebody who is dry, stopped drinking against his will, does not enjoy his new life, and waits for the first “excuse” to start drinking again.

Such a dry person has also not yet made peace with the fact that he does not want to drink again. Unfortunately it is not long before he has a relapse. To be truly happy he has to accept his circumstances and should look up others who have overcome the problem, so that they can help him to be happy without alcohol.

10. CAN I TRUST HIM?

Now that he no longer has the protection of the clinic, another thought that might keep you busy is: Can I trust him again?

If he has made peace with his problem, decided in his own interest to stop drinking and has given his life (and his problem) over to Jesus Christ, you will have to truly trust him.

Instances might occur that would seem as if he has started drinking again, but you have to trust him until you can prove that his is the case. He also realizes that he will not be able to win back your trust overnight. He is also aware that you are watching him for any

negative signs, e.g. when you come home after a function or appointment. He knows that when you greet him with a kiss when he comes home, that it is your way of measuring that everything is still in order. He even accepts your warnings placidly, to be careful that somebody should not provide him with liquor. Questions he has to answer to himself:

- **Has he really made peace with the idea that he no longer wants to drink** or does he avoid this thought?
- **Has he stopped drinking because of himself** or is it to retain his family and job, or to satisfy other people?
- **Is he prepared to share his experiences with other, in order to help them overcome their drinking problem or is he not willing to admit that he had a problem?**
- **Does he shy away from the idea that he is an abstainer and would like to remain like this as far as alcohol is concerned,** or does he hope that he might one day be able to drink “socially again?”
- **Does he handle his problem form day-to-day or does he boast that he will never drink again?** (is he humble in respect of his problem?)
- **Is he prepared to forfeit his drinking pals or is he prepared to defend his friendship with them? (Does he still visit with them on a regular basis?)**
- **Is he prepared to trust God unconditionally with his problem** or is he trying to solve the problem out of his own strength by himself?

Be careful that your trust in him is not miss-used. Be careful of the following dangerous situations, when he:

- **Wants to go to the pub in order to prove to himself that he has overcome his problem.**
- **Wants to use alcohol-free drinks.**
- **Uses tranquilizers or pain-killers for long periods.**

- **Does not make sure that the medicine that he is using is alcohol-free.**
- **Stays away from gatherings for rehabilitated persons, or refuses to be included in these groups.**
- **During a special occasion claims:**
“Oh, one glass of champagne will do me no harm, believe me, I am really over my problem”
- **Refuses to ignore dangerous situations, e.g. a hunting session where liquor is abused.**

You will have to intervene, if situations like this occur. You can trust him only as far as what your mind tells you to. If he is honest regarding being sober, he will not expose himself to such situations.

11. HANDLING OF FUNCTIONS

Functions or parties can pose problems to the rehabilitated person. If he is uncertain as to whether he will be able to resist the drinks that are on offer, he should stay away from these occasions in the beginning.

A fear might also arise in him, such as: Will they not treat me as a “leper” because I do not want to drink, or will somebody not try to force me to drink, or will they not, just as a joke, pour liquor into my cool drink, etc. Be careful that he does not, due to an innocent function, have a relapse. If you have an open and frank **relationship, he will be able to tell you that he will not be able to manage the occasion, and you can handle the situation together.** You can decide, without giving him unnecessary special attention that you will always be available to support and encourage him if he needs it. Treat him as usual – he does not want to be treated in an abnormal way. This will only focus the attention of everyone on him. What will certainly irritate him is when the host tells him when he arrives at a function, that he has especially kept some cold drinks for him. Non-

addicts do not always realize that we (ex-addicted person) now have a free choice as to whether we want to drink or not. Just like people without a problem, we would like to decide as to what we would enjoy (cool drink, grape juice etc.) It is not necessary to tell everybody during the function that he had a problem with alcohol (and thus he is no longer using alcohol). He simply says that he prefers cool drink, grape juice, etc. During the function the rehabilitated person has also to confirm with the hostess that no alcohol has been included in e.g. the “punch” or dessert. His wife can do this in a subtle way if he finds this too revealing. It is important that he should avoid any food or drink which contains alcohol, or which could remind him of it.

It would be helpful in the beginning of his soberness to avoid using any cool drink that has previously used to mix his drinks.

There are many ex-addicted persons who get irritated by the idle drunken men’s talk during functions. It might be this reason why he does not like to remain at the function until the end.

