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How to Deal with a Drug Addicted Family Member

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When family members or loved ones abuse drugs, it affects everyone they know. Their addiction can have emotional, psychological, financial, and environmental effects on the people who care about them most. Follow the advice below to cope with a drug-addicted family member or loved one.

Method 1 of 4: Educate Yourself About Addiction



1. Search online for information about your loved one's form of addiction.

The optimal plan for addiction management and rehabilitation may vary according to the substance on which your loved one is dependent.

Priorities reading information from sites with a medical or scientific bias or trustworthy sites such as government or university sponsored information. There is information on the web but not everything you read about drug addiction is true or realistic.

Learning about the characteristics of your loved one's drug and addiction can help you understand what to expect from addicts and how to best address the situation.

2. Look out for organizations such as Al-Anon, Ala-Teen and Nar-Anon which offer 12 Step programs for the families and friends of alcoholics and addicts.



They offer support for dealing with the addict and sharing with people in similar situations to you will quickly help you to understand the realities of addiction and recovery. These programs will also help you to recover from the emotional effects of a relationship with an active addict.

Method 2 of 4: Seek Professional and Specialist Help



1. Look into local detox clinics and rehabilitation centers. Ask a health professional or search online for local health facilities and inpatient care centers that can treat minors or willing addicts.

- Many drug addicts have other conditions – such as an undiagnosed mental health problem – that contributes to their addiction, so finding a detox center or hospital

that can address all aspects of health for your loved one can make the difference between temporary and permanent recovery.



2. Search for local anonymous support groups.

Besides detoxification and rehabilitation, your loved one may need to attend group or independent therapy.

- Many organizations exist with regular (often daily) meetings to promote drug-free living and a support network of individuals who have conquered their addictions.
- These groups often offer anonymous support and follow the 12-Step program initially developed for Alcoholics Anonymous.



3. Speak with a professional therapist or counselor.

Besides learning about resources for your addicted loved one, it can be helpful for you and other family members to speak with a therapist or family counselor.

- Living with a drug addicted loved one can cause significant stress on other members of the household. Family therapy can be of tremendous help to confused or stressed parents, children, or romantic partners.
- Many schools have counselors available to help parents deal with drug-addicted children.



4. Encourage your loved one to seek help.

Do not ignore the drug use of your loved one. Instead, accept the addiction and the strain it is putting on the family or relationship. Respectfully ask or encourage your loved one to attend a doctor's visit, therapy session, anonymous support group session, or detoxification clinic.

Method 3 of 4: Stage an Intervention

1. Ask for help from a professional.



Interventions should be planned and led by a professional for the best chance of success. A botched intervention risks your loved one becoming even more committed to their addiction.



2. Plan the intervention.

Decide who should be there, who will lead the session, how you will involve the addict, and what activities you will do during the intervention. Many interventions are led by a trained drug therapist or family counselor and have family members, friends, clergy members or teachers, and other influential people from the addict's life in attendance. Consider all these options while planning an intervention suited to your loved one's situation.



3. Confront your loved one about his or her substance abuse.

Some interventions involve a series of personal requests from loved ones to ask the addict to enter detox therapy and rehabilitation, while others involve reading letters to the addict aloud or sharing personal feelings about the difficulty of seeing a loved one suffer from addiction. Be prepared for what you will do depending on your loved one's response.

Method 4 of 4: Persevere but Set Boundaries



1. Offer your emotional support but do not enable the addiction.

Do not give money to your loved one to allow him or her to continue to buy drugs or alcohol, but do remind your loved one that you are ready and willing to help him or her find help.



2. Develop effective communication skills.

Many difficult relationships can fall into communication ruts that make it harder for both parties to express themselves effectively.

- Consider reading a self-help book or speaking with a counselor about the appropriate way to address a loved one who suffers from addiction.
- Learning how to communicate better can enable you to focus on conversations that make progress toward seeking help instead of spiraling into negativity, blaming, threats, or shouting matches.



3. Offer to attend therapy with your addicted loved one.

If you suspect that your loved one is unable or unwilling to attend therapy or support groups alone, make it clear that you are willing to offer support by attending sessions or detoxification treatment with him or her.



4. Know your limits and don't accept unacceptable behavior.

Be prepared to maintain personal safety by cutting ties if the addict's behavior warrants it. Behavior that may lead you to consider whether you need to separate yourself and any other family members you care for from the situation include:

- If your family member or loved one is violent or abusive toward you or other family members or loved ones
- Endangering the home or family with risky behavior (such as using drugs near children or conducting drug deals on the property),
- Putting the family's economic stability in jeopardy (by draining the bank account or selling items from the home to pay for the habit)
- If necessary, consider options such as reporting the addict's illegal behavior to civil authorities, admitting a minor to an in-patient substance abuse program, relocating without announcing your new location, or demanding the addict leave the home and not return until sober.

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[10 Survival Tips For Loving An Addict \(https://addictioneducationociety.org/10-survival-tips-for-loving-an-addict/\)](https://addictioneducationociety.org/10-survival-tips-for-loving-an-addict/)

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[Naloxone: Everything You Need to Know \(https://addictioneducationociety.org/naloxone-everythingyouneedtoknow/\)](https://addictioneducationociety.org/naloxone-everythingyouneedtoknow/)

[Helping A Child With Addiction \(https://addictioneducationociety.org/helping-child-addiction/\)](https://addictioneducationociety.org/helping-child-addiction/)



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