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## Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by JesseGirl - 2006/03/12 21:08

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Hello. I'm a PhD student in clinical psych. I have become a big fan of SO. I have really learned a lot, both about myself, but also about doing therapy and working with clients.

I was just wondering if any other mental health professionals are fans, and if there would be any interest in starting a thread where we can discuss SO, what we have learned from it, and any experiences we have with techniques used on the show (keeping everything confidential of course).

I have recently spoken with a co-worker who is going to be starting what she calls an "experiential" group for women with traumatic experiences. What she described was very SO. I'm really fascinated by the SO techniques . . .

Well, I hope to hear from the other mental health professionals out there!

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeterJ - 2006/03/12 22:45

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I was a social worker before I got into what I am doing now (I teach at a two year college and run a computer center for a non-profit community service agency) and that is part of how I got interested in SO. It's teaching me alot!!

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Tara - 2006/03/12 22:49

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I am an ADD Coach and currently working on my degree in human services. I really like the show but am also concerned that much of what the coaches do goes beyond coaching and moves in the realm of therapy.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/16 14:07

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I am a psychologist and clinical nurse specialist (mental health). While I think SO is great for laymen, I have the expectation that we as MH pros should be going deeper with our patients. This is the discreet difference between work with a coach vs. work with a licensed person. If you work from a cognitive-behavioral perspective the line becomes very blurry. What's the diff between coaching and cog-b work?

I don't see any.

Admittedly I am a purist. I have studied psychoanalytic theory for 15 years, as well as formal dream analysis. My work with patients is focussed specifically on the analysis of the unconscious. My patients do get better and do leave treatment with a profound awareness of themselves and their deeper issues....

So why do I watch? I really admire these women who want help... they want it so badly they'll go public! They are courageous.... I do wish the deeper issues would be addressed, but in this context I don't see how it's possible...

Anyway that's my \$.02

If there was a MH prof. board, I would probably be interested...

PeggyHill

p.s. I've met Dr. Stan and was scheduled to train under him many years ago, but the schedule changed!

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Ok first.. I'm not a therapist lol I just wanted to throw out a question to those more 'in the know'.

How do you feel about what SO did with Kim in bringing in her mother at this stage in her life.. rushing through the process like they did. Do you believe that Kim will suffer repercussions from this and that she and her mom really do need extensive therapy that that should have been done prior to being on this show for starting over 'counseling'?

I think right now Kim is in a whirlwind of emotions and doesn't know where to turn or what to do with them all.. she isn't getting much understanding from the other hgs. It was the coaches and stan that brought her mom into the scenario giving Kim harsh truths that in one case, validating she was in her mom's way, second choice, unwanted etc. How does that validation serve a purpose? I believe she hoped to find out otherwise.. yes it was hard facts but couldn't they have presented it a little differently? Are they going to now push her toward a relationship with her mom or help her deal with those leftover feelings of the visit? For so many reasons in Kim's case I think SO crossed the line between therapy and counseling.

Can anyone enlighten us on their thoughts about this?

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/16 20:20

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I agree with some of your concerns. I think the process was rushed and Kim really didn't have time to prepare. If she doesn't get aftercare support in one way or another, the main risk as I see it is that the anger (rage) has been opened up but she has no skills to contain or control it. She understands it in a basic way but not really deeply. That is what's necessary to integrate an experience like Kim's and not simply attempt to bury it.

That being said... I think she could benefit from the process if she has aftercare of some sort... individual therapy. She might also benefit from counselling sessions with her mother, but what seems to be unfolding is that the marriage is in BIG trouble! There are problems in the relationship and Kim's issues/contribution is not the only factor. And now we are learning that she has concerns about his drinking (and didn't he have an affair? He needs to work on his issues about their marriage too!) And there's now a child...

Aftercare will be the Key for Kim, because an awful lot has been seared open.

PeggyHill  
(I am a psychologist.)

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Mystique - 2006/03/16 20:47

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Thank you for your input Peggy, that's how I was seeing it as well.. (I guess my position is pretty much splattered all over the Kim threads lol) I appreciate you taking the time to give your point of view on this, it helps to hear from a therapist point of view and I appreciate you taking the time to share.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/16 21:06

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No problem, in fact my pleasure...

I began to watch this show out of concern for these very kind of issues. (I suspect this is why Dr. Stan was brought on board.) I have also heard from Jill that they are given a significant number of therapy sessions as part of their departure from the house...