There are rehabilitated person who handle special functions, e.g. Christmas, with difficulty. In the past these special occasions were an opportunity to really abuse alcohol. During these functions you have to tell him that you realize that it could be difficult for him and you would like to support him. All of the rehabilitated persons are exposed to such situations, but with the help of Jesus Christ they can attend it without relapsing. He should avoid these occasions if it poses or presents a crisis. At some stage, however, he will have to attend these special functions. He can certainly not expect his family, to stay at home every Christmas because of his problem.

It might happen during a function that he is with people who are e.g. drinking beer, and might wish for a cold beer himself. I have learned to distinguish between feeling like a drink and experiencing a real thirst. When people around you are enjoying a drink, you can develop

a thirst. Therefore during a function I always have a cool drink in my hand. Even advertisements on TV, regarding liquor may make you thirsty, but you do not really have a desire for alcohol. Where people have had an uncontrollable desire for alcohol “out of the blue”, it has helped them in many cases to drink tea, coffee, cool drinks, or water. **He should not confuse his desire for alcohol with a normal thirst.**

12. SHOULD I ABSTAIN FROM ALCOHOL?

You will have to ask the rehabilitated person whether it would upset him if you would take a drink on occasions. Certain sacrifices might be required from you in order to keep him on the path of soberness, thus it might be best not to take a drink before he feels that this would not be a stumbling block for him. He might also think that it is unfair that you have to “suffer” for his wrong actions and will say that it will not worry him. Be cautious – you certainly do not want to be the reason for his relapse.

In the first few months (in some cases even longer) it might happen that the “great longing” could again raise it’s head. It might be when you are having a drink, and this could lead to his relapse. It is preferable at the first stages that you do not drink or smell of liquor when you come home. He will tell you out of his own when it will no longer be a stumbling block to him. By abstaining, you also show him in a tangible way that you care and that you support him wholeheartedly.

13. LIQUOR IN THE HOME?

There are many cases where persons had a relapse due to the availability of liquor in the home. Therefore I will certainly recommend that you should refrain from this practice. If, due to the nature of your work you have to entertain, I suggest that the liquor is bought on the day of the function, and whatever is left over can be given to those who had attended. It might sound like a waste of

money, but believe me, it will be much cheaper than his going for treatment again, and all the drama involved with a relapse.

It is also not necessary in the beginning to provide drinks when you are entertaining friends. They would, like yourself try and help your husband not to drink again, and will not care if there is no alcohol. If their friendship is sincere, they will also ensure that there is no alcohol when they invite you over. Should friends avoid you because of this, their friendship is not worthwhile.

You might consider, after a year or more of “soberness”, depending on circumstances, **if it is really necessary**, to keep liquor in the house.

14. PRESSURE AT HOME

Due to your husband’s drinking in the past, you have had to make most of the decisions. Now that he has stopped drinking, he would like to once again, take up his rightful place in the home and relieve you form these duties. You might find it difficult to allow this, but it will have to happen. It is also a tangible way of showing him that as head of the home, you trust him completely. You can discuss decisions with which you do not agree with him in a diplomatic way when you are alone. It is important that you do not go against him in front of the children, or make him feel ridiculous. He is busy building-up his self-confidence, go soft on him! It is also important to avoid conflict between the rehabilitated person and his wife. In the past this conflict was a good reason to start drinking. On the other hand he cannot be pampered forever. Any differences that might arise should be handled diplomatically. Most addicted persons are sensitive people who would like to please others, therefore they avoid conflict. A woman once said that her husband, even after he had stopped drinking, still had habits that irritated her. It was however, easier to live with this, than with the addiction which he had before.

She taught herself to overlook them instead of having a confrontation that could lead to his drinking again.

The times in which we live have its specific problems that can put “pressure” on him. He will share that pressure that he is experiencing with you if there is an openness in your relationship. The joint handling of the problem will definitely help him to work through the situation. If his relationship with Jesus is good and if he receives his daily strength from Him it will make matters much easier. He will then know where to obtain the best help in the word, and no matter how intense the situation, will be able to handle anything.

15. PRESSURE AT WORK

Most of the ex-addicted persons have an obsession, after they had stopped drinking, to work twice as hard as before, in order to make-up for what they might have done wrong. It might then happen that he is taking on too much, which can cause unnecessary pressure on him. He has to learn that “Rome was not built in one day”, and that he does not, in the first months, have to make-up for what he had refrained from doing in the past.

The owner/manager or departmental head where he works, will be aware of his problem (and should be informed if they don’t know) and will definitely not expect more work/responsibility than what he can handle. The ex-addicted person should also be honest with his manager/departmental head and tell him when he feels the work/responsibility is becoming too much. There are known cases where at the beginning workers asked to be released from certain duties and then later when they were ready for it, again accepted the duties and could even handle more responsibility with ease.

