



“Roles: Addict/Alcoholic and Family”

Families unconsciously slip into unhealthy roles with their addicted loved-ones. Whether your son or daughter is living in or outside of the home, there is one common dilemma: Treating someone as a child rather than as an adult. Your loved-one may choose to play several different roles - using a select role that's beneficial depending on the circumstance or the audience.

Role of Addict or Alcoholic

Circle roles you recognize in your loved-one

1. Intimidator - *uses anger to drive people away*
2. Intellectual - *mistakes knowledge for understanding*
3. Victim - *blames negative events for addiction*
4. Blamer - *blames other people for addiction*
5. Playing Dumb - *“I don't understand”*
6. Avoider - *tries to keep a low profile*
7. Socialite - *keeps a high profile but is superficial*
8. A.A. Expert - *speaks in slogans but doesn't get personal*
9. Bible Expert - *quotes scripture but doesn't get personal*
10. Con Man - *thinks he/she is fooling people*
11. Closed-Minded - *“I know what I have to do”*
12. Magic Bullet - *“I know what caused my addiction”*
13. “Yeah, But” - *“That's a good idea, but it won't work”*
14. Deflector - *tries to focus attention away from self*
15. Lip Service - *agrees to follow through but never does*
16. Controller - *tries to control the course of own recovery*
17. Rabble-Rouser - *stirs up conflict between people or groups*
18. Suspicious - *“What will you do with this information?”*
19. Poker Face - *non-responsive*
20. _____

Role of Family

Circle roles you recognize in yourself

1. Co-dependent - *has a strong need to take care of and to please the loved-one and everyone else*
2. Enabler - *has a strong need to take care of and to please the loved-one*
3. Rescuer - *inadvertently keeps loved-one in dependent position*
4. Enforcer - *plays the part of policeman*
5. Ignorer - *gives up because “nothing works”*
6. Punisher - *uses punishment to force changes*
7. Controller - *makes all decisions in an effort to help*
8. Jailer - *tries to help loved-one change by keeping them safe at home*
9. Lecturer - *uses lecture, criticism or advice to try to get loved-one to change*
10. Pretender - *acts like everything is fine while hoping things will somehow get better*
11. Avoider - *keeps busy in order to avoid loved-one and perhaps other family members*
12. _____

In recovery, it is desirable if your loved-one seeks a healthier role as a *willing student* or an *apprentice*. This should lead to learning life skills and coping skills that will help on the road to recovery. It's beneficial if they connect with someone who coaches or holds them accountable to this new role. This person may be a counselor, sponsor, pastor or a sober member of the recovery community. **A friend member, however, is not a good recovery partner.**

Parents, spouses or family members must also evolve to new roles. You can develop the skills to be a *boundary setter*, *listener*, *cheerleader* or *encourager*. In support groups like PAL or in a counselor's office, you may connect to those who give encouragement, suggestions and support.