

WHAT CAN I DO TODAY SERIES: TEENS, ADULTS AND FAMILY

A 3 part video series on the “how” of recovery from chemical dependency

Produced by Clear Pictures

One of the greatest problems facing the world today is the overwhelming abuse of drugs and alcohol. Addiction knows no sex, class distinction, or educational level but is equally devastating to all those who find themselves in its clutches. Addiction also extends its destructive force to family members and loved ones of the addict and alcoholic.

ABOUT THE SERIES

The What Can I Do Today Series - Teens, Adults and Family presents success stories resulting from participation in Twelve Step recovery programs by teenage and adult addict/alcoholics and their loved ones. The strength of each video lies in its candid reality. The people sharing their stories are not paid actors or professional guides, but recovering addicts and their loved ones earnestly revealing their progress from a life as a suffering substance abuser or co-dependent to a healthy and active participant in society. Each person expresses the insight they have gained about themselves as they worked through human frailties to human victories.

The people in each video come from all walks of life, and while each story is unique, there is present a common theme true to all recovering people: their stories begin in despair and end in hope. They tell their stories to the camera with the hope that others will find the courage and strength to either seek help, stay in a program or return to a program. The videos are therefore non-threatening and have wide audience appeal.

AUDIENCES

These tapes are recommended for a variety of audiences. By hearing the stories, the viewer will see that an addict/alcoholic or anyone who is involved with an addict or alcoholic can find a way to overcome their fears, build

their self-esteem, and live an improved and healthy life that does not depend on the sobriety or self-improvement of a family member who abuses substances. After viewing these tapes, audiences will understand that special Twelve Step programs allowed these people to truly begin realizing their potential.

Health Care

Because the addict at some point must find his new place in the world, in- and out- patient rehabilitation centers for alcohol and drug abuse will find the Teen and Adult videos useful in introducing their patients to the benefits of belonging to Twelve Step programs.

The strain of the self-imposed responsibility for the addict/alcoholic is sometimes too much for a family member or loved one to bear. Therapy centers for both in-patient and out-patient care will also find the Family tape useful in introducing their patients to the benefits of belonging to a Twelve Step program which focuses on the needs of the addict's and alcoholic's significant others.

Schools

Education on drug and alcohol abuse is becoming more common in the classroom setting. In an academic setting, teachers and counselors deal with users and non-users and the loved ones of addicts and alcoholics. Because these tapes contain ordinary people talking openly about their own stories, viewers find it non-threatening. For colleges and universities, these tapes are valuable in a variety of humanities classes as well as extension programs that focus on drug and alcohol awareness. However, on the secondary level, the adult and family tapes work best as part of the *What Can I Do Today* series.

Organizations

With the widespread use of alcohol and drug abuse in our society, organizations, both religious and secular, are participating in educating and informing their membership about the realities and dangers of this problem and the devastating effects of alcoholism and drug abuse on addicts and their family members and loved ones. These tapes are effective because they present people sharing the experiences of their own recovery.

THE STUDY GUIDE

The following are included in this study guide for each video:

- 1) reference to some of the typical stories of addicts/alcoholics and their families,
- 2) length of the video,
- 3) discussion questions for use before viewing and after viewing as well as questions that take the viewer beyond the content of the video into reflection and possible action.

These tapes are valuable individually or as part of a series on recovery.

ABOUT TWELVE STEP PROGRAMS

As this series makes clear, Twelve Step programs are about more than being clean and sober. They are about leading a healthier and more complete life. Thus, the three basic elements for recovery in a Twelve Step program are: 1) going to meetings, which are free and open to anyone with a desire to be free of addiction, 2) getting a sponsor who acts as a guide through the twelve steps and is available day and night for advice and support, and 3) working the twelve steps, which includes admitting the problem, beginning the task of cleaning up the wreckage of the past, taking a daily inventory of relationships with others, making time for meditation and spiritual growth, and finally fulfilling the paradox, "If you want to keep it, you must give it away," as the people in these videos do by sharing their own stories in the hope that it will help other addicts/alcoholics.

WHAT CAN I DO TODAY? - TEENS

About the Video

While the stories of the addicts and alcoholics presented are individual and unique, they share a theme of lives rescued from unmanageability. In an age where image is a priority, viewers will be moved by the candidness with which these teenagers speak:

- A girl who felt she could only be popular by using drugs discovers that being liked is not being high.
- A scared young man cleans up his life after realizing his friends are criminals involving him in dangerous situations.
- After turning to drugs because he felt that no one liked or cared for him, a young man now in recovery finds a relationship with his family.
- A high achiever discovers she's an alcoholic only after leaping off a railing in a suicide attempt.

These stories and others bring the viewer to an understanding of the impact drugs and alcohol have on young lives, and the importance of a Twelve Step program for recovery.

This video is 30 minutes long. The coordinator will want to allow additional time before and after presenting the video for questions and discussion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following questions are available to the coordinator presenting the video to allow for various levels of discussion.

Questions for use before viewing to stimulate thinking about the subject matter in the video:

- What might be the impact of knowing that as a teenager you can never drink or use drugs for the rest of your life?
- What stereotypes come to mind when you think of an addict or alcoholic?
- What knowledge, if any, do you have about Twelve Step programs?

- What are some reasons teenagers might begin using alcohol and drugs?

