

CARRY THE MESSAGE

Many people find it helpful to carry their message of recovery as a part of an ongoing program to promote their long-term recovery efforts as well as to help those that have not yet discovered sobriety. Through sharing their story with those who are less fortunate, the individual is able to remind themselves of the struggles and losses associated with alcohol and drug abuse. The interaction also clearly reveals to the individual the unmanageability of one's life that is caused by the disease of addiction. By communicating with those less fortunate, the individual will better understand the insane point of view that can be created by the disease.

Exercise:

This exercise will simulate an interaction between someone trying to carry the message to someone who is still in the disease of addiction.

1. Break into pairs or triplets.
2. Ask for a volunteer from each group to act as the addict. The remaining people will be the message carriers.
3. Instruct the addict to speak as if they were still using uncontrollably, and they are living on the street with no resources.
4. Instruct the message carriers to attempt to intervene with the addict by trying to carry their message to the addict. Their ultimate goal is to get the addict to commit to coming with them for help.
5. Run the simulation for a period of 5-10 minutes.
6. After the simulation, ask the message carriers what they learned.
7. Switch roles, and run the exercise again.

It may be helpful to write these suggestions on a white board:

Message Carriers;

- Speak from your own experience.
- Use empathy and understanding.
- Use good communication skills (eye contact, speak clearly, do not interrupt, no vulgarity).
- Show them who you are now so they want what you have now.

Addicts;

- Try every excuse imaginable as to why you do not need help.
- Think with the reasoning and understanding of an unmanageable addicted mind and body.