



Do It Yourself Intervention

An Intervention is about helping an individual realize the need for treatment despite the individual's resistance to change. If your loved one is unable to recognize their need for treatment then an Intervention is a forum whereby a group of concerned individuals join together to present a case in a loving and caring manner regarding the person of concern need for treatment. This step-by-step guide is not a treatment guarantee and Recovery NOW, Inc. only provides this as a tool to assist others with completing their own Intervention. We recommend seeking the services of our Professional Interventionist Alicia MacGowan, L.C.S.W., L.A.A.D.C., C.A.I., yet recognize the cost of completing an Intervention often makes this possibility out of reach for most. The average amount of time to complete the Intervention process is 50 hours. Our goal is to provide the resources to allow everyone the opportunity to have a chance at recovery.

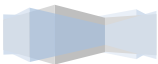
Initial Phase:

- Family, friends and or co-workers should first have approached the person of concern at least a few times regarding concerns about mood, thoughts and behavior changes
- Be specific in noting these changes in the person of concern (POC) mood, thoughts and behavior
- If you have found paraphernalia present this to the (POC)

- Advise person of concern (POC) of the possible consequences if problem mood, thoughts and behaviors continue
- There may be instances where it is not advisable to approach the (POC) and often this is more of an employment related matter to be dealt with by Human Resources
- It is recommended that before deciding on an Intervention, you ask the (POC) to go to treatment and provide him or her with treatment options
- It is determined by family, friends and or co-workers that the (POC) is unresponsive to attempts to assist
- Once it has been decided that the (POC) is refusing treatment, one Individual assumes the responsibility of being the Leader
- The Leader identifies a group of people that are important to the (POC) – The larger the group the better
- Size is important, since when (POC) walks in the room and sees so many people concerned sometimes this show of support is enough to get the (POC) to treatment
- People of key importance and influence are also very important
- The Leader contacts Group Members and invites them to be part of the Intervention
- An invitational Intervention includes the (POC) in all meetings
 - If doing invitational, you may advise (POC) you have gathered together a group of concerned individuals and request (POC) attend
 - Advise (POC) will happen with or without the person and the meeting minutes will be provided to (POC)

Middle Phase:

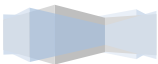
- If POC has refused invitational or you are following traditional model of a surprise Intervention this phase applies
- The Leader sends out guidelines for those participating in the Intervention on how to complete a “Letter of Concern” to present to the (POC) during the Intervention
- The Leader schedules the date, time and place for the Intervention and coordinates the best way to have the (POC) attend



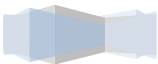
- An Intervention may be conducted as a surprise which many feel is best, since this way the (POC) does not have an opportunity to develop defense mechanisms
- An Intervention may also be an invitation. This provides the (POC) with the opportunity to prepare psychologically for the rehabilitation possibility and most often eliminates any hostility
- The Leader reviews everyone's letters and suggests any necessary changes
- The "Letter of Concern"
 - Try to make the letter no more than 1 ½ pages but 1 page is best
 - Should start with explaining your relationship to the (POC)
 - Share some happy memories and special moments
 - Share hopes and dreams
 - When did you first notice the changes in behavior, thoughts and mood
 - Specific dates and times that you may have confronted the (POC) about changes in behavior, thoughts and mood
 - How behavior, thoughts and mood have adversely affected you psychologically, emotionally and economically
 - What you hope to have happen by you presenting this information
- Consequences Part of the Letter
 - This part is kept separate and I recommend only reading if the (POC) refuses treatment at the end of the intervention or if the (POC) ask you after reading the letter what will happen if he/she refuse treatment
 - What are your consequences should (POC) refuse treatment
 - Possible consequences are loss of friendship, loss of home, loss of job, loss of financial support

End Phase:

- Leader coordinates a Pre-Intervention meeting whereby everyone meets if possible to do a mock intervention



