



Living with an Addiction

Making a commitment to live in recovery requires a recognition of and acceptance of certain realities. Living with a person who is actively using is unhealthy, but what happens after the substance use stops? Does life eventually go back to normal? Can a recovering person lead the same lifestyle as a person who has never been addicted? If you are in a relationship with a recovering person, what effect can you expect the recovery to have on your life? If you are a recovering person, what do you need your spouse, partner, or family member to understand about the limits an addiction puts on your life? Discuss the following principles and determine if they are relevant in your relationship.

1. A recovering person needs to learn his or her own limits and relapse signals.
2. A recovering person needs to respond to the relapse signals as a first priority.
3. Family members of a recovering person need to understand that he or she needs to avoid relapse even when that avoidance takes priority over the relationship and the family. Avoiding relapse is in everyone's best interest.
4. A recovering person has to maintain a balanced lifestyle, more so than if there had been no addiction.
5. Recovery is a process—a slow process—and all aspects of it, including sexual readjustment and reestablishment of trust, may occur slowly.
6. It is often difficult for family members to live without a guarantee that the addiction will not reoccur.

Questions

1. Which of these principles apply to your situation? Explain.

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2. Which of these principles will be difficult for either of you to accept? Explain.

3. What other problems have you experienced within your relationship during recovery?

4. In what ways can you help each other live within these realities?

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