



Supporting a loved one after drug rehab

Question

Dear Alice,

I want to thank you and Columbia for this wonderful service! I have been browsing your archives for some help, here is the situation: I want to know what I can do to support my significant other when he is released from Drug Rehabilitation. Please help me!

Sincerely, Keeping Clean After Rehab

Answer

Dear Keeping Clean After Rehab,

Glad you have found this site useful! It may be difficult to figure out the best way to offer support to your significant other (SO) who's managing their recovery, but you're already partway there by asking this question! A good place to start could be to reach out to his rehab program. They may be able to offer tips and strategies for what to do and not do when your SO first comes home. Thinking in advance about what you can and will do may prove helpful but being flexible if things change. It's also a good idea to talk with your SO about what they need or anticipate needing in the coming days, weeks, and months. Doing so can help ensure that the ways in which you're providing support are helpful for him. It's also worth noting that the best form of support could also be listening and helping him process through the experience. Read on for additional factors to think about when you're supporting someone returning from rehab.

One of the best ways to figure out what your significant other needs in this situation is to ask. While this may sound basic, it could actually prove challenging. His time in rehab may have been one of the most difficult that he's experienced. You may have questions about it and he may or may not want to answer them. Perhaps the two of you can establish some communication guidelines, which could include how you'll communicate with each other in both easy and difficult times. This can also include what topics you each feel comfortable talking about and which ones are off-limits. It might also be helpful to think about how you'll know if he needs some space or needs you close. Beyond your relationship, it could be good to check in to see what might he need from friends or family members you both know.

In addition to asking him about his needs, it's also good to be there to listen to his problems, fears, and plans for getting through this tough time — all while doing what you can to reduce social and environmental stressors. One way you can be supportive is by not drinking, smoking pot, or using any other substances — even if you're able to use them in moderation. Maybe you can offer to take him to post-rehab meetings or consider joining a support group yourself. It's good to hear what others who've been through a similar experience have to say. That way, you won't feel so alone and it may help you gain insight into other support strategies. Through all of this, it's also key to take care of yourself. Compromising your own well-being will impact your mental and physical

health, not to mention your ability to care for others.

Keeping Clean After Rehab, the first few weeks and months will probably be the hardest. Your SO will most likely go through periods of emotional ups and downs as he continues to manage his recovery. He may be angry at times (at himself, at you, at others, or just angry), sad at other times, or even may seem manipulative or distant. You may consider sharing as many of your reactions, fears, and feelings as possible. It may be helpful to point out any and all positives, and offer hope and compassion. There isn't a "one size fits all" roadmap to rehab or sobriety. If you'd like additional support, groups such as Al-Anon, Nar-Anon, and SMART Recovery Family & Friends are examples of resources for those with loved ones managing addiction and recovery.

By taking the time to ask this question, you've already shown that you're willing to navigate some tough terrain with your significant other. Opening the lines of communication, learning more, and making sure you have support will help guide the way forward together.

Health topic

Alcohol & Other Drugs

Helping & Getting Help

Source URL: <:///answered-questions/supporting-loved-one-after-drug-rehab>

List of links present in page

- <:///answered-questions/supporting-loved-one-after-drug-rehab>
- <https://al-anon.org/>
- <https://www.nar-anon.org/>
- <https://www.smartrecovery.org/family/>
- <:///category/alcohol-other-drugs>
- <:///category/helping-getting-help>
- <:///node/80388/printable/print>