



Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change

Jeffrey Foote (Contributor)

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The groundbreaking method that upends current treatment models and “offers collective hope to families of substance abusers” (*Kirkus Reviews*), helping loved ones conquer addiction and compulsion problems through positive reinforcement and kindness—from the leaders in progressive addiction treatment in the US.

Beyond Addiction goes beyond the theatrics of interventions and tough love to show family and friends how they can use kindness, positive reinforcement, and motivational and behavioral strategies to help someone change. Drawing on forty collective years of research and decades of clinical experience, the authors present the best practical advice science has to offer.

Delivered with warmth, optimism, and humor, *Beyond Addiction* defines a new, empowered role for friends and family and a paradigm shift for the field. This new approach is not only less daunting for both the substance abuser and his family, but is more effective as well. Learn how to use the transformative power of relationships for positive change, guided by exercises and examples. Practice what really works in therapy and in everyday life, and discover many different treatment options along with tips for navigating the system. And have hope: this guide is a life raft for parents, family, and friends—offering “reminders that although no one can make another person change, there is much that can be done to make change seem appealing and possible” (*Publishers Weekly*).

Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change Details

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Author : Jeffrey Foote (Contributor)

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From Reader Review Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change for online ebook

Dean says

As the father of an addict in recovery, I have read dozens of books on addiction, treatment, and self-help. Believe me when I say that this book is unlike any of the others I've read. Written by people at the Center for Motivation and Change (CMC), *Beyond Addiction* is a truly unique guide for families who are dealing with a loved one's substance use issue.

This book is not another "old school" book on addiction that tells families they have to force their loved one into rehab and totally detach from them. It's not another "tough love" book. Instead it teaches you how you can play an active, important role in affecting change in your loved one. Yes, you can actually **help** your loved one get better by using CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training): "a scientifically supported, evidence-based, clinically proven approach to helping families of substance abusers." According to the book, "CRAFT has three goals: 1.) to teach you skills to take care of yourself; 2.) to teach you skills you can use to help your loved one change; and 3.) to reduce substance use, period, whether your loved one gets formal treatment or not."

I won't lie to you. Some of the strategies in *Beyond Addiction* may come as a shock to you if you're used to reading and hearing about the old school approaches to addiction, which frequently tell us that we are helpless when it comes to assisting a loved one. The book's subtitle itself--"How Science and Kindness Help People Change"--should give you a clue that this book is very different. Using kindness to help a substance user change? Seriously?? Yes! And the authors explain the concept very thoroughly.

Beyond Addiction actually teaches family members and friends how to become empowered and make a huge difference in a substance user's life, using an actual plan. The book is broken down into four parts: What to Know; How to Cope; How to Help; and Live Your Life. You can choose to read the book in order or skip around, depending on what parts you think are most important to you at any given time. There are also interesting sidebars entitled "Good News" and "What's Hard About This." (I especially appreciated the "What's Hard About This" explanations, which are very clear, concise, and informative.)

This positive, science-based guide to helping a loved one was fascinating to me. It was incredibly refreshing to read an optimistic and compassionate approach to addiction treatment. (Note: CRAFT can also be used to motivate and reinforce change in other behaviors, too.) I wish this book was around a few years ago when my wife and I were first dealing with our son's addiction. It would've been fabulous to have been able to try the plan detailed in *Beyond Addiction*. I'm sure a lot of the verbal battles we had with our son back then could have been avoided.

If you have a loved one who is struggling with addiction or other compulsive behaviors, I highly recommend picking this book up. As it says on the inside flap, "This guide is designed not only to help someone change, but to help someone **want** to change." It's also full of hope, and that's a wonderful thing.

Christina says

Beyond Addiction is the number-one book on the topic of helping a loved one get clean or sober. Trusted

advice. Buy the book without reservation. It's worth the cost. Underline and highlight the sections you need to review. Worth 100 stars not just 5.

