



Assuming My Role in the Family

(Middle Stage of Recovery)

In the adjustment phase of treatment, people often try to move back into their traditional places in the family. As parents, they may feel the need to quickly assume their role and set boundaries, disciplining their children. This may be awkward and create friction because they may not have been in a parental role for a long time, due to their substance use and/or criminal behaviors. For some, jail or prison may have kept them away from their family for long periods of time. Recovering offenders sometimes try to “pick up where they left off.” They may feel comfortable doing so, but the family may not. Family members may have some strong reactions to this new situation.

In the following list, check the statements that apply to you and your family since your recovery.

- My children aren't sure how to approach me.
- Other family members keep their distance.
- I feel like I need to discipline and set boundaries now that I'm home and doing better.
- Communication has improved.
- Communication has become worse.
- Because of my past domestic violence, my family still does not trust me to manage my emotions.
- I no longer use, but family members still use and that's hard for me.
- My significant other was helpful in my recovery but now seems uninterested in what I'm doing.
- I feel like I don't know my family any more.
- I'm a parent, and I need to return to that role.

ASSUMING MY ROLE IN THE FAMILY | *continued*

_____ We're all having problems with me being sober and back at home.

_____ As a family, we're getting along better than we ever have.

_____ Some of my old using buddies and anti-social peers are still friends of my family, and they visit.

_____ Since my recovery, I communicate better and discuss my feelings appropriately with my family.

_____ Others (list below):

Remember, treatment staff will help you manage the new feelings and emotions around returning to your family and adjusting to your family role in sobriety. These are common issues for people newly in recovery.

• • •