In this way and with his new way of life by depending totally on Jesus, he will be able to handle any pressure that might arise at work or home successfully.

16. ACCEPTANCE IN SOCIETY

In the beginning, the ex-addicted person might experience problems by becoming part of society again. He might feel as if everybody is aware of his problem, they mock him, and in any case are just waiting for his first relapse to occur. I felt like this in the beginning as well and I even trembled with fear, (“stilstuipe”) for a time. It was as if you were “outside”, felt uncomfortable amongst other people and did not always know what to talk about – as if your own conversation had dried-up. Fortunately this was only temporary. **Soon you realize that people liked the new you, accept you just as you are and do not regard it as a weakness that you once were hooked by alcohol.** On the contrary, many people regard it as a huge achievement that you had been able (through the strength of Jesus Christ) to break-away from alcohol.

The problems that the addicted person experience in the beginning, also has an influence on you, his wife. You feel unsure about accepting invitations to social occasions; you do not know whether he is ready for it and whether he might “close-up” from the others. You, who know him well, will observe an uncertainty in his behavior in the beginning. Once again I have to emphasize that he is busy building his self-confidence, and situations that he had handled previously by using alcohol, he now has to do without it. Anyone who uses alcohol knows that it has a “calming” effect on you and makes you act with confidence. As his self-image improves, his uncertainty will disappear.

Just as he has to be honest with himself, it will also help him if he plays open cards with society. It will be easier to tell people when they ask him where he had been for the past weeks that he had a drinking problem and had received treatment for it. He might have to tell a lie later when they offer him a drink, if he uses another excuse. Many people, who ask him about this, suspect that he had gone for treatment and would like to confirm their suspicions. By telling lies

he creates a negative spirit in himself and this can contribute in a huge way to a relapse.

It will also help the rehabilitated person when you show by your actions that you have faith in him and encourage him to once again become part of society. Encourage the person (without forcing him) to pursue a hobby. Even the building of jig-saw puzzles had a relaxing influence. Many dependent persons agree that idleness had led to their drinking – thus make sure that he is kept busy by doing something worthwhile during his free time.

The church provides the ideal opportunity for any person to become part of society again. Due to all of the activities that exist, a volunteer is always welcomed with open arms. The advantage for the rehabilitated is that he comes into contact with people who are spiritually involved and usually do not abuse alcohol. Let him make contact with your minister/pastor and offer his services.

16. RELAPSE!

A relapse can have serious consequences for a rehabilitated person. It can let him slide back to his “care free” life and the danger exists that he can reach a level where he does not care what happens to his family, work and life. He can even lapse into the existence of a tramp and live this way for the rest of his life!

It does not normally happen “accidentally” that a person starts drinking again. I find it difficult to believe the following statements.

“I did not know that the dessert contained brandy. That is the cause why I started drinking again” or

“I did not realize that they had put alcohol into my cool drink. All I know is that I experienced an uncontrollable desire for liquor and started drinking again.”

My personal experience is that if you are really tuned-in as to whether alcohol had been added into something that you eat or drink (desserts etc.), you will smell, taste or feel the effect immediately. I do not hesitate to ask whether alcohol had been added when punch (“pons”) or desserts look or smell suspicious.

Investigation has shown that most of the relapses had been due to a pre-planned drinking session. The person was under the impression that he might once again be able to drink “socially”, and waited for the “ideal” occasion to do so. Negative thoughts (stinking thinking) in respect of alcohol had eventually led to the relapse. It is immensely important that the rehabilitated person keeps working positively on his problem and to think positively about it. So e.g. **it is better to say I was an alcoholic, and not: I am an alcoholic. It is also more positive to say: I do not want to drink, instead of: I may not drink anymore, etc.** The things that are in the past are gone forever and it does not help to worry about them. Rather learn from the past in order not to make the same mistakes again today.

When you observe that the rehabilitated person denies that he had a relapse, you will again have to start recording time, date and place and write down everything that he says or do while under the influence of alcohol. You will then have to confront him again as described in chapter 4 and 5 of the program: **Overcome it!** Depending on the amount and over which period he has been drinking, it is not always necessary to have him admitted to an institution. He should receive medical treatment in order to help him against possible withdrawal, and be given vitamins to help with possible rebuilding of his health. He has to start attending group-meetings as well.

It will not help to confront him if the relapse is coupled to a heavy drinking session, and he is still under the influence. Wait until the following day; help him after you have confronted him, but act determinedly in respect of his drinking problem.

There is evidence of people who had a relapse early during their sober life and then never drank again. Unfortunately, there are those who had been sober for years, who had a relapse and then found it very difficult to overcome the drinking problem. It seems as if it is more difficult to recover from a relapse, when you have been sober for some time.