Emily says

This was a really interesting approach to addiction and even just the idea of how to get someone else to change their behavior. I liked the idea that a 12 step/abstinence only approach isn't for everyone. I also liked the idea that family and friends can modify their approach to the situation in a way that can lead to more organic and longer lasting change. I would recommend this for anyone looking to help a loved one through a tough time, not just addiction, and also for any counselors or therapists.

Pauline Plissner says

This book is a comprehensive look at understanding why people engage in behaviors that are destructive to them and their relationships, how people change and how loved ones can positively help both themselves and those they love who struggle with addiction. There are exercises and practical steps that are very helpful. I gained a lot of perspective and encouragement as well as the ability to look at my situation differently and make some needed changes in how I was approaching dealing with an addicted spouse.

Emily says

Great book. I wish I'd had it a couple of years ago, but it hadn't been written yet. There is other literature with a similar approach, but the way these people wrote really spoke to me. Sometimes I felt like they were reading my mind. It was down-to-earth, logical, compassionate and optimistic. I highly recommend this to anyone who has a loved one with a substance abuse problem and is struggling with frustration, anxiety and a feeling of powerlessness.

When you're looking for help for your loved one and yourself, you can run into some very one-size-fits-all, black and white approaches. This book is about options, perspective and getting your own life under control so you can be a better help to others. It never puts the pressure or blame for someone else's problem on the family members or significant others, but it does have some very realistic and helpful advice for what a family member can do to optimize conditions for change. They don't prescribe one rigid path, which if it isn't followed means doom and despair. It's really more about developing a healthy understanding and attitude toward change, and the various ways change happens for different people.

I love many books, but most I do not consider to be life-changing. I think it's rare for a book to have that much power, at least in a lasting way. I think this book is different and that the things I learned from it are lessons that will stay with me, that I'll use (and already have used) in multiple life situations and that can be built upon.

I can't recommend it highly enough.

2017 update: My opinion of this approach remains high. I will say, these sound ideas are more difficult to put into practice in the midst of crisis. I was more or less looking back on crisis, or thinking I was, the first time I

read this. It was definitely worth re-reading.

Randy Kaye says

Full disclosure here: I am an audiobook narrator, and I just finished reading (out loud) and recording this book for Tantor Media (should be released in August 2014), so obviously had no choice but to read it cover-to-cover!

That said, I found it very illuminating and helpful. I was married to an alcoholic, and am also the Mom of a son with schizophrenia (not an addiction, obviously, but sometimes behavior modification tools are so valuable with other issues especially where relationships can be helpful). The concepts and suggestions in this book really opened my mind to think beyond the black-or-white thinking that can close us off to all the options in between.

It also reinforced what I learned about helping my son in his treatment for schizophrenia - family can be a huge asset, when exposed to ideas, resources, information and support that truly make a difference. Ben Behind His Voices: One Family's Journey from the Chaos of Schizophrenia to Hope

Dana says

This is an excellent book for family members trying to get their loved ones into treatment for substance use. A lot of the information in the book would also be helpful for supporting their loved ones while in recovery during and after treatment as well. The book does an excellent job citing research to support their claims as well. This book would also be helpful for practitioners to read who want to learn more about substance use disorder treatments, and more specifically CRAFT. I only have a couple criticisms about this book.

The first is that, while the book does mention the importance of treating underlying mental health conditions multiple times, I am not sure that their treatment recommendations are very dual-diagnosis focused. More so, they focus on changing behaviors related to substance use. I would like to see them cite more research about their treatment approach in the context of dual diagnosis. For example, the book describes differentially reinforcing sobriety behaviors. To do this the book explains you should reward sobriety behaviors and not provide the reward for substance use behaviors (the reward can range from financial to quality time to a nice dinner, just whatever is rewarding for that substance user). What I wonder with this, is to what extent does differential reinforcement of sobriety behaviors work on someone who is also severely depressed or bipolar and using? Would it be appropriate to withhold a reward from someone who is severely depressed when we know pleasant activities and behavioral activation are helpful at treating depression? With that said, there may be plenty of ways of getting around these concerns and I don't think this book will lead you down a harmful road. I would just highly recommend working in collaboration with a therapist while reading this book if you are dealing with dual-diagnosis as well. A lot of the book is supports harm reduction, doing what works, and taking care of yourself. The book also provides just a lot of really great psycho-education and advice on how you can communicate and support your loved one through the change process. I see their advice in this area just as applicable for dual-diagnosis populations.

