

WHERE TO START WHEN A LOVED ONE IS STRUGGLING

Concerned about how drugs, alcohol, or other compulsive behaviors are affecting the life of a loved one?

We've designed this resource to help supporters of individuals who may be struggling with substance use disorder or other compulsive cycles. Recovery is possible, and the sooner your loved one can get support, the better. However, the type, quality, and processing of accessing help matters immensely. Please note that we are not medical professionals, and this resource should not be considered medical advice.

Why Is Getting Help Important?

Recovery is unique to the individual, because challenges with drugs and alcohol are often complex, bio-psycho-social-spiritual challenges -- meaning they affect one's mind, body, and emotions. People with substance use disorders (SUDs) struggle to simply "stop" unhealthy behaviors because of the patterns that have been developed in their brains through previous use. Personalized support is needed to address both current behaviors and the roots underneath -- the pain, trauma, or co-occurring challenges that motivates the desire to use. Starting recovery sooner can prevent the cycles from becoming more embedded and reduce the consequences that behaviors bring. The motivation of an individual and the support they feel is incredibly important; check out our resources designed to help people show up well. [Learn more about SUDs here.](#)

How Can I Tell If a Loved One Has an Addiction?

Understanding the severity of a loved one's struggle can be hard. Our friends at the nonprofit Shatterproof have adapted the 11 questions used by the American Psychiatric Association's DSM 5 framework here, which can help you understand the severity of the issue. They are not meant to replace medical advice from a physician, psychiatrist, or other medical professional, which is the best place to start.

Does My Loved One Need Treatment?

Check out the [Addiction Treatment Needs Assessment](#). This clinician-designed online questionnaire, created by the nonprofit Shatterproof, offers information on possible treatment needs. It's a quick 13 question quiz that your loved one can take or that you can complete on their behalf.

Finding Help Is Complex -- Where Do I Start?

You can find free, local, community-based support groups in nearly every geography. Many of these have specific focus areas or approaches: twelve-step, faith-based, non-religious, or catering to specific types of substance use disorders like narcotics or population groups. Treatment is an important part of recovery for many, but it is important to be careful about navigating these decisions. Sadly, there have been cases of fraudulent practices and misrepresentation of services, due to financial motivations. Still, there are many wonderful programs that are not like this, including both more basic, government-funded facilities, and programs with more amenities available through private insurance or cash pay. Shatterproof created the [ATLAS tool](#) to help identify quality treatment providers. Talk to medical professionals in your area. Interventionists, therapists, and counselors may have information on providers they trust. Learn about the various forms of treatment and levels of care. If considering a treatment program, make sure to speak directly to practitioners onsite, and not just a third-party or call center. Call your insurance company to talk through options, and make sure that services are actually covered.

Get the Support *You* Need.

Strengthen your process.

Get our free emotional health guide for supporters

Looking for support?

Book a 1-on-1 session with a recovery guide.

Needing encouragement?

Join our private Facebook community for recovery supporters