

# Preparing for an Intervention

*Telling the truth in a powerful circle of unconditional love*

What is an intervention?

**An intervention is a meeting between an individual with addiction or behavioral-health related problems and those whose goal is to get that person into a treatment program.**

Why have an intervention?

**Denial is a fundamental symptom of addiction or other behavioral health problems. An intervention is a powerful tool for penetrating and overcoming that denial. An intervention also brings together people who matter in the individual's life so that they create a unified front and collaborate on how to cease enabling the addiction but instead support the individual's treatment and recovery. Interventions also help the family members comfort the pain they have been suffering and consider ways to get support for themselves.**

Who attends the intervention?

**An interventionist, a professional in the field, leads the session. Attendees usually include family members and friends. If the intervention takes place on the job, it may include union representatives, work colleagues, or supervisors. Knowledge of the person's problems and a commitment to the plan to get the individual into treatment are the only criteria for participating.**

What kind of preparation is required?

**The interventionist confers with the attendees about how to write a two-part letter (Part A and B, explained in the next paragraphs) to read to the person and what is expected at the session. The interventionist also works with a point person to establish an appropriate treatment location that will be set up prior to the intervention.**

What happens at the intervention?

**Attendees read Part A of the letter, in which they express their own personal feelings about the problem. They give facts about what they have witnessed and what they felt and experienced as a result of the addictive behavior. An intervention is, by its nature, an emotional event, but attendees are encouraged to avoid anger, judgments, or criticism. This is a time for honest, loving confrontation.**

What if the individual doesn't agree to go to treatment?

**If the individual doesn't comply with the treatment plan, each attendee then reads Part B of the letter, outlining the consequences. Each attendee must be completely willing to adhere to the consequences they have established. The consequences will vary based upon the participant's relationship with the individual; however, all participants need to be willing to distance themselves and establish firm boundaries with the individual unless he/she complies and gets the help everyone agrees he/she needs.**