



## OVERCOMING UNHELPFUL BEHAVIORS



**SMART**  
Family & Friends

How can you overcome your impulses to fix, nag, and protect?

Start by making a list of specific things that you do that you suspect may be supporting your LO's addictive behavior (remember the three categories: nagging, fixing, protecting).

### Ask Yourself:

1. **Why am I doing these things? What am I telling myself about this situation that has been making it ok for me to do these things? Some things that you may be telling yourself:**

My Loved One (LO) *needs* my help (and I **MUST** help her)  
I can't be happy until my LO changes  
It hurts me to see this  
I'm the only one my LO trusts to help him fight this addiction

2. **Has my behavior been effective in solving the problem?**
3. **What's stopping me from changing my behaviors? For example:**

I don't want to hurt my LO  
He/she will be angry with me  
It's going to hurt **ME** to no longer protect my child  
I just don't see how it will make any difference

4. **Challenge your reasons for continuing your behaviors:**

Will changing my behaviors truly hurt my LO? Yes, she may get angry, but what is that in comparison to the long-term HARM of addiction that I am working to avoid? What will hurt **ME** more: changing my behaviors, or knowing that I didn't do everything I could? What can I expect to happen if I *don't change*? Will things get better?

5. **Choose an unhelpful behavior that you'd like to change.**

Use the **Change Plan Worksheet** to plan how you will implement your change. Consider which SMART tools might be helpful to you in planning your new behavior (e.g., positive communication, healthy boundaries).

### Expected Outcome of Allowing Natural Consequences

Can you expect your LO to pursue recovery as soon as you change your behaviors? Unfortunately, there are no guarantees that your LO will seek recovery, no matter what course of action you choose to take. If you do change your behaviors to allow for negative consequences, it is even possible that the situation may appear to get worse before it gets better.

Changing how you interact with your LO will feel uncomfortable at first. This is normal. Remember just because your new behavior may **FEEL** wrong, that doesn't mean it **IS** wrong. Congratulate yourself for the really hard working you're doing, keep your eye on your goals and remember the Three Ps: Be **PATIENT** with yourself, **PRACTICE** what you are learning here, and be **PERSISTENT**.