The second issue I had with this book probably isn't relevant to the target audience and more relevant to clinicians reading the book. I have an issue with the way they define "punishment." Given the creators of

CRAFT is based on CRA, which was heavily drew on behavior analytic principles, an informed reader might expect their definition of punishment to be consistent with how it is defined in behavior analysis. This is not the case in this book. In fact, the way book describes punishment but does not refer to it as such. Taking away a reward that you were expecting in order to see a decrease in a behavior (i.e., using drugs) is a response cost/punishment contingency. This is probably not important to the readers who are the family members seeking help though!

Overall I really loved this book and I would highly recommend. 12-step readers, I encourage you to be open to the content in this book and to approach it with a mind-set of curiosity.

P.J. O'Brien says

This book is written for those with loved ones with self-destructive compulsions or behaviors who are not at the point of addressing them. It covers what has been learned from clinical experience, and from studies in motivation and compulsion, to offer a range of approaches that respects everyone involved. A lot of the ideas seem basic common sense or courtesy and I don't know if it's a sad thing, or simply reassuring, that there has been a need to have studies to prove what I would have thought was basic intuition:

- a) Even though there are common patterns to specific physical and mental health conditions (however culturally defined), there is diversity in the severity and manifestation among individuals. Therefore, what's appropriate for one person may not work for another.
- b) Even people undergoing great stress at crisis points in their lives are capable of resilience and self-care, particularly with good support networks. When family members are in partnership with a struggling person and an insightful support team, everyone fares better. (I'm wondering if notions such as "tough love" – a contradiction in terms the way it's offered prescribed – and accusations of "enabling" came about because there was no clinical or community support for a family. It seems like something a society that's disengaged from its marginalized members would tell a family to do.)
- c) Relationship patterns are like a dance. When one person moves differently or out of sync, it affects the other, and this can have positive as well as negative implications. The book teaches new steps for the dance, drawing on adapted cognitive behavioral techniques to give possible ways that one could identify and positively reinforce non-addiction times, and give some incentive to extinguish motivation for the other times.

Even though the book emphasizes different methods, it doesn't necessarily bash the traditional approaches to addictions. It describes how the 12 Steps approach can be successful and a life-saver for some if it provides the individual with a supportive network and positive reinforcement for a shared goal. But even if it works for some, the evidence presented suggests that it doesn't work for all, or even for the majority who've tried it. That could be because not everyone feels support under the same conditions, nor do they have the same goals and philosophical outlook. The clinicians who wrote the book take it from the standpoint that many people have habits that could be compulsive patterns, and the ways they have found to deal with them may vary a good deal in form, even if the underlying principles of positive/negative reinforcements to extinguish them could be broadly categorized in similar ways.

Therapists, particularly cognitive behaviorists, can work with individuals, but this book is for those who are close to someone who doesn't seem ready to begin work on their own. It provides a variety of ideas for caring for oneself and other family members, reinforcing good instincts about what seems to right for the

situation, and has plenty of exercises, hints to gauge severity and criticality, and listings of where to go for help. The techniques for positive interactions would work well in any situation where people might have tensions and disagreements, even if there were no self-destructive behaviors involved.

Anne says

Visited the website and browsed deeply. Ordered from my local library and skimmed the intro and first chapter this morning. Especially liked the dedication, "For everyone who is hoping and working for change." Must have this book; it is compassionate and real, and matches my experience. Bought it.

