



Helping a friend or family member struggling with alcohol or drugs can be heartbreakingly painful but, with help, it can be remarkably rewarding. At times, it can seem so overwhelming that it would be easier to ignore it, pretend that nothing is wrong and hope it just goes away. In the long run, however, denying it or minimizing it, will be more damaging to you, other family members, and the person you are concerned about. **Don't Wait, Now Is The Time.**

If you are **still wondering** if now is the time....here are some quick questions:

- Do you worry about how much your friend or loved one uses alcohol or drugs?
- Do you lie or make excuses about their behavior when they drink or use drugs?
- Do they get angry with you if you try to discuss their drinking or drug use?
- Have you ever been hurt or embarrassed by their behavior when they're drunk, stoned, or strung-out?
- Do you have concerns about how much time and money they spend on alcohol and drugs?
- Do you resent having to pick up their responsibilities because they are drunk, high or hungover?
- Do you ever get scared or nervous about their behavior when they're drinking or using drugs?
- Do you ever feel like you're losing it--"going crazy"--just really stressed out?
- Have you ever considered calling the police because of their alcohol or drug use or their behavior while under the influence?

Alcoholism and drug dependence are complex problems, with many related issues. And, although there is no magic formula to help someone stop his or her drinking or drug use, **you are not alone. We are here to help.**

[NCADD Affiliates](#) offer a range of services including help for individuals and family members. If you are concerned about your own alcohol or other drug use or that of someone you care about—a child or other relative, a friend or co-worker—**please make the contact.** You will be able to speak to someone who will listen, assess your needs and provide information about available services, costs and how to deal with another person's alcohol and/or drug use. **Help is just a call or visit away—Make the contact now!**

To get you started, here are some important suggestions:

- **Learn All You Can About Alcoholism and Drug Dependence:** Utilize the resources we have provided including, Learn About Alcohol, Learn About Drugs and For Friends and Family.
- **Speak Up and Offer Your Support:** Talk to the person about your concerns, and offer your help and support, including your willingness to go with them and get help. Like other chronic diseases, the earlier addiction is treated, the better.

- **Express Love, Concern and Support:** Don't wait for them to "hit bottom." You may be met with excuses, denial or anger, but be prepared to respond with specific examples of behavior that has you worried.
- **Don't Expect the Person to Stop Without Help.** You have heard it before- promises to cut down, stop, but it doesn't work. Treatment, support, and new coping skills are needed to overcome addiction to alcohol and drugs.
- **Support Recovery as an Ongoing Process:** Once your friend or family member is receiving treatment, or going to meetings, remain involved. While maintaining your own commitment to getting help, continue to support their participation in continuing care, meetings and recovery support groups. Continue to show that you are concerned about and supportive of their long-term recovery.

Some Things You Don't Want To Do:

- **Don't Preach:** Don't lecture, threaten, bribe, preach or moralize.
- **Don't Be A Martyr:** Avoid emotional appeals that may only increase feelings of guilt and the compulsion to drink or use other drugs.
- **Don't Cover Up,** lie or make excuses for them and their behavior.
- **Don't Assume Their Responsibilities:** Taking over their responsibilities protects them from the consequences of their behavior.
- **Don't Argue When Using:** When they are using alcohol or drugs, they can't have a rational conversation.
- **Don't Feel Guilty** or responsible for their behavior, it's not your fault.
- **Don't Join Them:** Don't try to keep up with them by drinking or using.

For additional information, [Learn About Alcohol](#), [Learn About Drugs](#) or [Get Help](#) may be helpful.