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## **Learn a New Craft**

**By Anna Gooz**

When you see your friend wearing a necklace she has made herself or you see someone who has decorated her house with unique handcrafted items, you are jealous. However you think you cannot do so as you never done any such thing in the past. **WRONG!**

I am sure you have done some crafts at some point in your life. You may have made paper airplanes in school. You may have painted. You may have created decorations for the Christmas tree or Easter or some other occasion. You may have made a dress or a mask for Halloween. You decorated cookies for your child's bake sale. All this qualifies as craft.

Life is busy and you probably have not practiced any craft for a long time. You think do not have time to learn a new craft. However, there are many good reasons why you should learn one:

- Crafting is a great stress buster. It engages your mind and takes it away from the problems of daily grind. It gives you an opportunity to channel your excess energy and help you relax. It will allow you to keep aside some time for yourself.
- Get your creative juices flowing. Everybody is born with some amount of creativity. It is a matter of cultivating it. As you master the skill and technique of your chosen craft, you will get more innovative. You will conceive and create new designs and execute complex ideas. This will enhance your creativity. You will be able to look at problems in your daily life with a new perspective and often find innovative solutions.
- Improve your self-esteem. You will create something new and unique out of some unfinished materials like wood or clay or glass with your own hands. This will give you a sense of accomplishment and pride in your skills. You would see an improvement in your self-confidence in a matter of short time.
- Save Money. Learning a craft will enable you to make gift items for family and friends economically. They will also appreciate a unique gift, made especially for them. Depending on your craft, you may be able to decorate your home on a strict budget

- Make money with your craft. As you improve at your craft, you will be able to sell your craft items and make money. You will get an opportunity to make a full-time or part time income with your handmade crafts.

Crafting requires a creative process as well as a skill. Not everybody likes everything. You may have to try multiple crafts to figure out the one you like. Start with a craft that you may have been exposed to already or one you thought you would like to learn sometime. If nothing comes to mind, talk to your spouse or your best friend. If they have a favorite craft you may want to learn a similar craft or complementary craft. This will give you an opportunity to spend more time with them as well as learn a craft. Another option would be taking a couple of classes for different crafts. Select two or three crafts that you think you would like. Take classes at the local community college or adult learning center. This will help you determine if you like to craft and learn its basic techniques.

Do not learn a craft just to make money. Learn it only if you enjoy doing it. If you have fun with your craft, you will create beautiful pieces that will give you and others pleasure.

Anna Gooz, Craft and Small Business Consultant and publisher of Craft Business Package available at <http://www.craftsells.com>

## CRAFT: An Alternative to Addiction “Intervention”

By Tom Brown, Ph.D.

CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) is a non-confrontational approach to getting a loved one to enter addiction treatment. It is an approach designed for the concerned other (spouse, family member, friend), who is seeking assistance in getting their loved one help. CRAFT can also help the person you are concerned about reduce their substance use, even without their direct cooperation. CRAFT is successful in getting people into treatment by a three to one margin over traditional intervention strategies.

CRAFT is motivational rather than confrontational. Concerned Significant Others (CSO) learn how to motivate loved ones to change, by rewarding sober activities and discouraging activities that include drugs or alcohol. The motivational approach to getting a loved one into treatment leads to a lower percentage of relapse. When the reasons not to use outweigh the reasons to use, people are more likely to enter treatment. CRAFT training provides CSO's with skills to help shift the balance in favor of not using and entering treatment.

CRAFT goals are to:

- Increase the CSO's happiness, independent of whether or not the IP (Identified Patient) enters treatment.
- Decrease the IP's substance use.
- Get the IP into treatment

CRAFT uses Positive Communication to improve the probability of the IP entering treatment. CSO's are encouraged, when talking to the loved one, to:

- Be brief in describing concerns
  - Be positive and hopeful
  - Refer to specific behaviors (“I see” or “I hear.”)
  - Describe their own feelings (“How I feel when this happens is...”)
  - Offer an alternative for the future (“What I would like to happen is...”)
- (A quick way to remember the above is “facts, feelings, future.”)

CRAFT is especially useful for the CSO who has seen previous attempts to get a loved one into treatment fail, who is tired of nagging, pleading, and threatening, and who feels worn out. In addition, CRAFT is an appealing approach to those who are turned off by harsh confrontational interventions.

CRAFT works within your values and beliefs. The process is based on the understanding that no one has better information about the behavior of the substance user than the Concerned Significant Other. CRAFT teaches you how to use the information in a motivational way to increase the chances of the substance user entering treatment.

CRAFT will help you learn:

- New skills to cope with old problems
- How to increase your loved one's sobriety

- How to keep yourself safe
- How to improve the quality of your life

The CRAFT method will coach you, in a very practical way, to discuss costs and benefits of your loved one's substance use. Research finds that it is best to acknowledge that the substance user drinks or takes drugs because it makes them feel good, provides an escape from problems, and/or allows them to be more social. What is often neglected by the substance user is the cost of drinking or taking drugs. This is where the opportunity for change exists.

CRAFT is scientific. CRAFT is non-confrontational. CRAFT is a way for CSO's to improve the quality of their own lives, while decreasing the possibility of use by their loved one and increasing the possibility of a loved one entering treatment. Best of all, research shows that CRAFT works.

Tom Brown, Ph.D., is a senior clinical psychologist at Practical Recovery (<http://www.practicalrecovery.com>) where he helps individuals overcome addiction and achieve a greater sense of meaning and purpose in life.

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