It is also said that the rehabilitated person should be weary in the first year, of the uneven months, the first, third, fifth, etc. They cannot explain why his is so. To me it is more important to ask Jesus for help every day, and then to be careful of anything that might rob me of my soberness.

18. EPILOGUE

Through the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ and the support of my wife and children I have been sober for 33 years. To me my period of being sober is not of great importance. To me it is more important that I did not drink **today** and I do not intent to do so. Whether I will drink tomorrow, does not worry me – it is in His hands and He has never disappointed me when I have asked for his help. I can confess with an open mind that if you are prepared to hand this problem over to Jesus Christ, and trust Him whole heartedly, that He will not only release you completely from the hold that alcohol has on you, but will allow you to be one of His children – that is indeed, total happiness.

19. LIST OF CLINICS

Aurora	Bloemfontein	051- 447 7271 051- 447 7275 051- 447 9204
Elim Kliniek	Kempton Park	011- 975 2951
Stabilis Kliniek	Pretoria	012- 333 7702
Castle Carey	Pretoria	012- 542 1121
Ramot	Parow	021- 939 2033
Welbedacht Terapeutic Centre	Welbedacht	041- 367 4276
Zelza Treatment Centre		082 926 5820
CAD NASIONAAL	Kroonstad	056- 2131542 082 412 2451 Webtuiste: www.cad.org.za Epos: cad@iningi.co.za
SANRA	Vereeniging	016- 422 2470

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Published by Knowres Publishing (Pty) Ltd.
P O Box 3954, Randburg, 2125, RSA

Testimony of René Combrinck

Deliverance from alcohol dependency

I was fortunate enough to be raised in a Christian home as one of four siblings. In those years, the fifties and sixties, we were fortunate in the sense that our parents, their friends, as well as our own friends were mostly Christians and as a result one easily stayed on the straight and narrow path. At the age of 12 I accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and Redeemer at the end of a Pentecost service. My spiritual life was secure in Jesus and it went well with me.

There was only one problem: I stammered. In primary school the teachers had “helped” me by not asking me to read aloud in class or not expecting me to answer any questions. In high school I took full advantage of the situation and later the teachers did not expect of me to speak at all. Wonderful! After that I did not have to do any homework anymore!

In St.9 (Gr.11) a few of my friends and I got a bottle of vodka. It was one of the most wonderful experiences that I had up to that point. For the first time in my life I could speak without stammering at all! The effect that alcohol had on my body was fantastic! I felt “relaxed” and in total control of myself.

There were incidents after matric where I abused alcohol, but it did not happen regularly. I played rugby for the university and later for the Old Students’ Club. It was important that I stayed fit and during the rugby season I did not touch alcohol at all. But during the off seasons I let myself go completely! I should already have seen the danger signs at that time...

In 1971 I married Pikkie Krynauw. Even though she was a wonderful woman (and still is), my drinking pattern did

unfortunately not change after our wedding. In contrast, it slowly became worse so that by 1975 it had reached the point where I **HAD TO** drink every single day. It is incredibly bad when you know that you are being held captive by alcohol, but you do not know how to escape out of its grip. My work, family, friends and especially my relationship with Jesus Christ suffered. Although I in all honesty really tried to stop, I simply fell back into alcoholism quite a few times.

Promises to stop are broken. You lie and deceive about your drinking. You learn to be cunning. You drink alone. You always have a bottle hidden somewhere: under the car seat, in the garden between the plants, in a rolled up carpet, in your desk at work... everywhere!

Fortunately the manager at my work saw me quietly drinking from my car’s boot at a work function one night. He came to my house in 1977 to confront me with the facts and for the first time Pikkie spilled the beans. I was also tired of the alcohol and had wanted to stop a long time ago, but I feared the withdrawal more. Still, I agreed to get some help.

Because of my job I could not go for full-time treatment and only went to an institution after hours for the necessary medication and encouragement. But it was not easy. In the beginning I only endured from one hour to another and tried my best not to fall back. Later it went better and I then endured until lunch and then again until I went to sleep. I did unfortunately fall back a few times, but I believe that Jesus Christ saw my sincerity and on 15 October of that year He delivered me of my alcohol dependency once and for all. He even helped me to overcome my stammering!

I was so serious about not drinking again, that I attended meetings on Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday evenings. With

Jesus' help and other friends from the CAD (Christians Against Drugs) I learnt to stay sober. I still attend two meetings of the CAD each week, not only to stay sober, but also to share what Jesus has entrusted to me with others. Today, I still stay sober for only one day at a time. In the mornings I ask Jesus to help me through the day and at night I have every time so far had the privilege of thanking Him for helping me conquer the challenges of the day.