I am happy to respond to questions like this....

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PeggyHill

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by alistrong - 2006/03/16 23:49

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I am SOOO grateful that this issue has opened up. THANK YOU, JesseGirl. I am not a professional, though I sometimes feel like all of the research, study & therapy work that I've done over the years could have put me well on my way to that status. I have been concerned about a number of the women in the house not getting enough help from Dr. Stan. I think the Life Coaches generally do an awesome job at helping the HG's w/their issues. But some of their issues go deeper than they are able to handle in that setting & w/out a medical background. I, too, certainly hope that Kim is going to get some individual therapy when she leaves SO. Peggy Hill, you said.

"I think the process was rushed and Kim really didn't have time to prepare. If she doesn't get aftercare support in one way or another, the main risk as I see it is that the anger (rage) has been opened up but she has no skills to contain or control it.

I SOOO agree w/you! I have been where Kim is - knowing there was anger deep inside & afraid of what it would look like if I let it out. I went into an in-patient treatment program where I had supportive & UNDERSTANDING people around me. When the rage did hit I didn't have people talking about me behind my back. They just cared for me. I've had MUCH to deal with since then, but I've had much professional help & I've made it through. I can only hope & pray that Kim will be blessed w/the same care & results when she gets home.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/17 02:25

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I think very few SO fans watch for pure entertainment value. We all identify in one way or another. For the most part I think there is empathy, and we (certainly I) really do care that each of these women get the help they hoped for.

This kind of work is a long and arduous process, painful too!

Currentlly we are seeing Kim as difficult, and I'm sure she is! But I really do wish and want the best for her, and hope that she is able and open to continuing the process after she leaves...

PeggyHill

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by JesseGirl - 2006/03/17 07:03

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Peggy, I am fascinated by the training and expertise you have. My program is CBT-oriented. We get almost no psychodynamic training. One of my supervisors has had dynamic training (including dream analysis), but we never explored that in our work together. One goal of my professional career is to do training in this.

Like the rest of you, I am concerned about Kim. I'm a bit behind on my episodes (I've only watched through Tuesday - its been a busy week!), but I really think Peggy is right that her anger hasn't been addressed properly. I really think she didn't express her anger and hurt to its fullest extent in her exercise with her mom.

I had no idea that her marraige had those extra stressors . . . I guess I'd better get watching!

Thank you all for your interest in this thread!

Oh, and Peggy, one quick question: What is Dr. Stan's training?

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

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Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/17 09:25

JesseGirl Do yourself the favor and get a supervisor willing to help you learn the dynamic work. Also attend as many workshops in the psychoanalytic arena as you can. You'll be intrrroduced to other supervisors there, as well as readings and study groups...

Dr. Stan is a Lic. Psychologist with community based psychodynamic training (not psychoanalytic training, to my knowledge.) I believe he still has a pvt. practice in Beverly Hills, and was the director of training at a local counselling center in Beverly Hills for a period of time...

Where are you in the education process? What city are you in? Feel free to email me privately about your training...

PeggyHill

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by piper - 2006/03/17 09:54

PeggyHill wrote:

This kind of work is a long and arduous process, painful too!

Currently we are seeing Kim as difficult, and I'm sure she is! But I really do wish and want the best for her, and hope that she is able and open to continuing the process after she leaves...

PeggyHill

I'm so happy to see you here, Peggy, and Jessie!

I went thru most of what Kim is just now starting. I know, if I didn't have a regular therapist, (regular, as in seeing her every week, at times a few times a week!), I would \*never\* have lived thru the whole process.

Or, if I did, I'd be the one in the straight jacket. :P

Seriously, I was in therapy for a bit over 3 years, with the same psychologist. She was wonderful. A larger, (much taller than myself), African American, who gave the bestest compassionate support. And great hugs, too. That woman saved my life!

Literally, I believe. No doubt in my mind, there! :woohoo:

So, to you, and all the other mental health professionals, I'd like to say, "THANK YOU!!" for being there when we need it most, or even if we need it a bit. :)

Love you ppl!!

