



How to support a loved one who is new to recovery.

The road to recovery is a personal journey. Whether you're facing a substance use disorder or if you're supporting a loved one on their recovery journey, every individual is responsible for their own health and well-being.

Most people are unsure how to support a person in recovery and that's understandable. Here are some suggestions that can help family members welcome a loved one back home.

Before someone returns home from treatment, you may want to educate yourself about substance use disorders. You'll begin to understand your loved one's mindset and the possible reasons they continue to use substances.

Educating yourself will also help you recognize potential triggers that may influence them. It will also help you understand that you are not responsible for your loved one's journey.

Recovery is a systemic process, so that the learning and healing can unfold in you and your family – as well as in the person who is working directly on their substance use.

Where do you start?

Among the first things to do is to take a personal inventory of your home and dispose of any mood-altering or mind-altering substances. Consider getting a locked container if you must keep prescription medications in your home.

If family meals and celebrations include alcohol, perhaps consider opting for mocktails or alcohol-free options to help create new habits or traditions for your family.

Look for local, family-friendly activities that will be sure to keep the mind busy and the body active. It will help to relieve stress and kick-start a healthier lifestyle, possibly introducing your loved one to a community of like-minded individuals.

Equally important is encouraging an open line of communication through patience and understanding. Remaining honest and non-judgmental allows a person to feel safe and encourages them to interact with you in the same open manner.

What to expect when a loved one returns home.

After returning home from a treatment program, your loved one will most likely attend meetings and groups as part of their aftercare program. They may have also developed a routine that helps them stay accountable while focusing on sobriety and avoiding stressors that may cause them to return to use.

It's important to remember that your friend or family member in recovery must focus on themselves to maintain and grow their confidence while living a life without substances. As their recovery progresses, they will begin to focus on mending the other aspects of their lives, including relationships, hobbies, and careers.

During this time, you may want to attend your own support group. McCall has highly trained counselors that can help. You can also feel free to reach out directly to me, your Family Recovery Coach.

Recognizing the signs of a return to use.

Often, when an individual returns to using substances, there are signs you will be able to spot. If your loved one begins speaking about the good old days, hanging out with friends who use substances or going back to places associated with their substance use, you may be seeing signs of a potential return to use.

Here are other indicators to look out for:

- Any sudden changes in appetite, attitude, and/or sleep patterns.
- Not attending groups and meetings.
- Leaving behind the activities that first helped them in recovery.
- A loss of interest in their hobbies.
- Keeping secrets.

If you notice any of these signs, it's important to speak to your support system. Together you can come up with a way to approach the situation and, if a return to use has indeed occurred, you can help to encourage your loved one to seek treatment. Be sure to keep in mind that you are not personally responsible for your loved one's recovery journey.

Things for you to consider concerning a loved one with substance use disorder.

- Avoid pushing your loved one to do too much too soon.
- Let the recoveree focus on getting well, which will in turn strengthen the family relationship.
- Communicate honestly from a place of love, kindness, and respect.
- Recognize that nothing you do or say can cause your loved one to return to using substances.
- Make your own recovery plan, with achievable, realistic goals.
- Try not to blame yourself.

Remember, you must take care of yourself. Self-care is essential.

If you have a loved one who is considering entering substance use treatment and you'd like to learn more – or you'd like to work on creating a wellness plan for yourself during this critical time – please feel free to reach out to me at Alicia.Peterson@mccallbhn.org or 959.229.4814.



McCall's Family Recovery Coach Program is grant funded and provided at no-cost to all participants.

For more information contact:

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Resources

McCall Behavioral Health Network

860.496.2100
mccallbhn.org

McCall's Recovering Together Group

Meets every Wednesday,
5:30PM via Zoom.
For more info, email:
leann.mitchell@mccallbhn.org

NAMI CT, Waterbury

Paul Brainerd
860.882.8674 or 860.310.4055
pbrainerd@namict.org

Sound Community Services

New London
Amy Faenza
860.439.6443
amy.faenza@soundct.org

Clifford Beers Clinic

New Haven
Christine Montgomery
203.915.4074
cmontgomery@cliffordbeers.org

Community Renewal Team

Hartford and Middletown
Casie DeRosier
860.549.3350
derosierc@crtct.org

TriCircle, Hope and Support Groups

Hope After Loss Groups
Ana Gopoiian
860.349.7074
ana@tricircle.or

Our Contact Information

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