



LIFTING THE LID

ON DRUG AND ALCOHOL USE AND ABUSE

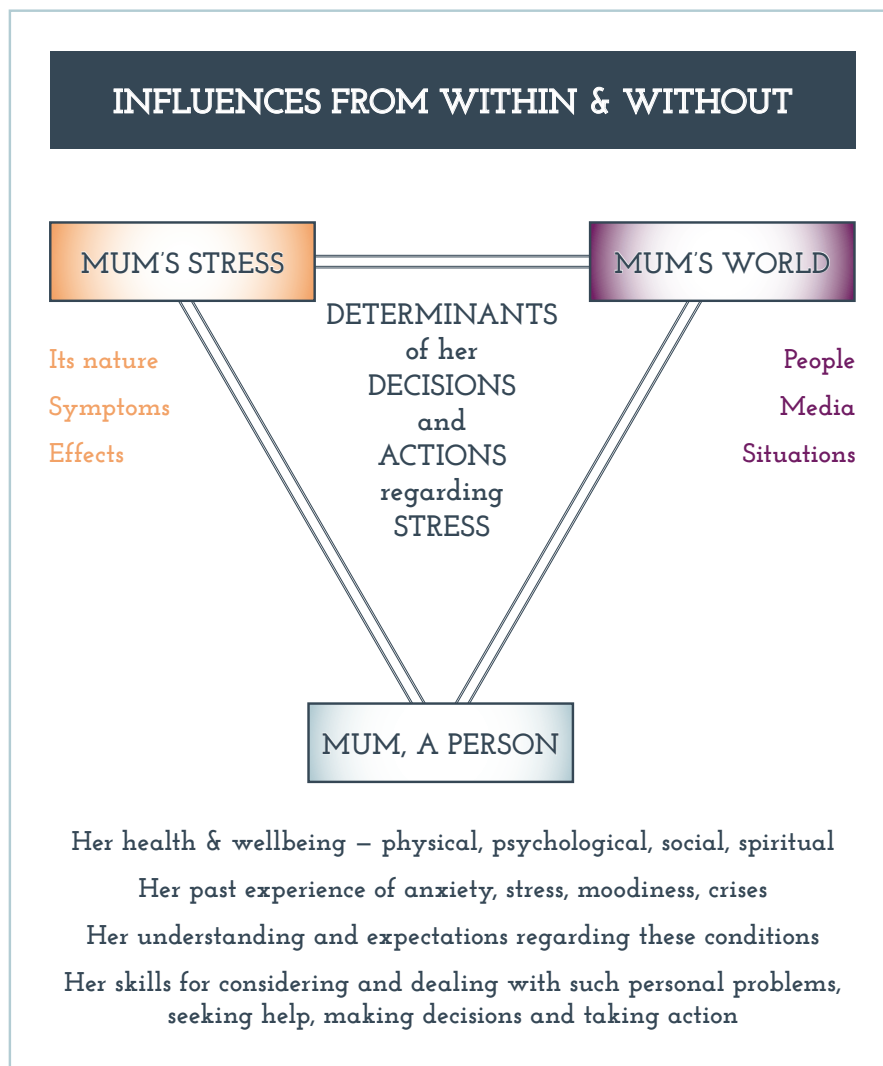
Reactions and concerns of family and friends

‘Now she’s been charged with possessing and using illegal drugs. Her dad’s furious. Of course I’ll stand by her, I’m her mum, but I haven’t slept for days.’

THE DAUGHTER in this example has a drug problem in terms of her choice of behaviour, her jigsaw of life, with her as the ‘Me, a person’ in the triangle of multiple factors which led her to decide to do what she did. It is she who now faces unwanted ‘costs’ which include being charged by the police and being judged harshly by her family, the legal system and society in general.

But her mother also has a problem, sparked off by the daughter’s situation: anxiety, stress, sleeplessness and so on. She is probably having thoughts constantly nag at her: ‘What can I do for her? How can I calm my husband down? What did we do wrong in her upbringing? ...’ and so on.

Let’s label the mother’s concern as ‘Mum’s Stress’ and have it replace ‘Drugs’ in the top left corner of a triangle:



Using the triangle to consider someone’s stress.



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This opens up a whole new lot of factors for consideration which relate to the mother and her problem, her attitude and her reaction to it, and to her finding actions she might take to alleviate her distress. There are influences from her 'World' in play, from that point of her triangle. Of particular importance is all 'the jumble of thoughts and voices' in her own head in her 'Mum, a person' corner. Dealing with these contributors to her distress connected to the three points of her triangle, by herself or with assistance from others, might help the mother cope.

In other words, the various ways in which a drug-user's problem can be scrutinised can also be applied to concerns or problems generated in those close to them. These methods can also be used, hopefully helpfully, where there is no problem with drugs – at least as yet – such as by anyone who is simply wondering about whether to begin using alcohol or other drugs.