Cheers,

MaryBeth <who also, believes that many of the women should get extra therapy sessions when leaving the SOH, and so glad to hear that Jill said they do!!>

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by ymimad - 2006/03/17 14:07

ahh, you are really blessed to be able to get counselling with a therapist. i needed so much help over the years from my childhood and young adult years and I could never get any because I was too poor to pay for it. So i have had to read and pray and face my issues with courage and its been hard, i still struggle, but at least i am not a total nutcase like I was...i am a loner though, and i often have found myself with tears on my cheeks watching SO because i sometimes relate to the ladies. I related a lot to TJ when she was in that box and i related a lot to Lisa but I didnt think it was good for them to dress her up like a baby...

I wonder sometimse about the exercises they do, and about some of the ways they work with these ladies. but life coaches are not the same as doctors. well, Dr Stan is there and so i guess anything they do will be approved by him first.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by piper - 2006/03/18 10:36

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ymimad wrote:

ahh, you are really blessed to be able to get counselling with a therapist. i needed so much help over the years from my childhood and young adult years and I could never get any because I was too poor to pay for it. first.

Oh, my dear ((((((((((ymimad))))))))))

I can feel your pain.

I remember \*\*\*vividly\*\*\* being where you are. NF, NF, NF, NF, NF !!! (NO Fair and NO Fun!!)

Funny, innit? That one tends to forget physical pain, as in after a surgery, but that emotional pain sticks with us until \*we\* decide to drop the load off. :S

Do know, tho, it does take some professional help of any kind. Try calling your county clerk's office and find out about the/any Mental Health Care pros out there. There must be some open to sliding scale or even \*free\* MH care.

Please, don't go without help another day....well, um, it's is Saturday, so call on Monday, get some help, but you don't have to can't continue down this road. You have NO idea how peaceful and content a life I have now, and all because of that one therapist! Don't wait, sweetie, really!

When I was in therapy, I was living in California. And I \*was\* lucky in that I found a place that charged on a sliding scale!

Perhap you could get a social worker or other counseling, from a clinic similar to the one I used. There are paths that ARE available to you, you just need to find a street sign that leads you down \*your\* alley. :lol:

I really hope/pray that you DO get the help you deperately need.

If you want to e-mail me, then visit at marbethsATcoxDOTnet. (Better Jackee? :P )

I'm here everyday, and/or nite, and would love to help if I can, in anyway....

Just remember to keep your hopes alive, there is SO much loving living out there just for \*you\*!!

Sincerely,  
MaryBeth

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by ymimad - 2006/03/20 12:17

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thanks so much for your kind words. :)

I will see what i can do. But I am much better than I used to be. So I dont feel the same desperation I used to feel. However I know I need to deal with the isolating. and I do think I need professional help. I will see if I can find someone to talk to.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by patacake - 2006/03/21 21:47

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I would be interested in lurking on such a thread as you propose-- such a discussion of the SOH would complement the show.B)

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/03/22 13:13

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JesseGirl, Tara and PeggyHill, I read your credentials and thought you might offer your opinion on a question I have had since Tess was a hg. (I'm not sure if you were watching then) She and Lisa I demonstrated conduct that could be construed as narcissistic. I am not a health care professional, although I minored in Social Work in undergrad, but have read that narcissism is a personality disorder that cannot be changed. Those who have this disorder cannot change because they lack the capacity to even see the problem. No one knows what causes it, but it is thought you are born that way. Although many infamous criminals have narcissistic personalities, it is not the same as sociopathy and many criminals have both disorders.

What is your opinion? I'm not asking you to diagnose any of the hg, but if you had a chance to see Tess and Lisa I in action, you would understand why I began speculating on reasons for their behavior.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by JesseGirl - 2006/03/22 18:09

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Hi Debby,

As you know, I'm only a student. And of course no person could make a diagnosis based solely on a TV show.

That said, I can see where you would think there is a personality component when thinking of Lisa I. I wasn't a viewer when Tess was on so I can't comment on her.

Regarding personality disorders, there are actually several different ones. There can be overlap in the different diagnostic criteria, but they generally are distinct. PDs are actually very fascinating.

Also, I would like to clarify that although personality disorders are very difficult to treat, they are NOT untreatable. They generally take an extended period of psychotherapy to treat though (often years) and really require a lot of dedication by the person seeking treatment.

Generally, personality disorders are characterized by patterns of behaving and thinking that fit a certain patterns, and often become problematic to the person over time. These problems can be seen in interpersonal relationships, work, school, etc. It is only when the person recognizes that the particular pattern of behavior has become a problem that they can really work on change. This is a very key point because at times the behavior can actually work for the client, and at other times they just can't see how it is causing difficulty in their lives.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/22 18:25

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Good Question!