Questions for use after viewing to focus the viewer on the information presented in the video:

- How does this film reject or support stereotyped notions of alcoholics and addicts?
- What are some of the reasons these people began using alcohol and drugs?
- Which person do you most relate to in the video? Why?
- What desperation did you hear in these stories that would cause someone so young to seek help?
- Besides the fear of using again, what other fears did these people express about leading a sober life?
- What have these people found out about themselves in recovery?
- What methods and resources have these people found to help keep them clean and sober?

Questions that take the viewer beyond the content of the video into reflection and possible action:

- What does it mean to be young and not able to drink or use drugs?
- What might keep someone away from a recovery program?
- How is it possible that even though people share similar life experiences, some people become addicts and some don't?
- Why do drugs and alcohol look like an answer to people?
- What are other solutions to problems besides using drugs and alcohol?
- What kind of action might be appropriate when dealing with someone you know who may have a drug or alcohol problem?

WHAT CAN I DO TODAY? - ADULTS

About the Video

While stories of the addicts and alcoholics are individual and unique, they share a theme of lives rescued from unmanageability. In an age where image is a priority, viewers will be moved by the candidness with which these people speak:

- A successful business woman finds recovery is more than not drinking and using drugs when she faces the greed that controls her life.
- Recovering after years of cocaine addiction, an Hispanic man reveals how grateful he is to be alive when he describes the miracle of his daughter's birth and his realization of life's wonders.
- A young black woman declares sobriety thawed the cold dead person she was inside.
- A Malibu lawyer's image of himself as a gentleman drinker prolongs his recovery from alcoholism.

These stories and others bring the viewer to an understanding of the impact drugs and alcohol have on people's lives, and the importance of a Twelve Step program for recovery.

This video is 45 minutes long. The coordinator will want to allow additional time before and after presenting the video for questions and discussion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following questions are available to the coordinator presenting the video to allow for various levels of discussion.

Questions for use before viewing to stimulate thinking about the subject matter in the video:

- What stereotypes come to mind when you think of an addict or alcoholic?
- What knowledge, if any, do you have about Twelve Step programs?

- What pressures or problems might cause an adult to seek relief in drugs and alcohol?

Questions for use after viewing to focus the viewer on the information presented in the video:

- How does this film reject or support stereotyped notions of alcoholics and addicts?
- What are some of the reasons these people began using alcohol and drugs?
- Which person do you most relate to in the video? Why?
- How did these people recognize that they were no longer social drinkers or drug users?
- What experiences brought these people to a recovery program?
- Besides fear of using again, what other fears did these people express about leading a sober life?
- What have these people found out about themselves in recovery?
- What methods and resources have these people found to help them clean and sober?

Questions that take the viewer beyond the content of the video into reflection and possible action:

- What does it mean for an adult to not be able to drink or use drugs?
- What might keep someone away from a recovery program?
- How is it possible that even though people share similar life experiences, some people become addicts and some don't.
- Why do drugs and alcohol look like an answer to people?
- What are other solutions to problems besides using drugs and alcohol?
- What kind of action might be appropriate when dealing with someone you know who may have a drug or alcohol problem?

WHAT CAN I DO TODAY? - FAMILY

About the Video

While the stories of the loved ones of addicts and alcoholics are individual and unique, they share a theme of lives rescued from unmanageability. In an age where image is a priority, viewers will be moved by the candidness with which these people speak:

- When he lets go of his judgmental attitude after being ordered to enter a program while his son is in recovery, an Asian man learns drug abuse is not about blame.
- A career woman discovers that her compulsion to be with her alcoholic boyfriend, who dies of this disease, is just as serious as his compulsion was to drink.
- After frantically driving the family car up and down the street in her nightgown, a black woman realizes her behavior is just as crazy as her husband's.
- After living unhappily with their father's sobriety for five years, a middle class family seeks help and discovers that his drinking was the symptom, not the problem.

These stories and others bring the viewer to an understanding of the impact drugs and alcohol have on the life of everyone who is close to an addict or alcoholic. and the importance of finding their own Twelve Step program for recovery.

This video is 43 minutes long. The coordinator will want to allow additional time before and after presenting the video for questions and discussion.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following questions are available to the coordinator presenting the video to allow for various levels of discussion.

Questions for use before viewing to stimulate thinking about the subject matter in the video:

- What stereotypes come to mind when you think of the family life or family members of an addict or alcoholic?

- What knowledge, if any, do you have about Twelve Step programs?
- What are some reasons an unhappy loved one of an addict or alcoholic might not leave them?
- What are some of the reasons that a loved one of an addict or alcoholic might feel terribly unhappy or depressed?
- What behavior of the loved one of a substance abuser would make you think they are losing control of their own life?
- What kind of action might be appropriate when dealing with someone you know who may have a family with a drug or alcohol problem?

Questions for use after viewing to focus the viewer on the information presented in the video:

- How does this film reject or support stereotyped notions of alcoholics and addicts and their family members?
- Which person do you most relate to in the video? Why?
- Why does the family often remain dysfunctional after the addict/alcoholic becomes sober?
- What experiences brought these people to a recovery program?
- What have these people found out about themselves while attending their own recovery program?
- What methods and resources have these people found to help them lead healthier happier lives?

Questions that take the viewer beyond the content of the video into reflection and possible action:

- What might keep a suffering family member of an addict/alcoholic away from a recovery program?
- What impact does the user have on those around him/her?
- When does blaming the addict/alcoholic for problems stop, and taking responsibility for one's own well-being begin?
- What would be the most frightening aspect of letting the addict/alcoholic be himself. whether good or bad?

WHAT CAN I DO TODAY
Series

TEENS, ADULTS AND FAMILY

Film Guide

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