Today, Pikkie and I are the proud parents of three married daughters and eight grandchildren. I will certainly never exchange this life for one in which alcohol controls me!

René Combrinck

TESTIMONY OF BASIE KILIAN DEVELOPMENT OF ADDICTION

When I started working after I had finished school I was only an occasional drinker. I did fairly well in rugby and athletics. After rugby matches and athletic gatherings the guys usually went for a drink or two. I did not really want to drink with them, but sometimes did, because I did not want to feel out. At some functions I did have too much to drink. Without me even realising or intending it, my problem with alcohol became worse. I did not have a clue as to the dangers awaiting me. I was young, hardworking, diligent and healthy.

At the age of 29 my whole life changed. I had a heart attack and was hospitalised. The internist recommended that I stop smoking and that I rather drink water with my brandy instead of Coca-Cola. He also recommended that I drink whisky and water. I firmly believed that my chances for another heart attack were much slimmer if I drank more whisky.

At that stage I was probably already addicted to alcohol and therefore a candidate for rehabilitation, but I never went for treatment. On a few occasions I was hospitalised for so-called stress, heart cramps and several other symptoms, but my problem was in fact ALCOHOL.

From 1984 I was a member of the church council even though I was a hard drinker. On several occasions I was even the leader of the deacons. When I collected money in my ward or attended church, I made sure that I was sober. Many Sunday mornings I still felt sick when I attended church. To cover up the alcohol smell I ate lots of peppermints and rinsed my mouth with vanilla essence. I truly believed that it took the alcohol smell away.

In the meantime I had married Ronél. We had a very happy marital relationship out of which two children were born. I often promised Ronél that I would stop drinking, but never mentioned for how long I would stop. I was always looking for opportunities to drink. One such opportunity was COMMUNION. It was a very good excuse to use alcohol and to smell like it. *Ronél* was also a good excuse when I started drinking again. The fact that I abused Communion worried me a lot and I often asked God for forgiveness. TODAY I know that GOD has forgiven me.

At one stage I was hospitalised for six weeks due to a neck injury. I arranged with friends to bring alcohol to the hospital. As a result I was often under the influence when the minister or doctor visited me.

DECISION

On Sunday, 11 September 1994, I was preparing to attend church as usual as I was also an elder in church at that time. I was sucking the usual peppermints when Ronél told me that the peppermints did not work anymore. You could smell the alcohol through my skin. I was extremely shocked. I phoned my doctor immediately so that he could give me an injection to help with the detoxification. I DECIDED TO STOP DRINKING. Under medical care I detoxified from the toxins in alcohol and since then I have never let alcohol over my lips again.

Our daughter Rozél got married in 1998. On 1 October 2003 our first grandchild Simoné was born. A little more than a month later, on 21 November 2003, Rozél was diagnosed with acute leukaemia and 6 months later, on 24 May 2004, she passed away. For parents there cannot be a bigger shock and I was really tempted to start drinking again. Fortunately I could

resist the temptation. Our son Hugo got married in 2007 and in 2009 our first grandson was born.

CAD

Since 1994 the CAD in Worcester has meant a lot to me in terms of assisting me with my recovery. I still attend CAD meetings every Monday night, as well as every camp, conference, outing and other activity that they host. I am proud to declare in public that I am a member of the CAD. In the beginning it was difficult, but because I regularly listened to testimonies of other CAD members in church, I realised that that was what I also wanted to do. The CAD is part of my life and it helps me to reach my goal in life. God leads me to regularly share my testimony in church and also to introduce the CAD to different congregations.

Because of my involvement with the CAD I have been the chairman of the CAD branch in Worcester for long periods as well as the chairman of the CAD Regional Committee for the Western and Southern Cape. I have also served as CAD representative on the governing body of Ramot for 10 years. In 2008 I was elected as vice president of the CAD Nationally. I love talking to people about addiction and I believe that it is my calling in life to do so. I do realise that I must always remain humble. You do not always feel good just because you serve on many committees. Some days I feel better and other days I feel worse. It is very important to stay humble and to realise that your salvation is only by grace. It also takes hard work to prevent a relapse.

THANK YOU

I would like to thank Ronél and Hugo from the bottom of my heart. Your support over the past 17 years has helped me to stay sober. I know that I often caused sadness and hurt you

through my behaviour. I sincerely apologise for that. I specifically want to thank Ronél for her continued involvement with the CAD and because she has spent so much of her free time to support me. Thank you two very much!

