him any longer, he may challenge them to fight, and is usually beaten and thrown out. Eventually, the bartender denies his entry to the bar and, more depressed than ever, the alcoholic moves on to another bar.

At home he finds a quiet place to drink. He avoids his family as much as possible, arrives last for dinner and leaves first. He spends as much time as possible in his “workroom” or his “study” where he’s hidden bottles in concealed hideaways.

Occasionally, he becomes terrifyingly aggressive toward wife, children, or parents. The alcoholic or barbiturate addict is especially dangerous after very heavy consumption of drugs in a home or party atmosphere where the spouse and other family members remain sober. The addict expects criticism from sober family members so he reacts with violence to prevent it. The family member may end up with a black eye, loose teeth, or even a fractured arm or skull.

The following morning, the alcoholic remembers little or nothing about the episode because of “blackout”—memory loss. But the broken face or arm of his loved one reminds him, especially his conscience, of what he has done. All of this “naturally” drives him to the “eye-opener,” the first drink of the day to prevent shakes and gastric upheavals due not only to a damaged nervous system but to extreme guilt. The first drink or pill upon awakening, in other words, is just one more predictable development following loss of control over a mood-altering drug.

In the midst of the downward plunge, job performance naturally falls off. Though the addict usually struggles desperately to maintain his balance on the job, or on duty, he will fail to perform as well as before. He becomes a risk to his company, his unit, his fellow employees, his fellow human beings. He knows it, and slowly others come to know it also.

Naturally, the addict’s family follows him into a “neurotic” tailspin. Most family members, especially wives, first try to deny the addiction just as the addict tries to deny it. The family members become depressed as the addict becomes depressed. Wives in particular tend to blame themselves for their husband’s incredible behavior, and their husbands are only too happy to agree.

ENTER THE COUNSELOR

Typically, the counselor enters the scene at approximately this point. The situation is largely out of control. The addict is out of control in the consumption of his drug. The family is out of control with depression, anxiety, denial, confusion. And job performance is out of control.

I want to emphasize, however, that not all alcoholics or drug addicts reach this level before seeking help. I didn’t. Many alcoholics, seek help in programmed treatment long before they reach a low level of