All of us have some narcissism... and some is healthy. (We have all sorts of other traits in a balance, hopefully, as well!) It allows us to stand up for ourselves in an appropriate way, allows us to care for ourselves, how we look, how we think others see us etc... We have more at certain developmental stages in life, like toddlers and teens!

It's important to remember that people who have an extreme amount of narcissism are not aware of it! When someone tells you you are pushy or defensive, do you always believe it at first? No. Of course not, we aren't aware of these things. But when a personality trait occurs in the extreme, and it interferes with a person's life (friends, work, happiness, relationships, etc...) it may be to a degree that warrants a diagnosis of personality disorder. Narcissistic, Dependent, Sociopathic, Self-Defeating are all examples of other personality traits that can be problematic in the extreme.

(Please, please remember that a psychtric diagnosis is only a recognizable cluster of symptoms, labelled for the purposes of having a common language for treatment and research.)

That being said, I think that Tess did have an extreme degree of narcissism. She wasn't aware of it, and had a real hard time understanding the feedback, because inside her head she really believed she was trying. (It is a very painful thing to try and address when you THINK you are doing so and are not getting it!) I think we saw the extreme in Tess, and it

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was probably a diagnosable personality disorder, Narcissistic Personality Disorder.

Lisa I was another matter entirely. Sure there was some narcissism, but there was also extreme Dependency, and I think some Sociopathic traits as well. So from a mental health point of view, we would think about a mixed personality disorder, not just one type.

It is my belief that a personality develops extreme personality traits because of the way they are raised. Parental influence (or lack of it) joins with the basic character of the baby, and the environment shapes that baby. And a baby will cope whatever way she or he can to get the needs met. Sometimes that's in a narcissistic way. (Lisa I's dad completely overindulged her and encouraged narcissistic and dependent traits.) Sometimes that's in a dependent way.

In any event it is rare that these things resolve on their own. Therapy with a therapist who can and is willing to go deep into the early life of a client is essential to get to the root of how that person developed the way they developed!

If the therapist spends time making the person feel warm and fuzzy, or tells stories about the therapist's background, or chats with the patient then this is not the therapist that can help a person go deeper. The sessions are going to be painful. People don't come to me for warm fuzzies, they come to look at the hard and painful stuff. And I am absolutely willing to go there with them. The dark, the ugly and the painful. :unsure:

In the end it is a very warm and caring experience.

Hope this helps,

PeggyHill B) :woohoo:

p.s. If anyone wants ideas about how to find a good therapist, feel free to message me privately.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by grizzlys4 - 2006/03/23 02:26

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First of all, thank you for the very interesting thread and comments!!!

Actually PeggyHill, you ask a good question at the end. And I have a generalized comment/question about that....not specific, so I hope it's okay to ask here.

How do even think you could possibly trust a therapist to even begin to consider going to one?? With family and friends who've had major issues and very bad (even illegal in one case) experiences.....and then knowing there are so many different psychological and therapeutic ideas and opinions.....it kind of seems so overwhelming to even consider!!

Just curious as I really have someone in my life who desperately needs this.....but how can I help them trust enough to go if I don't necessarily do so either???

I'm sorry if I got too personal, and I certainly am judging....well, I guess I am from the past "horror stories".....but not you personally!!!! Just hoping that you can shed some light and hoping I'm not the only one who could benefit from the answer!!

Thank you so much!!

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/23 11:28

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First of all I want to put on the table that there are some, many bad therapists out there! Many people who go into the work often are trying to solve their own problems, and haven't had the therapy or training adequate to overcome their issues. Like the personality issues, these individuals often can't see that their own issues are adequately contained or resolved to help others.

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That being said... here are a few guidelines...

1. Know that you will need to take a risk. That's the whole point, you are going to have to trust someone.
2. Make your first appointment with the intention that this is a consultation. You don't have to stay in treatment with the first person you see. You will have to pay for the consultation. This is our work, our job, and we expect to be paid for our time. It is okay to ask what the fee is for a first consultation.
3. Plan to NOT make a second appointment at the appointment. Inform the person that you would like to think about the session and you will call if you'd like to continue. (If you have a really good feeling, disregard this.)
4. Get a personal referral from a friend or neighbor whom you think has benefitted from their treatment. A referral from your doctor is a good option of you really like and trust your doctor. If not, avoid this as a referral source.
5. Another referral source is the local psychological association. Los Angeles County Psychological Association will give a referral based on your zip code.
6. Consider seeing a therapist near your work. It might be easier to get there if you go before, after or during a lunch hour at work.
7. Back to the trust issue... Expect to be wary. If you have a history of childhood abuse or neglect, of course you will have trust issues, and the therapist will expect this too. Bring it up as the ice breaker, how you know you need to work on issues but have trouble trusting the therapy process.

