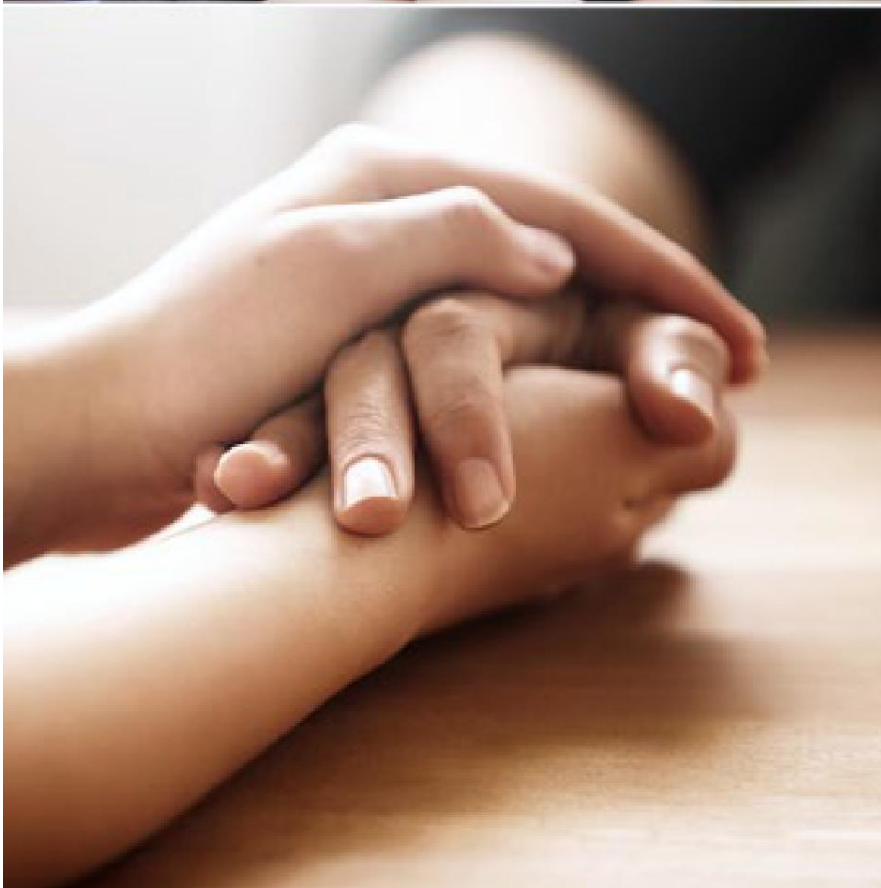




## When Someone You Love Has a Substance Use Disorder



### Overview

It's painful to watch a family member or friend struggle with substance abuse. It can be frustrating and scary. But don't lose hope - it can get better. Here are things you can do to make the journey to recovery easier for you and your loved one.

### Educate yourself

First, you need to learn about what your loved one is going through. You need to know what treatments are available. So learn all you can about your loved one's addiction. There are plenty of organizations that can help. Call a helpline or look online to find the information you need. Consider private therapy sessions for yourself to help you see how their addiction is affecting you. And you may want to join a support group for people dealing with a loved one's addiction.

### Communicate

Next, be open and honest with your loved one. When they are not under the influence, talk with them about their addiction. Let them know how you feel about it. Give them examples of things they have done that have hurt you or caused you to worry. Offer your love and support, and be willing to help them get the help they need. This is important, because they may not be able to beat their addiction on their own.

### Support their recovery

Finally, stay involved throughout their treatment. Encourage them to go to therapy sessions and group meetings. Take time to do things together that are relaxing and enjoyable. Eating meals together, getting regular exercise and doing craft projects are all things that can help you and your loved one stay focused and engaged in a positive way.

### Conclusion

Your loved one's substance abuse problem is not your fault, so don't feel guilty. But don't let them manipulate you, and don't cover for them when they make mistakes. Just be honest, loving and supportive. Together, you can beat addiction.

Actor portrayals in photos

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