

Reaction paper-SA 201 Addiction in the Family
Andrea Gerry

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Beal College

By Andrea Gerry

Well where to start. This particular mod has been one of many trials and tribulations. This mod has been one of learning and growing as a person as well. I will say this class has been one I've been looking forward to since beginning this journey back in September, and when after only the third in-person class to find out we will be moving to online learning was at the time disastrous for me, or at least this was my thinking at the time.

I have always been amazed at how addiction and family biology in one's family can play such a large role in a person's life story. When we first started this mod specifically this class I was pumped and ready to go, eager to learn. My own family has played such a huge part in my recovery and I am blessed to have a forgiving and unconditionally loving family. My own family has an addiction, mostly on my mother's side and namely my mother's twin sister my aunt Jean. For me, family is how I made it through my active addiction and the reason I stay sober.

After making and researching my genogram for class I looked at where the addiction started as well as illness, which seemed to be largely on my mother's side. The addiction pieces were really focused on my Mother's sister and myself actually. My brother and I. Strange how that happens. It really brought to light that the addicted individuals in my family history really starts with my brother, my aunt, and myself. I can only hope when a family genogram is done in the future the addiction also ends with us. I am a big believer in educating the family about substance use and finding ways to

help cope with these issues within the family, possibly Al-anon. My family had not had any education around substance abuse even though there were signs with my aunt. Looking back I wish every family who struggles with a family member or themselves could have the education I am receiving here at Beal College.

When I do enter into this field as a counselor one of the things I would like to help my clients to understand is how their use has such a ripple effect on their family and friends around them. That thinking of "I am only hurting myself" is such a lie we tell ourselves when we are in active addiction. I would not do this in a manner in which they are made to feel bad, but It will be more of a push towards self-revelation. Once I became more clear-headed in my recovery I started to recognize the stages of change my own family went through. I really became aware of the Hero, Joker, Scapegoat, traits in all of my children. I am forever thankful for my family and all they endured but never wavering in their love for me.

I thought becoming an addiction counselor would be something I come by naturally and I thought it would be easy work. Now that I have been a bit more educated on the science of addiction and family genes I realized there are so many aspects to addiction counseling and the education is endless as we are always learning and discovering new things, I think this is so beneficial to both the client and the counselor, myself. I love that we are able to dive into one's family and from that we can decide treatment plans and processes.

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So even though this class was not the classroom type of learning I was looking forward to and was accustomed to, I have to admit I still got so much from this class. From your PowerPoints on the LMS to just reading Tip39 I couldn't be more grateful for the knowledge I have gained. Not only about family genes and generational addiction, but myself and the strength I have within my own self to adapt and make things work. It was not what I expected out of this class, but this is my most beneficial class yet.