

Loving Lions

BREAKING THE CIRCLE OF CHAOS

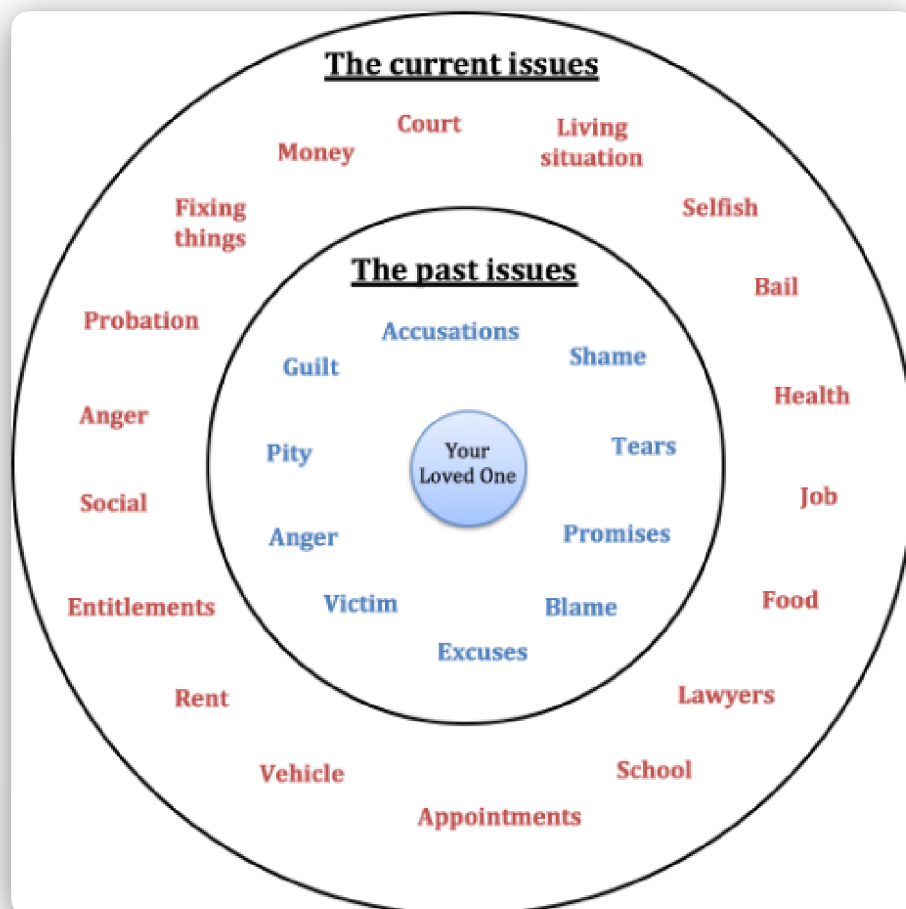
A Practical Guide Inspired by Loving Lions

What Is the Circle of Chaos?