More in Part 2

PeggyHill

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## How to Spot a Poorly Trained Therapist

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/23 11:37

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How to spot a poorly trained therapist...

A Poorly trained therapist...

- 1 ...will tell you your feelings or issues "aren't so bad.":blink:
- 2 ...will tell you stories about themselves.
- 3 ...will tell you stories about other patients.
- 4 ...will quickly try to make you feel better, make things very comfortable, without really listening.:silly:
- 5 ...will want to make a referral and put you on medications rather quickly. :(
- 6 ...will give you books or suggestions about books you should read.
- 7 ...will talk alot or ask a whole lot of questions. :whistle:
- 8 ...will use a tone or attitude that blames you for the difficulties you present. :angry:

Hope this helps...

PeggyHill B)

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## Re:How to Spot a Poorly Trained Therapist

Posted by peace - 2006/03/23 12:15

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Just want to throw out a bit of caution into the thread...

I'd be pretty worried if I was a Mod/Admin of this thread...

There have been a couple of posts by folks who seemed to be reaching out thru this thread, maybe hoping for some therapy or support from those who have stated they are professionals in the MH field...

This makes me nervous...

Those who are MH professionals or training to be MH workers...please be very cautious and alert when posting here - posters are real people... and your advice or comments could be misinterpreted as specific diagnosis or professional advice.

I don't wish to question anyone's claim about training or credentials but I think it is fair to state that this is a virtual situation where there is no way to verify that people are who they claim to be.

I wouldn't want a person who is in a bad place who really needs MH intervention and help to be harmed or led astray as a result of perceived therapy through posts in this place...

I suggest stepping lightly.

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## Re:How to Spot a Poorly Trained Therapist

Posted by PeggyHill - 2006/03/23 12:23

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peace wrote:

Those who are MH professionals or training to be MH workers...please be very cautious and alert when posting here - posters are real people... and your advice or comments could be misinterpreted as specific diagnosis or professional advice.

I completely agree. My comments here are intended to offer guidelines and DO NOT REPRESENT professional advice or consultation.

Above all be critical as to what you hear. Think about it, note how it feels. Only you can make your best decision about getting any kind of help.

PeggyHill

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/03/23 13:20

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JesseGirl and PeggyHill, thanks for the great responses! Very informative and interesting.

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## Re:How to Spot a Poorly Trained Therapist

Posted by honeyb - 2006/03/23 13:24

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Thank you Peace for being so observant as to what has been posted here in the past. There have been many cries for help and we have seen people that have been actually suicidal. I have talked to a couple of them myself. I am a retired mental health therapist and it really breaks my heart to see such anguish in some of the posters lives. I think we should just suggest they seek help in their home town. In a very discreet private message, not in a post.

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## Re:How to Spot a Poorly Trained Therapist

Posted by grizzlys4 - 2006/03/24 06:14

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Thanks for the info! That's just what I was looking for....some guidelines really!!!

Now.....the hard part will be on my end trying to help them "see" that they need help instead of using me as their therapist. I try to give common sense advice...but I am not trained in the field!! AND....it's exhausting!!!!

I do appreciate you all!!

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## Re:How to Spot a Poorly Trained Therapist

Posted by Tara - 2006/03/24 09:23

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I don't see anybody trying to practice therapy or counseling in this thread. There is a disclaimer at the very bottom of this web site too. I know as the owner of this site I have upset some of the users because I have made it clear that the purpose of this site is to discuss the show and not offer help to people. It's not that people don't find some support here but we have had some people coming here thinking they were going to be helped like those on the show have been.

However I have decided to close this thread since it has gone way off track from the original thread. If you would like to continue this discussion please start a new thread in the "Beyond The Show" area of the forum.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by KNC - 2006/04/06 13:30

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Hello. I am a certified Addictions Counselor, and I hold a Bachelors in Social Work.

