

**GUIDELINES
FOR FAMILIES OF
ALCOHOLIC/CHEMICALLY
DEPENDENT PERSONS**

1. Don't regard Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency as a family DISGRACE. Recovery from this disease can and does happen.
2. Don't nag, preach, or lecture. Chances are they have already told themselves everything you can tell them. They will take just so much and shut out the rest. You may only increase their need to lie or force them to make promises they cannot possibly keep.
3. Guard against the "holier than thou" or martyr-like attitudes. It is possible to create this impression without saying a word. Begin to look at your own attitudes and behaviors.
4. Don't use the "if you loved me" appeal. Since the drinking/using is compulsive and cannot be controlled by willpower, this approach cannot work. It's like saying "If you loved me, you would not have sugar Diabetes".
5. Don't be jealous of the method of recovery that is chosen. The tendency is to think that love of home and family is enough incentive for seeking recovery. Frequently the motivation of regaining self-respect is more compelling than early resumption of family responsibilities.
6. Don't do for the alcoholic/chemically dependent persons what they can do for themselves ... or that which must be done by themselves. You cannot take their medicine for them. Don't remove the problem before they can face it, solve it, or suffer the consequences.
7. Begin to understand and live ONE DAY AT A TIME.
8. Begin to learn the facts about this disease and the role that you have in it. Be willing to assume responsibility for your own life completely and abandon any attempt to change him/her - even for their own good. Stop trying to manage their lives and begin to manage your own.
9. Begin to learn the 12 Steps as taught in Al-Anon and apply them to your life on a daily basis as a recovery program. Start with Step 1, admitting powerlessness over another person and recognizing unmanageability in your own life.
10. Be willing to recognize that your former methods have not worked. You no longer must face this disease alone. There is a power greater than you - however you perceive that power - that can support you in your efforts to be free to choose instead of simply reacting.

County of Santa Clara Employee Assistance Program

www.sceap.org

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