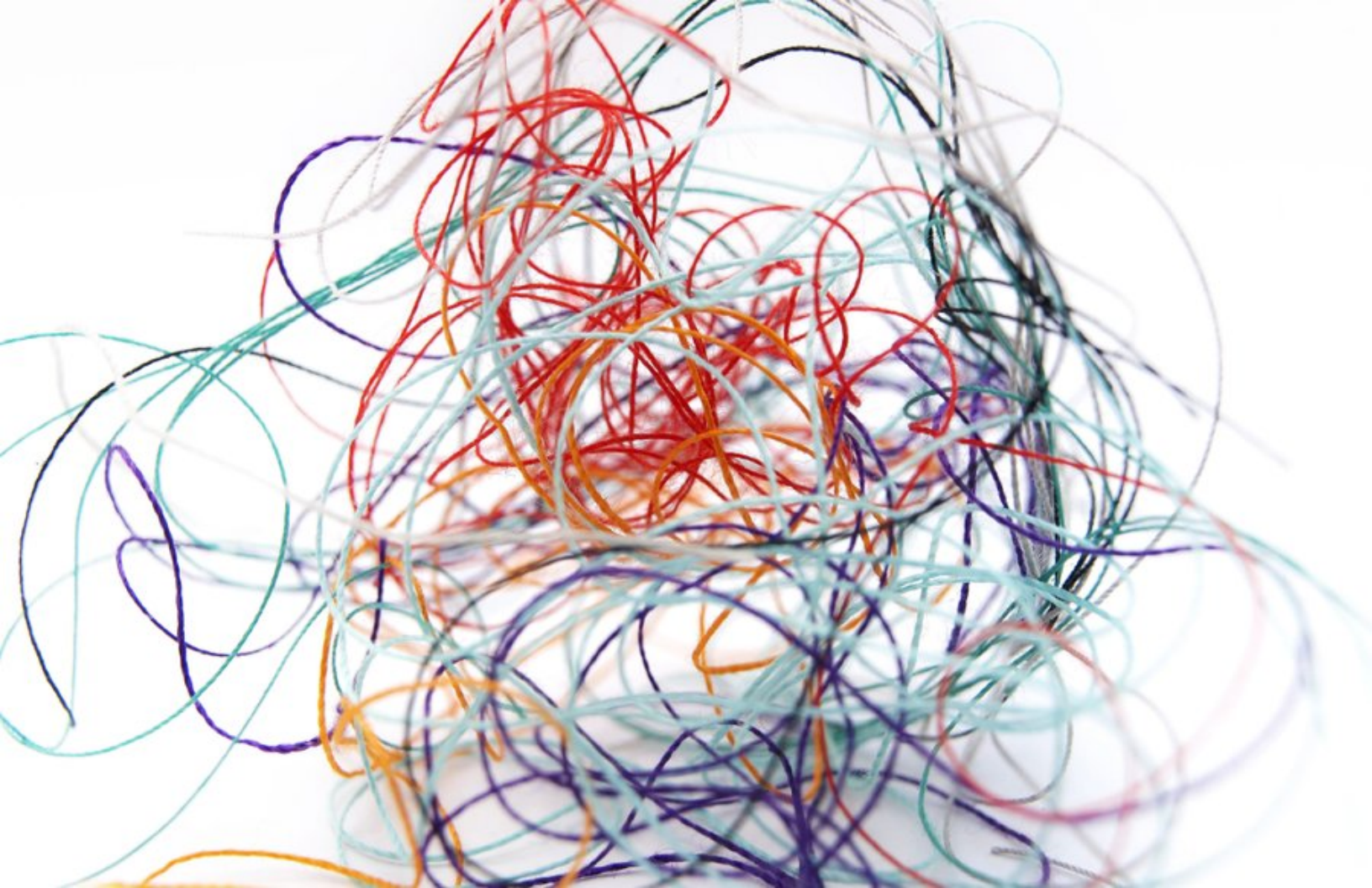
In *Loving Lions*, we read about a manipulative cycle called the "Circle of Chaos and Confusion." It keeps families stuck, constantly putting out fires, chasing new crises, and never getting to the heart of the addiction.

(From "I am a lion" - *"In order for me to be successful, I will need to make you feel pity, guilt, or responsibility and I will do this by using a multi-layered approach. This is the 'Circle of Chaos and Confusion'... It is a useful tool that prevents family members from successfully challenging me."*)

This guide will show you how the circle forms, why it keeps you spinning in conflict, and what first steps you can take to break free—without abandoning the loved one who's struggling.



IDENTIFYING THE CYCLE



The Outer Layer: Current Issues

According to *Loving Lions*, the outer layer is filled with “fixable” or “manageable” scenarios (money problems, bail requests, job struggles), distracting you from the core illness.

- **Constant financial crises**
- **Court or legal troubles**
- **Endless emotional drama**
- **“Fixing” bills, rent, or living situation**

Key Insight: Every time you focus solely on these surface problems, the “lion” keeps you busy and never addresses the addiction itself.

The Inner Layer: Past Issues

Beneath that is a deeper layer—older resentments, guilt, shame, blame, tears. *Loving Lions* points out that these “unfixable” situations keep you emotionally tied up.

from “I am a lion” discussing past issues:

“This inner layer... is filled with various versions of our shared past that I manipulate to justify my current situation. Moments I highlight in order to validate my need or right to drink or use drugs.”

Key Insight: If a family is stuck arguing over these old wounds, they can't unify to set healthy boundaries.



BREAKING FREE— ACTION STEPS



Practical Steps to Exit the Chaos

Recognize Both Layers

1. *"You will try to love me, and help me because it is hard to watch me struggle. You will blame yourself... I will use these moments of self-doubt to keep you from interfering with my drug or alcohol use."* (From "I am a lion")
2. Acknowledge how you're pulled into each layer—stop treating symptoms alone.

Set Boundaries, Not Fixes

1. Instead of paying bills or covering legal fees repeatedly, shift energy toward a core boundary: "I won't rescue you from consequences."
2. Families must unify on these boundaries—fragmented efforts keep the chaos alive.

Focus on Family Stability

3. "Getting out of the way" can feel scary, but it halts the cycle.
4. Lean on personal support (therapy, support groups, or other chapters in *Loving Lions*) to maintain your resolve.

Additional Tips

Small Wins:

Each time you say “no” to a bailout that only fixes a symptom, you reclaim a piece of sanity.

Educate:

Share what you learn with other family members so they don’t slip back into the circle’s illusions.

Dive Deeper:

The chapters “I am a lion,” “Family manipulation,” and “Am I going crazy?” provide deeper context on how addiction manipulates and confuses loved ones.

For additional help, insights, and stories, check out Loving Lions on Amazon, Barnes & Noble, or Audible. And if you have questions, don’t hesitate to message me on social media. We’re in this together.

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