I enjoy SO, but dont get to watch much this season. Last year, many of the exercises really threw me for a loop, and those of us who have worked in residential treatment programs have been known to use some strange strategies to get a clients attention.

If this year is the same, I would have to watch it all carefully to comment, and even then its tricky. Just watching it on tv will not give me all the info I would need to help someone. There is much that is edited because of time and yes...ratings. Not really helpful to the watching professional.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/04/07 12:55

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KNC wrote:

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If this year is the same, I would have to watch it all carefully to comment, and even then its tricky. Just watching it on tv will not give me all the info I would need to help someone. There is much that is edited because of time and yes...ratings. Not really helpful to the watching professional.

KNC, I actually minored in Social Work. Your addictions certification caught my eye. I posted my question in another thread yesterday, (See subject Kim and topic wine and smoking or something like that) I wondered why SO sent

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Christie to the Passages Group for at least 2 sessions. Are you familiar with their philosophy?

Another member posted her understanding of their philosophy, Dr.Stan spoke about and I read somethings about this school of thought. It seems to be in direct contradiction to that of most 12 step programs, so I was curious since the life coach, Rhonda seems to follow the 12 step program.

It seems that Passages says that if you deal with the internal problem that causes you to abuse the substance, then you can resume consuming the substance in moderation. Twelve step programs say no way. You can never take any amount of the substance again. Am I understanding this right?

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by KNC - 2006/04/09 15:16

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hi Debby. I'm not familiar with passages...however the thinking behind it is somewhat similar to what is practices in some "harm reduction" strategies.

I have tended to work with chronic alcoholic/addicts...people whose lives have virtually been destroyed, as well as the lives of their loved ones. Although I cannot say for sure that an alcoholic or addict could never drink or use a drug again...I would never recommend that. I have seen many people relapse because they felt that because of therapy...they now have it under control. I only witnessed tragedy in those instances. Of course....I havent seen everything though, and I try not to judge a particular path someone may have chosen. I would just hope that someone in that situation would still have a soft place to land. \*smile\*

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/04/10 11:20

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KNC, Thanks for your info. I think I may research it later on. Right now I'm trying to get my brother to join a 12 step program. (One that he can attend daily for support) He was in a 30 day inhouse program about a year ago, but hasn't followed up with anything. He recently relapsed but claims he's now back on track. I've done everything I can to convince him to go but he says he can do it alone. It's very frustrating. I'm sure you deal with that all the time.

I've kept my eye of the Christie storyline. Rhonda has been guiding her to accept and love her mom, just the way she is, which is a drug addict. I'm having problems doing that with my brother. I have questions regarding enabling. I have told him the only reason I will speak to him is if he wants transportation or help seeking treatment. No chit chat, no nothing unless he seeks treatment. And I will not give him any money.

Whenever you watch the shows that show an Intervention, one of the things the leader says it that you take away anything you have over the addict to get him to agree to go into treatment. Sometimes that involves saying, I will not continue my relationship with you in any way if you do not accept treatment.

On SO they taught Christie to accept her mother even though she will not accept treatment. She made her a handmade gift, ate lunch and told her how much she accepted her the way she is, drug addict and all. I'm confused.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by grizzlys4 - 2006/04/10 14:05

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Me too Debby.

I can't see me telling my sister to leave her hubby until he agrees to get treatment.....he's not violent at all toward her and the kids.....but he does drive home and I am SO upset about that. I've done all I can from a support standpoint that I know to do. But he's taking anti-depressants now and says he can handle himself. I just don't know what to say either.....I certainly don't want to say the wrong thing!!!! I've taken a major step back and just told her I'm here if she wants to talk and that's all. I guess there really are so many theories about how to handle the alcoholism issue.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/04/11 09:00

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Grizz, sorry to hear you have the same situation. My brother and his wife just separated again, for the third and final time. She's had it and so has the rest of the family.

I plan to do some more research and investigate joining a support group for family members of drug addicts.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by KNC - 2006/04/13 12:34

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Oh Debby....I am confused by that one too! Its not that I think Christie should ignore her mom...but she can tell her she loves her without accepting her addiction. I viewed that episode as " its ok...you can continue to use".

A hard line was taken with me many many years ago. I knew I was loved....but I knew my behaviour was unacceptable, and I was told that they (family) were not going to be a part or watch it any longer.

It saved my life and set me on a course that I am forever grateful for. I too...have had to do that.