- The Leader must determine who will sit on both sides of the (POC) – these people should be people that the (POC) does not see as a problem and views as sources of positive support
- The Leader determines who will sit by the door – this is an individual who has the most power of coercion over the (POC) and could influence he/she to stay should he/she decide to leave
- The Leader determines who will be the greeter – the person to greet the (POC) when he/she walks into the Intervention
- The Leader coordinates who will bring the (POC) to the Intervention
- The Leader coordinates someone to transport the (POC) to treatment after the Intervention
- The Leader determines the order of the presentation – easiest to place people clockwise and go around the room
- The Group should use this as an opportunity to bond and support each other
- Exposing secrets and removing the secrecy can create many feelings for all of feeling overwhelmed with emotions– everyone should be prepared for this possibility
- The group needs to know that there is a possibility the (POC) may refuse treatment and that if this happens this does not mean that the Intervention has been unsuccessful, since the (POC) now knows that everyone there knows about the problem and that group members will hopefully not continue to enable the (POC)
- The Leader contacts treatment centers and finds 3 treatment centers to present to the (POC) – the element of choice is especially important for (POC) since this provides the (POC) with a sense that they he/she has the final treatment decision
- Intervention
 - Everyone should plan to be at the Intervention 1 hour before the actual Intervention
 - When the (POC) enters, the Greeter advises the (POC) - Possible Script:



“We are all here today because we are worried about you and want to help you. We have come together to present our concerns in a loving and caring way. We all care about you deeply and are afraid we will lose you. We are hopeful that this will be the day that you will decide to make positive changes with your life. Please give us an hour of your time to hear us out. You can just listen. Please have a seat.”

- Each person reads letter of concern and may avoid eye contact with the (POC)
- At any point the Leader may stop the Intervention and check in with the (POC) and may even cut the Intervention short by presenting the treatment options if the (POC) asks what the treatment options are
- After everyone has given their presentation or the (POC) has agreed to treatment, the Intervention is complete
- Make sure to debrief at the end of the Intervention and everyone check-in with each other to talk further about any feelings or concerns that may have come up during the process
- It is best if someone has packed a bag before the Intervention for the (POC) and the group advises of the designated person to accompany the (POC) to treatment
- All Group Members should be encouraged to attend AlAnon, NarAnon, CODA or other support group, since members may require support to assert boundaries especially if treatment is unsuccessful or the (POC) refuses treatment
- Psychotherapy for those closest to the (POC) is extremely beneficial and highly recommended, since the whole family system must change in order to ensure long-term recovery for everyone

Post-Intervention:

- It is recommended that while the (POC) is in treatment the group continue to meet once a week to communicate information received from the treatment center and prepare for the (POC) return home



- If the (POC) has refused treatment, it is especially important to continue meeting in order to support each other enforcing consequences. This continued meeting and supporting each other may allow for the (POC) to enter treatment at a later date after the Intervention
- The group should remain supportive and members may need to continue to work out their own differences amongst each other before the (POC) returns home or while the (POC) continues to refuse treatment
- Members will need to determine how best to prepare the home for the (POC) return home, if the (POC) enters treatment
- Alcohol/drugs, and paraphernalia should be removed from the home
- Once the (POC) returns home, everyone should meet once a week as a group with the (POC) to continue the discussion of feelings and concerns, support each other
- Post-intervention meetings are recommended for 3 to 6 months after the (POC) has completed treatment in order to assure relapse prevention and overall improved communication within the family system

Please be advised if your spouse is the one being intervened on and you are inviting your children into the Intervention, it is imperative that you adhere to the consequences you present during the Intervention. These consequences should be enforced, if the individual refuses treatment or relapses after completing treatment. Children already have feelings of hopelessness about the situation improving and you, the enabling parent, have the opportunity to change your behavior. Removing the person of concern from the home environment is a child's last hope that the situations will improve. Children of substance abusers and mentally ill individuals want nothing more than to have their Father or Mother back. Enabling and perpetuating feelings of hopelessness by allowing substance abuse and untreated mental illness to continue in the home will contribute to children of substance abusers and mentally ill having their own substance abuse and/or mental health problems.

If you are intervening on your Son or Daughter, please make sure to examine your own enabling behaviors or the opposite problem being alienating behaviors. Often parents of children who abuse substances and/or mentally ill, tend to give their children too much of everything emotional and material or too little of everything emotional/material. Hopefully, through this process, everyone has determined where to change their behaviors and everyone can begin the recovery process together. During the Intervention, it is important to convey love, support and understanding. Parents need to acknowledge their own shortcomings and how their behaviors will be different after the Intervention.