



HELP FOR YOU

Jul / Aug 2023

Overcoming a Loved One's Addiction

By Rosemary Brown

The impossible questions

Sometimes it's hard to think about life and how it used to be before alcohol or drugs became part of the family. There are many 'wonderings', many 'questions', and many 'unknowns'. Asking these impossible questions is what tends to happen – but there are no real answers.

Impossible questions go around and around, creating stress and for you, you get stuck with the stress of 'not knowing'. You may have the answers that an 'addicted brain' gives you, some of this may ring true and the rest seems difficult to figure out how it got to that answer.

As with anything that hits families and destroys the usual way of life, addiction leaves you feeling helpless, powerless, and desperate for change. Addiction is a brain disease, and believing this covers all your 'why' questions.

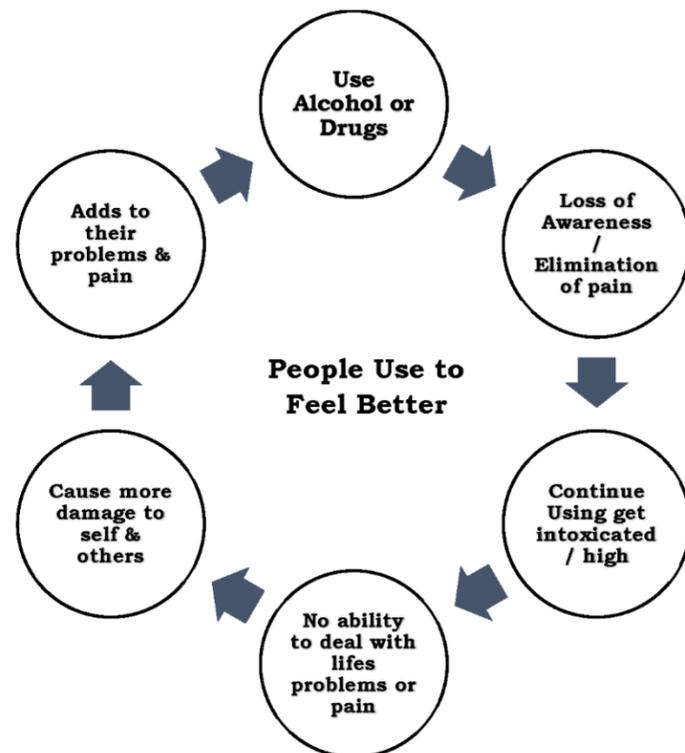
Dopamine rewards natural behaviours, overstimulating the system with drugs produces euphoric effects, which strongly reinforce the behaviour of drug use—teaching the user to repeat it, and screwing up any logical common-sense responses.

Now you know what is happening to your loved one and their brain, you can understand this thing of drug use is outside your control – so STOP trying to control, change or cure the problem – you cannot help right now.

Start with a commitment to yourself to get yourself emotionally well first, then psychological wellness will follow, and this is when life can be different for you.

'The Brain Instigated Cycle'

Alcohol and drugs are an effective tool when someone needs to feel better, they are just a very unhelpful 'tool'.



Alcohol or drug use goes in a repeating cycle – what happens next is predictable – regardless of who you are looking at – addiction, is addiction, as addiction is...

How Does this become different

You may be thinking I have read this all before here in a Newsletter, the addicted brain is what is influencing the addict's behaviours. I keep saying it as knowing this will help you accept what is happening as 'normal' for an addict, not necessarily 'normal' for your loved one without alcohol or drugs. Your emotional reactivity and turmoil is 'normal' for someone who cares (refer the [Mirror Effect](#)), and this effect can be different.

We all want to feel better in life, sometimes we are good at shifting our emotional distress or our thought patterns but over time caring about an addict eventually takes its emotional toll. Some cope by shutting down, some are angry, many are feeling like they are having a breakdown, others dedicate their entire life to trying to find answers, and so the cycle continues. The belief you get caught in is that if the addict stops drinking or drugging everything will be okay.

Agreed things will be different when your loved one finds a pathway to life without alcohol or drugs, the problem is we don't know when that will happen or how that will happen. Addicts 'use' to feel better and a big part of the need to feel better is their inability to tolerate their emotions, the same emotional turmoil you are experience, the addict experiences too.

For change to be possible the emotional turmoil is the first thing that needs to be resolved. Changing something that is a pattern (cycle) and almost automatically occurs can be very difficult. Here's why – this response is not a 'conscious response', it is not intentionally created, it seems to just come up from deep within, on the way it grips your heart, scrambles your head, and leads to distressing reactions. These responses come from your sub-conscious, and occur outside your awareness, it is like a prerecorded tape playing, a tape you can't erase.

