

Checklist for Intervention

Documenting the evidence of love before a confrontation in grace

“Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.” — Galatians 6:1

How to use this checklist. Sometimes a person trapped in addiction cannot see the damage clearly until those who love him hold up a mirror. An intervention is a planned, loving confrontation that helps him see his addiction through the eyes of his family and friends — and points him toward help and hope. The goal is restoration, not condemnation; the tone is truth spoken in love (Gal 6:1; Eph 4:15; Pro 27:6). Prepare in four steps:

1. Pray, then gather a small group of people he trusts and who clearly love him.
2. In each category below, write out specific, factual examples — what happened, when, and how it affected others. Use concrete facts, not generalizations or accusations (“On Thanksgiving you...,” not “You always...”).
3. Agree together on the clear next step you will ask him to take — for example, live-in accountability with a church family or a Christian addiction center.
4. Choose a calm time and a private place, and decide ahead who will speak and in what order.

A word of care. *Serious substance addiction can carry real medical and safety risks. Wherever possible, plan the intervention with the help of a qualified counselor, pastor, or medical professional, and seek their guidance on timing, safety, and treatment. This checklist is a preparation tool, not a substitute for professional or medical care.*

Write out a list of examples in each area:

■ Changes in the pattern of chemical use

- Amount consumed
- Denial of use, even when it is obvious
- Hiding the frequency or amount being used
- Attempts to control it or “go on the wagon”

Specific examples to share:

■ Changes in personality

- Angry outbursts followed by acting as if nothing occurred
- Violent outbursts · Silly or irrational actions
- Obsession with drinking or drug-related activities
- How does this contrast with their sober behavior?

Specific examples to share:

■ Health problems

- Broken bones and bruises, possibly unexplained
- Frequent stomach problems · Blackouts (chemically induced amnesia)
- Depression · Use of multiple doctors or pharmacies for prescribed drugs

Specific examples to share:

■ Legal problems

- Arrests for driving under the influence (or times when arrest was possible)
- Financial problems (e.g., higher insurance rates)
- Stealing of valuables to support the addiction

Specific examples to share:

■ Disruptions in personal activities

- Dropping hobbies or activities that interfere with chemical use
- Loss of jobs or promotions · A significant drop in grades at school
- A shift in the usual circle of friends (often toward others who use)

Specific examples to share:

■ Problems during special occasions

- Christmas · Thanksgiving · Birthdays · Anniversaries · Parties

Specific examples to share:

Hold on to hope. *The aim is never to shame, but to open a door. The same gospel that exposes sin also frees from it: “and such were some of you. But you were washed... sanctified... justified.” — 1 Cor 6:11*

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