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TOP 10 WAYS TO HELP YOUR LOVED ONE
STRUGGLING WITH AN ADDICTION:

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1 DON'T KEEP IT A SECRET

Ask your loved one about your concerns. You might say, for example: "I'm worried because you are drinking a lot." Be specific: "Your drinking is causing me the following problems..."

2 DON'T JUDGE IT OR LABEL IT

Addiction is a disease. Shaming your loved one doesn't help, it just keeps them using.

3 STOP MAKING RESCUE EFFORTS

Don't make excuses for your loved one. Don't get them out of jams caused by their addictions. Let them face the problems caused by their addiction – so they can become motivated to stop.

4 OFFER TO HELP

Call AA and get a meeting schedule. Buy a copy of the Big Book. Call a treatment center. Present a plan.

5 CALL A FRIEND

If your loved one won't listen to you, maybe they will listen to a friend in recovery. Or a caring, nonjudgmental friend – it usually takes more than one try to persuade an addict to accept help.

6 BE STRATEGIC IN YOUR TIMING

Talk with your loved one after they have experienced a problem resulting from their using. Wait until they are sober, and when both of you can speak calmly.

7 STATE THE CONSEQUENCES

Tell your loved one what you are prepared to do if they don't get help. Do not make any threats you don't mean.

8 REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE POWERLESS

You can't control your loved one or their addiction. You can only plant a seed. It is up to him or her to change – but they have much better chances with your support, understanding and encouragement.

9 GET HELP FOR YOURSELF

Talk to a therapist or a trusted religious adviser. Check out a local or on-line Al-Anon meeting. You need support, too.

10 GET EDUCATED

Learn about addiction. It is a treatable disease.