Some weeks later: read it all, in bits and pieces. Very encouraging and practical. Could not read it for very long at a time! Learned things about the brain and how addiction (both the behaviors and the substances) warp it. Helped me deal with my son when he was at his least loveable, and helped me deal with my own fears constructively. We are not out of the dense woods yet, but the path is now clear. Now when we talk we understand each other, and we can even talk well when our emotions are high. Far, far better than the silence and frustration we used to live with.

Morgan Blackledge says

We need a sensible and compassionate approach to treatment for substance dependence. Our traditional methods for addiction recovery are simply insufficient to grapple with the variety and complexity of the issue as we now understand it. It is becoming increasingly clear that we can no longer afford to blindly adhere to vagaries and unfalsifiable claims, no matter how time honored, poetic or beloved.

I believe a lot of the common addiction recovery truisms and approaches were born out of confusion and frustration. They represent the best practices of their time, and continue to serve and save millions. However, if we contrast these truisms and approaches with our medical model, we can see how dangerous and irresponsible it is to blindly adhere to them.

What if we told a cancer patient that he or she has to go to church and hit rock bottom before they recover? What if we told the loved ones of cancer patients that the patient "did it to them selves" and "the patient has to do everything" and based on that flawless logic, to withdraw basic kindness and support in the name of tough love. Its pretty safe to say there would be less cancer survivors.

Imagine an emergency room doctor refusing to do CPR on a patient because he didn't want to work harder than the client. It's safe to say there would be lots more dead ER patients.

Fortunately, our culture is becoming more sensible and compassionate regarding substance dependence and treatment. People (clearly not all, but some) are abandoning slogans and shrill, dogmatic ideologies for a more rational, evidence based treatments.

There are quite a few good books for individuals suffering from substance dependence. Beyond Addiction is intended for their concerned significant others (CSO's). Although, the book is written for a general audience.

There is a lot of hardcore research evidence undergirding the material. The authors do a good job of coupling a user friendly front end, with a pretty boss theoretical backend.

The book takes a "kitchen sink" approach (with the caveat that everything in this particular sink is intentional and valuable). They bring a lot of sensible and compassionate approaches together under one umbrella, borrowing heavily (and quite appropriately) from Motivational Interviewing (MI), third wave behaviorist approaches e.g. Acceptance Commitment Therapy (ACT) and Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) and other humanistic, family therapy and CBT sources. But the book is primarily about a behaviorally oriented, systems level approach to addiction recovery called Community Reinforcement and Family Training (CRAFT).

The CRAFT model assumes that (A) individuals with substance use problems are often strongly opposed to treatment, and (B) that the concerned significant others (CSOs) of the substance abuser are commonly highly motivated to help them.

The fairly unique feature of CRAFT is that it also dares to posit the nearly heretical notion that CSOs can actually play a significant and positive role in their loved ones recovery, even when said loved one doesn't want to change.

The book even dares to challenge (or rather to clarify) time worn truisms such as enabling and codependent relationships. Not that these constructs aren't valuable or valid on some level. But that maybe they have been taken a little too far in our popular culture, i.e. maybe it's o.k. to tell your addicted son or daughter you love them and or make them breakfast once and a while. Maybe it could even help them recover.

One of the downright sensible rationale for treating your addicted loved one with kindness (aside from the obvious examples) is that people (like just about any other mammal) respond better to reinforcement than to punishment. Reinforcement draws you in. Punishment makes you (and me and everyone we know) want to leave the situation quickly (unless you're into punishment, in which case we in the behavioral analysis world call it reinforcement, even if it involves fetters and such, but I digress).

