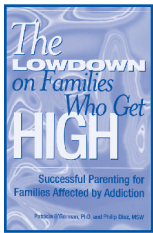


BOOK SHELF

By Stephanie Abbott

The Lowdown on Families Who Get High Successful Parenting for Families Affected by Addiction

By Patricia O’Gorman, Ph.D., and Philip Diaz, MSW



What can you do when you are trying to be a good parent and your spouse is addicted? The authors offer some specific action steps. What to do when you have been sober a year and your family isn’t incredibly grateful but is still putting demands on you? Um, maybe it’s time for a little less self-focus and more attention on learning good parenting skills. See Chapter 2.

O’Gorman and Diaz also offer a sensitive chapter on how caregivers can help COAs, as well as an overview on how children cope with recovery of their parents. They spotlight a clueless counselor who advises children “not to put stress” on their newly sober parents. As one young teenager commented “Who did he (the counselor) think was taking care of Mom every time she fell apart?...I think all adults are crazy. When do we get taken care of? I am supposed to take care of them now that he’s sober?...I left feeling guilty for not wanting to help out anymore!”

Sections include the impact of addiction on the family, parenting through addiction and recovery, and lastly a word to professionals and other helpers. For me the strongest section was “A Child’s View of Recovery,” because that is the area that is so little addressed in our field. How do children react to the great shift in the family, the recovery talk, the

parental lectures about addiction, the scary treatment center? How in fact does the child or teenager feel about it? For many of them, it’s just more of the same: focus on addiction, no attention to their needs, and family members who do not enjoy each other’s company.

ANNUAL MAATI SUMMER SCHOOL



The five-day summer school, sponsored by the Mid-Atlantic Addiction Training Institute and chaired by NACoA founder Robert J. Ackerman, Ph.D., will once again offer educators, prevention specialists, court workers, pastoral counselors and other mental health clinicians an array of outstanding speakers and workshops.

The school will run from July 18-22, 2005 and be held at Indiana University of Pennsylvania in Indiana, PA. Contact NACoA at 1-888-554COAS.

AT THE MOVIES

By Stephanie Abbott

Sideways

An alcoholic ACOA wakes up with his usual hangover, and takes a field trip with his friend, the has been actor/ sex addict, to the wine country in gorgeous California. They meet up with two great looking and willing women played by Sandra Oh and Virginia Madsen, but of course our hero is much more interested in swallowing all the wine in town. In fact at one point he even swallows the contents of the “spit bucket.” I amused myself by thinking what a good “here’s when I hit my bottom” story

this would make at the rehab center.

The alcoholic, played by Paul Giamatti, needs some money to finance the trip so he visits his mother on her birthday, giving her a card and then stealing money from her bedroom, clearly not for the first time. Mom is placating, delighted to see him and his friend, making great plans for the next day, and is last seen passed out in front of the television as the men tip toe out. She obviously won’t remember the plans made and won’t be surprised that her son has vanished.

Wine can be the perfect cover for addiction because people don’t associate wine drinking with alcoholic behavior, not even the drinkers themselves. They share such words as “tannins” and “nose” and “bouquet,” all of which mask the fact that for some people the mood enhancing effect is really the point. Can you imagine if grape juice had any variety to it that people would drink it by the quart and rhapsodize about the soil, the bottling, or the vintage that produced it? “This Welch’s has a certain shyness, but I really like its notes.”

The sex addict (Thomas Haden Church), a sweet natured loser, thinks he is doing a fat waitress a favor by going home with her only to find he is a pawn in a game she plays with her husband, and when the Oh character breaks his nose with her motorcycle helmet, he is going to be a sorry sight at his wedding a few days later.

Never mind, the wineries featured in the movie are now doing great business as people line up to taste those wines and sleep in the same sleazy motel. I hope they use that spit bucket.