



Empowering Families Who Face Addiction

Frequently Asked Questions

of prospective group members

Q. Does the family member struggling with addiction come to the course?

A. No, they don't, but not because we want to exclude them. If they see a therapist or attend support groups for their addiction (or maybe one day will), you would probably also not attend with them most of the time either. The reason being that their recovery is *their* work, and they have the right to have the space to do it on their own terms. The same principle applies here. The non-addicted family members have a right to work on their own "side of the street" on their own terms. That being said, if you feel your addicted loved one is ready to be solution-oriented with you, there may very well be opportunities in the future to schedule family sessions and include them in changes or decisions you make through this process.

Q. Can I start the course at any time?

A. Empowering Families is an "open group" format which means that you can enter the group at any time during the curriculum cycle. Regardless of where you begin in the curriculum, you will cycle through all 10 sessions. Running an open group allows better access to the group for new members who are in need of this service without having to be put on a wait list. (Please note that you will have to complete a family intake session with Karen prior to entering the course.)

Q. What if upcoming plans or scheduling conflicts will interfere with me attending all 10 sessions?

A. The 10 sessions of the program are designed as a comprehensive curriculum. Therefore, participants are strongly encouraged to commit to all 10 sessions (in addition to the intake). If you have special circumstances that would interfere with this commitment, you should discuss them with the facilitator.

Q. How is Empowering Families different from Al-anon?

A. **Empowering Families** is a clinical program created by a substance abuse therapist with a specialty in family issues. The group is designed to promote the self-reflection and personal growth necessary to decrease unhealthy dynamics in addicted families and to develop practical strategies to cope with addiction in the family. The group offers a combination of clinical skills and support. **Al-anon** is a non-professional support group for the loved one's of addicts/alcoholics. It uses the 12-step model to help the loved ones of alcoholics/addicts restore their own lives to sanity by accepting powerlessness over their loved one's addiction. Empowering Families encourages participation in Al-anon or other ongoing support groups for family members during and after the program.

Q. What do I do once the course is over? A. It is highly recommended that you schedule a private family therapy session with Karen upon completion of the course. We will discuss any unresolved concerns you have, troubleshoot as necessary, and create a plan for how you will maintain the healthy practices of a recovering family. Continued family or individual therapy with Karen may also be an option.