Basie Kilian

Testimony of Linda Lourens

As the saying goes: “He who sleeps with dogs...” Wait, let me take back my words, because I actually had wonderful friends in the past, but unfortunately we were all ‘ignorant’. Why would I say something like that? Friday was always Drinking Day for us. It was a day that we all looked forward to tremendously. I myself could later not wait for Friday to come...

Drinking Day already started around 12 o’clock on a Friday and then continued... sometimes till well after midnight. We socialized from the one bar and dance club to the next. On Saturdays I looked forward to 10 o’clock, because by then “the boeing had passed” and the first beers were opened. It goes without saying that the rest of the weekend was unfruitful and totally wasted as a result. Many a time I could not even remember how I drove home. Today I can only thank the Lord for His wonderful grace and protection over me as I was never made or caused an accident. A joint (dagga) at night became my sleep pill.

The day that I myself realized that alcohol and dagga has become a problem for me and that it did not hold any advantage for me, I stretched out my hand to God –“Please help me, Lord, because alone I can do nothing!” I asked. I accepted Jesus as my Savior and Redeemer and my life changed radically. For the past few years my diary has been booked out for Monday evenings. I also got involved with the CAD (Christian Action for Dependence). The CAD’s support groups meet on a weekly basis all over the country.

I know how difficult it is to climb that mountain by yourself and that is why I want to encourage you to join the CAD or even start a CAD support group yourself. If YOU can give the first step, Jesus, the one who knows your heart, will support and

help you. The purpose of the CAD is only to make it easier for you. In the midst of these people you will immediately feel at home, here you can share your toughest times with people who do understand. The people at the CAD really care for YOU and the people closest to you.

Why not decide to take the first step towards a sober and peaceful future today? You ARE God's chosen one and CAN help another to lead a sober life. Remember: With God nothing is impossible!

Jesus' love
Linda Lourens
Chairperson: CAD Jakaranda

Testimony of Esta Delport

My name is Esta. I am 38 years old and mother to a beautiful daughter.

This is my story... A story that like most others starts full of promise, makes a turn in the dark side of life and ends where I build upon my victory and hope.

Our childhood home was a safe haven where our family did Bible study together every night and we were taught good manners and respect for each other as well as our neighbours. Me and my two older brothers were a naughty, busy lot. Our days were full of sunshine and learning in the presence of a daddy who had the world's patience, always answered our questions with a smile and assisted us when life weighed us down. I was the "gold star" type: homework always done, room always neat and on top of that always courteous and reserved. My middle brother was the dreamer and my eldest brother was the best eldest brother that any child could wish for –always there to help and lead.

The first deviation from the idyllic picture was when my father suddenly starting drinking during my teenage years. At the time I found out that he had struggled with alcohol addiction during my toddler years, but had stopped drinking for more than 14 years just to fall back into drinking when I was a teenager. Like any other daughter I had held up my father as the perfect example and the news had pulled the carpet right from underneath my feet. I felt cheated by the world and became very cynical about life.

We lived like that for a couple of years: periods of sobriety alternated with periods of totally surrendering to the bottle.

During this time I, with my natural inclination to shyness, totally pulled back into myself and concentrated on my school work.

A week after my 21st birthday, my middle brother committed suicide. This was a fatal blow to my parents. My father handled it like he would have any crisis: he started drinking again. My mother, who was close to breaking point after many years of supporting my father, totally collapsed. So the burden of the household fell upon me and I carried the responsibility as if my whole life up to that point had been in preparation of that role. My only resolve was that I, the reliable one, would NEVER drink. Not even socially.

We had moved back to Kroonstad, my father's birthplace, as a family. I had started working there and met my husband at work. He liked people a lot and was consequently surrounded by friends the whole time –it goes without saying that alcohol was always included in the merriness and I started drinking socially. The use of alcohol did not bother me at all during this time and I did not even think twice about my family's history of alcohol abuse –something like that would never happen to me, I believed. Gradually alcohol started playing a bigger and bigger role in my life, but in our circle of friends drinking was acceptable behaviour –everybody lived like that. No social was ever organised without the drinks having been bought first.

My husband and I were each other's greatest friends. It felt as if we had already spent more than one lives together –that's how big our love for each other was. We did absolutely everything together. Being away from each other was not even an option for us.

After 2 years of married life we were blessed with the arrival of a beautiful blue-eyed girl. She was the spitting image of her father. Unfortunately not all fairytale love stories have lucky

endings... After 5 happy years together my husband tragically died after an appendix operation went wrong. Our little girl was only 2½ years of age.

I could not believe that the Lord could do something like that to me. I had always kept my part of the covenant and could not understand how He could punish me like that. Like a stubborn teenager I slammed the door of my heart shut in His face and turned my back on Him.