In the old days of recovery, inpatient setting approaches used to punish and humiliate patients. You have a little captive audience in that setting i.e. people can't leave. Nowadays we don't do that crazy, corny, sadistic stuff anymore. Particularly in outpatient settings. We treat people with kindness because if we abuse people seeking treatment, they leave. We figure people are better off in treatment than out of treatment so we just go ahead and be nice.

Additionally, there is great evidence that meeting people where they are at, and working with, rather than against them, motivates people better than treating them like trash. If treating substance depended people like shit worked, there would be a whole lot less addicted people out there. The inference being that so called "addicts" get treated badly all the time by cops, hospital staff, paramedics etc. Humiliation, coercion, guilt and confrontation make great reality t.v. But in reality reality it's a HUGE fail.

With CRAFT, CSO's are trained in various strategies, including positive reinforcement, various communication skills and natural consequences.

There are seven steps in the CRAFT model for implementing positive communication strategies.

1: Be Brief

2: Be Positive

- 3: Refer to Specific Behaviors
- 4: Label your Feelings
- 5: Offer an Understanding Statement
- 6: Accept Partial Responsibility
- 7: Offer to help

There is tons more to CRAFT. It's an exciting approach that I will be implementing in my work as a marital and family therapist and addiction counselor. In sum, I highly recommend this sensible and compassionate book.

Jamie Fuller says

This will not be the most cheerful or un-put-downable book you'll ever read, but it is a book that most of us would benefit from reading not just once but several times. I absolutely wish I'd gotten my hands on it many years earlier than I did.

If you're trying to figure out how to help family or friends addicted to substances or poor lifestyle decisions, you need this book! Read it before you try to navigate the mess of mainstream medicine and read it TWICE before you think about treatment or therapy!!

It isn't a be-all-end-all resource in and of itself, but it will inform the way you look at everything else for the better.

Deb Gripp says

I read this book because my nephew abuses substances; primarily alcohol and prescription drugs. My sister asked me to read this book so I could have a better understanding of the power of drugs and how to help my nephew. I already had a good understanding of addiction, but this book gave a deeper insight into the disease and real advice on what to do for your loved one and what to do for yourself and the rest of the family involved. I highly recommend this as a great resource for anyone dealing with this devastating disease.

Tweedledum says

A GR friend recommended this book when she learnt that I was struggling to support a relative who was not an addict but who was suffering with mental health problems. I am so glad she did. There is much wisdom and advice here to help any carer regardless of the nature of their relative's problem. Carers often feel so helpless and are all too often ignored by the support services. When the relative starts blaming those who love them for their plight things can get very scary and carers begin to doubt that they can help.

The authors advocate the KRAFT approach an approach based on kindness not blame yet enabling carers to analyse what kind of responses can really help change things for the better. However they are clear too.... Nobody can support effectively when emotionally and physically exhausted. You have to be kind to yourself to regain strength and compassion enough to help the other.

My all too brief review makes this sound like a simplistic approach but this is not the case. Everything is very carefully analysed and explained but without using jargon or hiding behind medicalese. And the authors recognise and acknowledge too that in some cases the situation may become too challenging for relatives to manage at home. But the most important thing is it offers hope for all concerned.

Cortney says

This book is for anyone that knows a human:) Hate the label "addiction" but this book addresses the authors agreement on that. The writers expressed beautifully what I've wondered about for years on human behavior. As a nation we need to change the way we think about ALL imbalances in our bodies/minds. We'd be a far more successful world if we looked at each with eyes of love instead of judgement.

David Cooke says

As a parent who has walked this journey of addiction in their family, I found tremendous insights into the addiction conversation. Beyond Addiction offers a refreshing alternative perspective to the continuous 12-step theology. Not that I am an anti-stepper, its just that our addiction conversations and treatment approaches have not sufficiently evolved. Beyond Addiction is refreshing, insightful, and accurate. Much of what they promote through research and application reflect the behaviors and approaches I found most effective and productive in my particular situation. I wish this book had been available when I first started the journey and discovered much of its truths through trial and error parenting.