Happy Easter Debby.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by KNC - 2006/04/13 12:37

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Debby, where do you live? In Canada we have "Family Programs". They are usually intensive 7 day residential programs...with great follow up later. I actually went to one about 20 years after I became sober. I was still living with an alcoholic, so I had to do something to get me back on track.

Have you tried alanon? Its a great program too.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by KNC - 2006/04/13 12:40

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Debby, where do you live? In Canada we have "Family Programs". They are usually intensive 7 day residential programs...with great follow up later. I actually went to one about 20 years after I became sober. I was still living with an alcoholic, so I had to do something to get me back on track.

Have you tried alanon? Its a great program too.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/04/13 13:49

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KNC wrote:

Debby, where do you live? In Canada we have "Family Programs". They are usually intensive 7 day residential programs...with great follow up later. I actually went to one about 20 years after I became sober. I was still living with an alcoholic, so I had to do something to get me back on track.

Have you tried alanon? Its a great program too.

Grizz and KNC thanks for your support and info. I am in North Carolina, not too close to Canada. I was lucky to contact

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the Nara-non support group. It is for family members of drug addicts. The man I spoke with was so nice and supportive. I'm going to check it out. He is a father of a drug addict.

Going to support meetings everyday is a choice my brother will have to make for himself. Whenever I went to visit him when he was in rehab, he would always talk about how bad everyone else was with drugs. He has never really admitted that he has a problem. He said what he had to do to get out in 30 days, and even stayed clean for awhile, but we knew it was risky. So therefore why would he waste his time at a meeting. He thinks he's better than anyone there. This is my opinion.

My parents blame his wife for his relapse. I don't. They blame her because she threw a big party in their home over the holidays. I don't think he protested. They served alcohol and they both knew that some of the guests were people he had done drugs with before. Bad move. He didn't have a chance. But if he had been in a support group, that entire thing could have been avoided. What is really sad are the 4 children. Anyway, thanks again. I'll let you know how things go.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by KNC - 2006/04/13 13:57

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debby you have such a healthy attitude! You put the responsibility where it lies...with your brother. It would be nice though, if his partner could have been a bit more supportive.

Even though he is the only one who can choose whether to use or not....having a party when you know that alcohol/drugs will be there...especially if someone is fairly new to sobriety, is a set up for sure.

Significant others of the addicted also need help, and I think probably his wife is in the throes of ( I hate the term...but oh well! ) co-dependency.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by valtina - 2006/04/13 14:37

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Sounds almost like sabotage, to expose a loved one with substance abuse problems to a party with the same substances there and the former co-partiers in attendance. I would wonder about the motives of someone who would do that, and about how they could be invested in keeping the former user a user, without even realizing it.

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by Debby - 2006/04/13 14:40

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KNC, I try to stay out of it as much as possible. My parents are control fanatics and they can't stop but staying right in the middle of it. They say they can't save him, but inside they really think they can. If they love him enough, pay his bills, take care of his kids, give money to his wife, iron his clothes, buy him a new car and give him lots of praise and support, take him to church, he will stay clean. They just don't get it. I don't even discuss it with them anymore because it is so frustrating. My other brother is also frustrated. We care about our brother the addict, but it is also embarrassing to our family. I know that shouldn't matter but, we have always been proud of our honest, hardworking, charitable reputation in the community. I live in a different town now. Thank God. I'm not sure how many people know about him.

I also believe the substance abusers spouse needs to be in a support group. The group would be discussing the kinds of things you do and don't do when you have a spouse who is new to sobriety. His wife refuses to go to any kind of counseling. She says that there is nothing wrong with her. Go figure.

I forgot to mention that over the summer, wife arranged for them to camp next to some old friends who brother used to do drugs with. You would think she had a little common sense. But anyway, maybe this separation will in some way be better for him and the whole family.

YOU know, the last time they separated, my nephew who is 10 years old seemed happier than I had ever seen him. He was talkative, cheerful and a totally different boy. When they later reconciled he went back to his withdrawn and sad

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appearance. What does that say?

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## Re:Mental Health Professionals - your opinions . .

Posted by patacake - 2006/04/26 23:08

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Debby wrote:

YOU know, the last time they separated, my nephew who is 10 years old seemed happier than I had ever seen him. He was talkative, cheerful and a totally different boy. When they later reconciled he went back to his withdrawn and sad appearance. What does that say?:whistle: I know the feelings.

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