The fact that my employer at the time was a heavy drinker herself did nothing to improve my situation. In contrast, after receiving the news of my husband's untimely death, her first words to me were: "What do you have to drink at home?"

I did not resist using the bottle as comfort. I had the excuse that it helped the time to pass more quickly. The sting was taken out of empty nights and days of sadness. Slowly but surely the monster that is dependency took hold of me and tightened its grip around me. I was pulled down into a dark whirlpool of pain, sorrow, self-reproach, lies, shame and depression.

Nothing than total impermeable black can be used to illustrate that season of my life. My life was worth nothing to me any longer. Not even my child was enough motivation to break the chains of alcohol abuse. I had (like many before me) hidden my problem well, but the truth eventually filtered through. The saddest part was that nobody could bargain for my freedom, it was a step that only I could take. Initially I was stubborn and believed that I definitely did not have a problem. I experienced everyone around me as over-reacting. I only drank at my own house and did not bother anyone there, I thought. How could anyone think such a thing of me?!

The Lord has never let my hand go, even though I thought that He had. After almost 4 years of destructive behaviour (of which the last few months were the worst), He thought it fit to drastically intervene in my life. I finally broke off all contact with my employer and entered a new job. There my whole life changed. My new employer was (and still is) a man of God from whom the love of Jesus radiates.

After a month at my new job I told him the truth about my alcohol dependency and in his kindness he did not refer me to someone, but took my hand and said that if I were willing to walk the road to sobriety and redemption, he would be right next to me every step of the way. During that time I moved to a new house and really experienced that the Lord wanted to redeem me totally from my past. I did not see any of the old acquaintances and did not have any contact with anybody from my previous life. I immediately joined the CAD as well as our local church.

The road to sobriety was not easy. In the beginning I struggled to break the habit, but after I had absolutely pro-actively resisted the last temptation, I was completely redeemed. The grace of Jesus Christ is so great in my life that after that last temptation I have not for a single moment felt like drinking alcohol again.

The first few months I kept myself so busy with all kinds of things that I fell down on my bed each night –all just to break the habit of reaching for a glass every now and then. I put effort into developing a personal relationship with Jesus like I have never before in my life had. Through all of this I made sure that I attended our local CAD meeting every week. After these meetings I was always filled with happiness and went home with a light heart –filled with direction for my life and Jesus' love. My daughter later saw the difference in me and

commented that she looked forward to my home-coming on Tuesday evenings, because "Mommy is so friendly and happy when Mommy gets home after the CAD meeting". As the saying goes... "Children and fools cannot lie"! I take it as confirmation for my 'new' life.

My motto nowadays is: "Been there, done that, ain't never gonna go back."

Everything is not suddenly moonshine and roses, but my God's tangible involvement in my life assures me that I am doing the right thing and gives me hope for the future. Nothing in this life is worth going back to a life of dependence for. My life without alcohol is good, free and full of promise!

Esta Delport

Testimony of Hannalie Joubert

We all have a story to tell. I never thought that my story would be a witness from Jesus.

We are a very ordinary family. I am Hannalie Joubert and in 1985 I married the love of my life JB Joubert the proverbial, tall, dark and handsome.

We have two beautiful daughters. Alcohol had always been part of our marriage and also caused a lot of conflict. There were always the promises "it won't happen again". It became progressively worse but the turning point came in 2009. At that stage we were living on a farm just outside of town. The eldest daughter was already working and the younger one was in grade 12. Our family was busy falling apart. At the same time I was able to protect him, put out the fires and keep the family intact. However JB had also started drinking during the day. So we never knew how our day was going to end. This created a lot of pressure on me and our daughter. She had to mature very quickly. This was bad for me as I could not hide the problem any longer. She was very aware of the problem which was causing a lot of embarrassment for us.

The worst of all was that you knew that there was a problem but you did not want to accept the fact. How could it happen to you? One only reads about these things in books. You protect him all the time and hope and pray that he will not make any mistakes. It is to his own disadvantage because at this stage he is unable to stop drinking himself. I was looking for help alone but in such a way that nobody knew that it was for my own husband. The family was there but only to a point. If you are not in the situation you do not realise how bad it is.

We had a time for prayer every morning. After a bad session the night before he would be waiting for me the next morning

for our quiet time. I did not know the man sitting with me anymore. It was definitely not the tall, dark and handsome man that I had married in 1985. Alcohol had an annihilating effect. He was defenceless powerless shy and yet still rebellious. I always had a lot of courage after our quiet times but it only lasted until the first call at about 12 o'clock. Then I wanted to break into about ten thousand pieces. I worked until 14:30 every day and then I would have to find him and get him home safely. I got to the point where I withdrew myself from everything and everybody. I did not speak to family or friends about the matter. The problem was hurting. I was sitting at Jesus feet. I was just praying for a miracle.

