

Amanda Bynes: When Help Is Needed But Not Wanted



By Jane

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Amanda Bynes has been in the news recently after a flurry of erratic behavior both in the real world and on Twitter. Drama peaked this week when she was allegedly caught in possession of drug paraphernalia and arrested. Two mug shots were circulated, one of Bynes wearing a flamboyant, platinum wig and the second with the wig removed revealing a new super-cropped haircut. Since the incident, she's lashed out at Rihanna on Twitter saying she had been beaten by Chris Brown for being "not pretty enough."

The child star has been having trouble for a while, including an arrest in 2012 for a DUI. Last month, she announced that she had an eating disorder and posted a photo of herself

wearing only a bra. Since then, she's been sharing increasingly inappropriate photos of herself on Twitter. For those of us on the outside, it is like watching a train wreck: we can see it happening but there really isn't anything we can do. But what about those close to her? Is there anything they can do? And what can you do if you have a friend or family member spinning out of control?

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In Bynes' case, it is hard to know if she is dealing with a drug problem, a mental health condition or something else, but one thing is for sure, she needs help. The reality is, though, she doesn't seem to be taking it. This is something many of us can relate to, the desperate pull to want to help someone in trouble who is flat out refusing to accept it. Your instinct is to throw them a rope, but they just swim in the other direction and cut themselves off from those who love them.

Sometimes friends and family coming together as a united front and doing an intervention can cut through the refusal to help. If that doesn't work, you might consider getting out of their way; on occasion a person has to hit rock bottom before they really take their problem seriously and are willing to accept help. So often people deny the severity of their situation and continue to think they can handle themselves and that they are OK. Realize that unless and until they experience the full impact of their behavior, they may remain unwilling to do anything about it to change.

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It isn't until they reach their lowest point that they can fully appreciate the seriousness of what they are dealing with, and grasp the importance of getting assistance. It is only then that they will want help and reach out to get it, or

accept what is being offered. Of course, stepping aside isn't an easy thing to do. You might feel helpless because they are at risk – if they are dealing with a drug problem the fear is an overdose, if they are mentally ill then you might be worried that they will be self-destructive. The truth is, though, that the more you attempt to help them, the more likely it is that they pull away and isolate themselves further. If you can curb your desire to help so you stop battling with them, then the only person they are fighting is themselves and they might finally be able to reach out and/or accept help.

Know also that if their out-of-control behavior continues to escalate, at some point either the legal system or the mental health system is likely to get involved so that seeking help will no longer be a matter of choice, but rather a necessity.

As difficult as it can be, sometimes the only option when someone is refusing help is to stop offering. Hopefully this will be the case for Amanda and those who know and love her, and she'll be ready to accept true support on her own soon.