Starting with breaking this cycle of emotional reactivity is critical, while you are still caught in this cycle nothing can be different long term for you. The emotional interference (the tapes that play) can be erased, to allow space for a calmer, more rational response, one that happens automatically. Things need to be addressed at the level they are occurring, at a subconscious level (gut level) rather than at conscious (head) level, the talking cure works at a head level, and you feel better for a short time but over time the same old emotional responses occur.

To experience immediate long term emotional change, I work with others utilising interventions that address these things at a sub-conscious level, opening space for amazing positive change in a short time of only three sessions, once this unhelpful cycle is broken my clients then learn how to stay well, create different relationships, and influence positive change for others.

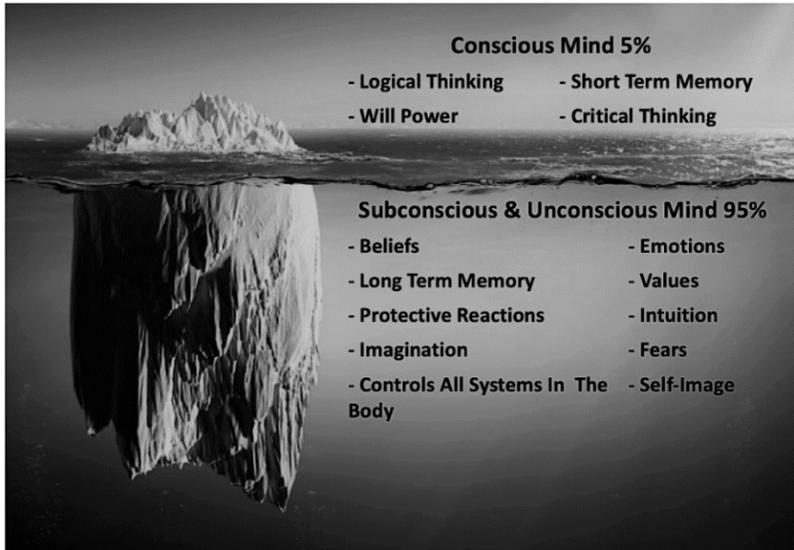


Helpful Tips Our two minds...

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We live in a time when we are often in two minds about things
yet we are trapped in one single mind

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The conscious mind.....

If there is one thing, we will all probably agree on it is our 'head' can drive us crazy, and this is very true for addicts as well. Although our conscious mind only contributes to 5 to 10% of our functioning, many spend 24 hours a day, 7 days a week trapped in their conscious mind.

The thoughts create stress, mice grow into monsters and trying to figure something out and understand it, leads to a hopeless loop of despair.

Traditionally the 'talking cure' has been the answer offered to this problem, people are taught to be conscious of making changes in the way they think – the story we are telling ourselves, answer to emotional distress 'change the story to feel better.

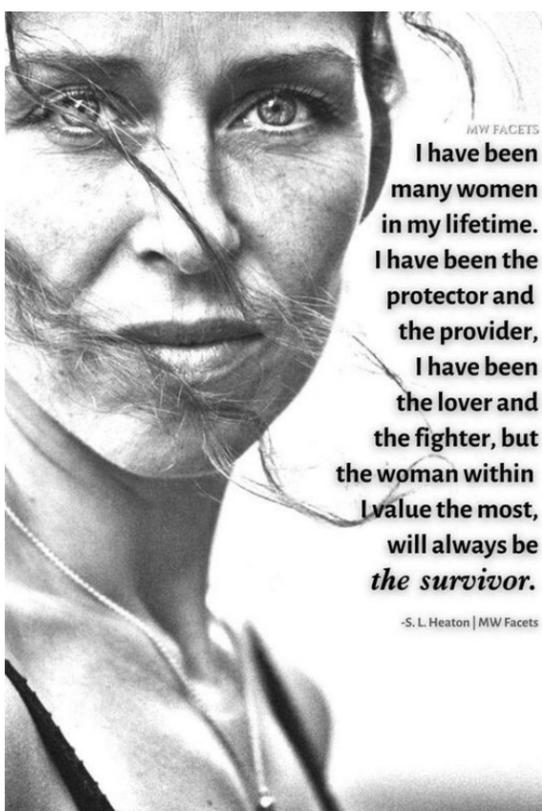
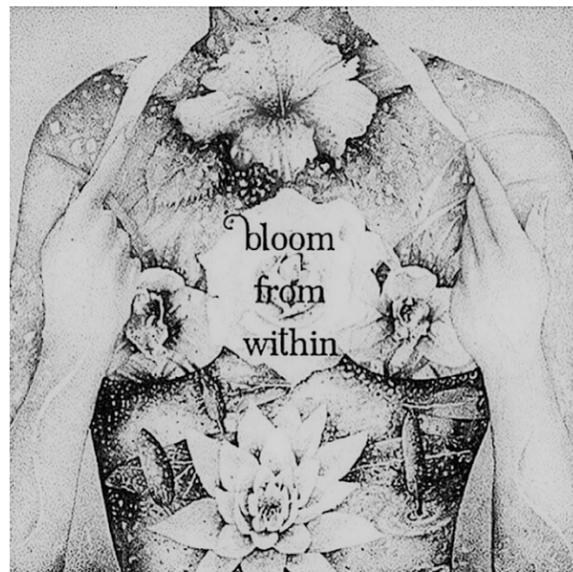
If you have tried this – you will notice it does not work, the overwhelming emotions continue to get in the way of a clear and logical head brain.