At our annual Church fete JB would work at the meat table. I had to work that morning and I only arrived at the fete at about noon. I immediately realized that he was not drinking the fete cold drinks when I saw him. He was also wearing a shiny wig. It was a carnival theme so you could not miss him!. He was selling cuts that I had not heard of and also recipes on how to cook the cuts. This was the longest day of my life. This was all too much for me. I realised that and would have to do something. After this terrible day and when everything was quiet at home I started to pray. I cried to God and asked to please give me something so that I would know what to do! I either had to withdraw or get help for JB who at that stage did not want to stop drinking. I just knew that it was not the man that I had married. In 1 Samuel 1:14-17 Hannah cried because she could not have a family. She begged God to help her. That is exactly where I was. My Bible opened at Ruth 3 verse 11. "Now don't worry, Ruth, I will do everything you ask, as everyone in town knows, you are a fine woman." Then a peace and calm came over me that I cannot describe to anyone. I awoke the following morning with an expectation and peace that only Jesus can give you.

A consultant came to see me at work about one of my policies. He also knew JB well and told me that he was worried about his addiction. This was not pre-arranged but I knew that this was my confirmation.

I had to do something that same afternoon. I went to see Pikkie and René Combrinck from the CAD (Christians against Drugs). They are also members of our congregations and had noticed what had happened at the fete. We decided on drastic measures (intervention) in co operation with our daughters and minister. This was successful as JB admitted that he had a problem and agreed to go for treatment. It was a traumatic time but the Combrincks were there to support me. The relief of knowing that someone understood our position and the support that we had during the 21 days while JB was away, words cannot describe. The 21 days passed and JB returned. You have to learn to know each other, trust each other and rebuild your marriage. You loose friends but it is all worth it!

Today I can look back and realise that Jesus allowed this trauma in my life so that I can give other woman hope. You don't have to keep quiet. JB tried to give up by himself on numerous occasions, but an alcoholic cannot achieve this. When I look at him today I don't see him as the man with the shiny wig at the fete. He has stood up and quich his heart to Jesus and taken aurthority in the home. My prayers have been answered.

We worship a great God. Never stop praying. He will never leave you. I don't think there are three more proud ladies than the Joubert ladies. JB has been given back to us.

It is now 2013. It will be 4 years on 12 June that JB has been clean. He is healthy and doing well at work and his daughters have a very good relationship with him. I can just say "Thank you Jesus!"

Hannalie Joubert

Testimony of JB Joubert

The intervention took the matt out under my feet. I knew that I had a problem but did not know how to stop. I was cross, humiliated and everybody was wrong except me. But I could not do it by myself. I was away for 21 days. There I had a real meeting with Jesus. I came back so positive. I am now healthy and everthing is alright again. I never realized what hurt I had caused my family. I called them together admitted what had happened, said I was sorry, it is the past and life must now carry on. I could not have been more wrong. For two years they did not put a foot wrong, too scared that I would start again. We never really spoke about the hurt. Then one evening we were having a good chat again.

Once again something popped up about the past and for the first time the Holy Spirit made me aware of what was happening in their hearts. I could sit and listen, cry with them and through all this laugh about the stupid things that I did. I had to hear how embarresed my daughter was when I arrived at her netball practice under the influence of liquor. How difficult it was for them when I could not provide for their daily needs.

It all come to a head and I could earnestly say that I was sorry and really mean it! Remember that by the time you go for treatment you have messed up so badly that very few people still like you. Then you choose the easy way out and that is to file for a divorce. You let everybody know that it is not your fault. However somebody must accept the responsibility. I received a second chance. I can not say enough thank you for what God allowed to happen in my life. There are many JB's out there that do not want to admit to even say that they are sorry. After the family and I could talk an cry about things and I could earnestly say that I am sorry, the stories of the past do not come up for discussion anymore. It is not necessary anymore. Jesus has healed it all.

It is unbelievable how my family supported me and still does. God allows bad things in your life so that you can see the good things.

If I can give any advice, don't wait for 2 years before you make a geniune apology. They did not make the mistake. Be man enough to crucify yourself. Only then will healing take place. I don't know anybody where things are worse after giving up the habit!

To my wife and two daughters. Thank you for not giving up on me and praying for me and that you still support me all the way. It is very important to join a support group. Join the CAD and go to their meetings every week.

All the glory to God the Father with whom nothing is impossible. I could not do all this on my own!

JB Joubert