

A Family Response to a Family Disease

Addiction is often referred to as “a family disease”. This is true in many ways, and could refer to a family’s genetic predisposition to addiction, to enabling behaviors, or the newly clean addict’s need for strong recovery support. Cri-Help believes that the involvement of well informed, supportive family members can be valuable to the treatment experience.

Responding to the family impact of addiction, Cri-Help convenes two weekly support/education groups for the family members and loved ones of our clients at each of our residential facilities, The George T. Pfleger Center and Socorro – where all of our family services are available in Spanish.

The Family Education Group introduces the family, friends and loved ones of Cri-Help’s clients to all aspects of their significant others’ recovery by providing education, information and awareness about the disease of addiction. Topics discussed here include an introduction to 12-step programs, healthy boundaries, codependency, family roles, and interpersonal communications.

Multi-Family Support Group affords an opportunity for family members to develop peer support, and facilitates cross-communication between families and their loved ones with clinical guidance. Communications are open and direct, and elicited specifically to resolve family conflict. This group also provides a safe environment where families help families, where participants can express understanding for each others’ difficulties, and help each other solve problems. Additional services are available, such as individual therapy and conjoint counseling, which involves

[continued on p.2](#)



A Profile on Marco Pardo

A Profile on Cri-Help’s Spiritual and Grief Counselor.

Marco Pardo, MA, MAPS is Cri-Help's Spirituality/Grief Counselor, and one of the most respected members of the Cri-Help Leadership Team. Marlene Nadel (MN), Director of Client Services was interviewed by Cri-Help's Marketing Director, Heather Edney (HE) to learn more about Marco's role at Cri-Help.

Heather Edney: Marco Pardo has been involved with Cri-Help for years, and offers a rare and critical contribution to the clients, staff and overall mission. Marlene, tell me more about Marco Pardo and the role he plays in clients’ treatment experience.

Marlene Nadel: Marco Pardo’s position started taking shape as he facilitated client groups defining spirituality, and helping people discover or renew their spiritual connection. Because of his years of counseling, life experience, and his remarkable style of communication, he somehow helps people repair those spiritual disconnections after tragedy, addiction or serious family problems.

Recognizing another critical therapeutic need, he started facilitating groups to help our clients process grief due to various losses – and the need was obvious. We had opened an avenue to help individuals express and resolve past experiences of while they were in treatment.

HE: I know of a family member whose loved one died of overdose who worked with Marco, and she was so grateful for the experience.

MN: Yes we’ve also extended his services to alumni and advocates of Cri-Help. He does wonderful work with people and has become well known in the recovery community.

HE: How did Marco become involved with Cri-Help.

MN: I met Marco at [continued on p.2](#)

Events & Links

[Cri-Help Annual BBQ - 5/4/08](#)

[Marco Pardo's Daily Meditation](#)

[Nar-Anon Family Groups World Services](#)

[Los Angeles Al-Anon](#)

*Cri-Help
Annual BBQ
Details on page 2...*

Marco Pardo Profile Continued

the Alcoholism Council in the early 80's, where he was the director of teen services. I talked to him about the struggle many addicts have with God. A colleague of mine started working with him on this very issue, and she immediately felt inspired by him. She was not asked to give up her beliefs, only to look at how she could make them work for her in her recovery. Then he was invited to facilitate grief and spirituality groups – and he started working full-time here about three years ago.

HE: Is his work at Cri-Help derived from some existing model?

MN: No, Marco is a Cri-Help original! He has been able to incorporate the 12 Steps as part of how he does grief work with clients. Because he's worked with so many people in early recovery, coupled with his intuition and his understanding complex grief he's been able to help people move towards healing after trauma. Somehow, because of how he carries himself, he's earned a deep level of their trust – no easy task – and they're able to go far beyond their expectations in resolving past issues. He creates an environment of genuinely unconditional love. Marco has had opportunities over the years to find financial security in positions which would pay him well. Instead he has chosen to work with people struggling with poverty here and in other countries. He truly is one of a kind.

HE: What does Marco offer the staff, is he a part of completion or aftercare?

MN: Marco is also consistently recognized by our clients at their completion ceremonies. Cri-Help's clients come from all walks of life, and it is clearly evident at such events that he is universally and deeply respected.

HE: How does he contribute to Cri-Help's mission?

MN: He helps fix broken people and prepare individuals to go back into society more balanced, with greater self-esteem and self-love – and to become more productive.

HE: Would you like to share anything personal about your relationship with Marco?

MN: My work at the Alcoholism Council was a great experience – he was my boss. I've gone to Marco myself, looking for validation when I doubted my own beliefs. He doesn't judge in a way that dictates a belief in anything other than what's right for you. Cri-Help is very fortunate to have Marco, and I'm especially pleased that he's voiced to me that he feels fortunate to have us. He views it as a natural way to give back, to feed his spirit. He feels that both he and his work are appreciated here, and he's right.

Cri-Help's 37th Anniversary BBQ and Fundraiser

Details:

- Music by Chuck Negron, formerly of Three Dog Night
- Silent & Live Auctions
- Raffle (LCD TV)
- Steak or Vegetarian Dinner & Dessert



Location:

Pierce College Campus Center
6201 Winnetka
Woodland Hills, CA 91371

Admission:

- Adults - \$25
- Children (6-12) - \$10
- Children under 6 - FREE
- Raffle Tickets - \$2/per, or 10 for \$10

Order tickets by credit card at: cri-help.org
or call us at 818.768.9851

Family Response Continued

clients and their families together.

Perhaps the most important thing Cri-Help does through treatment is to involve clients in 12-steps programs and activities. We also believe that participation in Al-Anon and Nar-Anon are unparalleled opportunities for families to resolve some of the damage that addiction has caused them, to initiate their own recovery, and to effectively support a lasting recovery for their loved ones.