The Sub-Conscious / Unconscious Mind...

Deep within us are some amazing abilities, and to be the best we can be this is where the answers lie. Terms like 'gut feelings', 'intuition', or 'inner knowing' are so often dismissed as having no value, yet it is here that 90 to 95% of our functioning is processed.

You may argue with the model above as to what processes what, but the point is - until we clear the unconscious bricks, blocks, and barriers that are getting in the way of us being the best we can be, nothing changes.

Connecting at a sub-conscious level provides a powerful process for personal change and growth, by facilitating the elimination of the painful emotions attached to memories or events in the past, it breaks the 'Cycle'.



We are all survivors...

We first need to survive before we can thrive. We will always be a survivor of the tough times in our life, we may have been the victim but moving beyond this is essential.

To thrive we need to have eliminated our fears, limiting beliefs and overwhelming emotions so we can improve and develop ourselves as we go through this journey.

Finding ourselves a purpose in life, a purpose that has value and meaning for self, one that we feel happy and content with is a part of a strong foundation to thrive.

Having a place to belong, feeling like we are a part of something with others, is also a part of that foundation. These two things may change over time, with our changing life circumstances, but always do what feels right for self.

Many people search for their purpose and a place to belong. STOP step back and allow things to flow – stop trying to create what you think might be right, just connect with what feels right as things come and go in life.



An Addiction Point of View

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A Special Mothers Story... "The Impossible Question"

How does this happen – was one mother's question to me, how does addiction become such a controlling influence in my life and take control of my daughter.

Here are the words she gifted me, her words of wondering and distress. NB: I have added the pictures.

For so long I have struggled in life, abusive relationships, alcohol, and drugs, and I worked through this and thought I had come out the other side. I wonder do cycles repeat?? I am my mother's daughter and by all accounts my mother struggled with mental health, she struggled with loss and struggled to find fulfillment and contentment.

Watching the destruction that was outside my control, the anger, the fear, the threats, and the desperation, wondering why I could not leave, why did I continue to battle for change for my daughter's father and for myself.

I was not the only one, there were many others that battled violence and abuse, battled to keep their relationships together and to find peace within life, I was not alone.

Reflecting on these times, I wonder could any of us have won, or were things too broken, society too contaminated by tradition and expectation around alcohol. After all is that not what you do as a man who works long and hard, you relax with the 'boys', you drink until there is no more. Then you go home, and the arguments begin.

My child grew up in this environment, until she was 5, that was when I made a change, for the better I thought. Ending the relationship and going it alone, there were no shared assets, I got all the liabilities and he walked away, free to continue his lifestyle and not take responsibility.

So much rejection, so little support from the man who was supposed to be our rock but unfortunately, he was too damaged to be anybody's rock. I was as a mother, abused as a child, and abused throughout my teens, I was alone and lost. I drank heavily too, before I contracted hepatitis and before I had my child.



I chose myself and my child over that life. The years ahead held many struggles, they held many disappointments and successes, yet the ability to enjoy the successes was not there, a numb dead feeling existed, just saying I love because I knew I did, but never feeling that feeling.

Doing everyday what I thought was right, battling emotional trauma and mental health, having family take responsibility for my daughter at times, trying to work through my own issues to come out the other side more positive with the ability to enjoy life, but never finding that joy.

Those elusive feelings we are taught to believe we 'should' feel, and we are led to believe are so great...

What's changed, on the outside much has changed, on the inside not so much. Sitting here wondering what went wrong, I tried so hard to be a 'good' mother, to protect my daughter from the hurt, pain, and harm that sat on the edges of life.

I didn't do a very good job at creating space for her to grow and find herself, or to build healthy coping strategies, after all I had none. I never recognised her emotional pain; it was only later I could do this.



I tried, I cried, and I failed. None of the good remains only the bad, drugs have robbed me of my daughter, and I think they have robbed her of peace in her life. She tells me she wants nothing to do with me, she tells me this is not my fault, but tells me of the hurt, the pain, and the distrust I have caused by my actions and my desire to help is now called controlling.

INJUSTICE is what I feel, the injustice that I can only hear her feedback as criticism, the injustice that my intentions are not acknowledged, only the interpretation according to her reality. Injustice that my story has never been told. Injustice that my crippling loss may never be understood.

The injustice of supporting my daughter through severe difficult times in her addiction, taking the phone calls, accepting the abuse, providing accommodation, all while somehow making that okay for myself, even though it shattered me and was so unfair.

Still no inner happiness or joy for me, no longer emotionally reactive to her on the outside, no longer overwhelmed by the feelings of abandonment and aloneness – what's left is a deep sadness and the questions that I know now are impossible to answer.

I am glad she has found a life beyond drugs, but these feelings remain. How come when I have always been the one who was there, who was supportive, who gave so much – how come I am now the one who is alone and suffering silently on the inside???

Impossible questions asked by me and so many others. Surviving only for others, not for myself, how come??? I know others have been isolated, in fact everyone that cared previously have been cut off, those fk*in drugs, will they ever be held to account for the destruction.

Probably not. So as each day passes, the weeks roll by I can only hope and pray for a miracle, one day I will have my daughter back, healed of the hurt and the pain life has inflicted on her. Back wanting a mother who cares deeply and who continues to feel the pain.....

Anne



Help for You – Rosemary Brown

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A bit about how Rosemary works:

Rosemary has worked as a Counsellor for 23plus years, specialising in Addiction and Behaviour Change. Her experience as an Addiction Specialist offers the people she works with a unique level of intervention.

Many years ago, Rosemary discovered the ‘talking cure’ did not work long term for her clients, she knew this stuff happened at a level outside of our conscious awareness, so it made sense she needed to be working to clear it at that level.

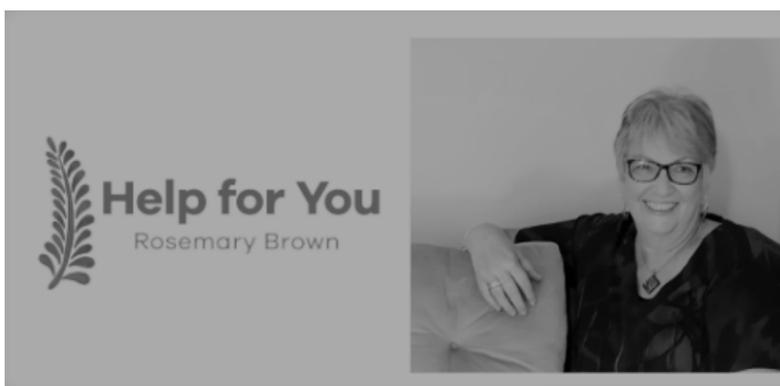
Someone had planted a seed some years before referring to NLP (Neuro Linguistic Programming) and the power of working with the sub-conscious, this is where the new journey began.

Not knowing how truly powerful NLP was, as she trained she experienced first-hand the power and the impact that NLP had on the long-held trauma and emotions she was carrying. Practitioner Certification training cleared all this for her, and Master Practitioner Training enabled Rosemary to use these powerful techniques with others.

Since integrating this training into practice Rosemary has made an incredible difference in the lives of so many people. People who were convinced they were stuck with PTSD, anxiety, depression and so many other emotional issues, have now escaped this reality and are free to enjoy life.

This change in understanding, the recognition that 90 to 95% of our process takes place at a sub-conscious level therefore this is where 95% of the healing needs to be done transformed Rosemary’s life and now transforms the lives of so many others.

Rosemary works every day fulfilling her mission of helping and supporting those who are impacted by a loved one’s addiction. She makes a difference. That difference is made in as little as 3 sessions and is simple and effective – no need to retell past events, no need to relive the feelings – it only takes an openness to doing therapy in a different way.



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