



Addiction Recovery Program

Support in Recovery

THE IMPORTANCE OF FINDING SUPPORT

Support from others is important to help us find recovery and healing. Having someone we can turn to in times of weakness often proves to be essential. Denial and isolation are hallmarks of compulsive and addictive behaviors. It is easy to fall back into these behaviors without the support and perspective of others. It is important for us to get support as soon as possible in our recovery.

Connecting with others not only provides the encouragement we may need but also helps us remember that we are worthy of love as a child of God. As we reach out to others for support, we are blessed, and those that support us are blessed as well. As we use the 12 steps and seek support from others, we may benefit from the following sources of support:

1. **Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost.** Heavenly Father, Jesus Christ, and the Holy Ghost are our greatest sources of support. Change is made possible through Jesus Christ and His Atonement. In the Book of Mormon, the prophet Alma shares that Christ “will take upon him their infirmities, that his bowels may be filled with mercy, according to the flesh, that he may know according to the flesh how to succor his people according to their infirmities” (Alma 7:12). We will feel succored and nurtured when we humbly go to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ. It is important not to overlook the help of the Savior through the Atonement. He has taught us, “I am the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). The Holy Ghost can give us comfort, peace, and spiritual strength to keep moving forward.
2. **Family members.** Family members can be a source of support by offering love and acceptance. They may be able to increase their ability to support by applying the gospel principles taught in the *Spouse and Family Support Guide*. Though not all family members will be in an emotional position to provide comfort, those who can are often of the most powerful sources of support.
3. **Friends.** Friends can provide love and support when we talk with them about our struggles, whether or not we confide in them about the details. When friends have the courage to point out behaviors that we need to stop, or when they encourage us to seek help, we can move forward in our progress toward recovery. As we experience love and support from friends, it can remind us of our worth and value.

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4. **Ecclesiastical leaders.** Ecclesiastical leaders can provide essential support in the process of change. These leaders can help us feel the love of the Savior and play a key role in helping us repent and become spiritually clean from compulsive and addictive behaviors.
 5. **Sponsors.** A sponsor is someone who has found recovery by working through the 12 steps. Because of their experience, they know how to help us work through and apply the steps. They can usually recognize dishonesty and understand other difficulties even when we may not be aware of them. A sponsor is there to help us put our “[life] into perspective and avoid exaggerating or minimizing our accountability” (*A Guide to Addiction Recovery and Healing*, 29).
 6. **Recovery meetings.** Support meetings are a safe place where we can find acceptance, love, and support. In these meetings we share our experience as well as our faith and hope for recovery through the Savior Jesus Christ and applying the 12 steps in our lives. Sharing our experiences may help us work toward needed changes and find hope that recovery and healing are possible.
 7. **Mental health and medical professionals.** Professionals can often provide insight and unique skills necessary to recover and heal from compulsive and addictive behaviors. If we are still struggling with compulsive and addictive behaviors even as we participate in the Addiction Recovery Program, we should consider seeking professional help from a mental health or medical professional. When seeking professional help, Church members should choose someone who is supportive of gospel principles.

Choosing People to Support You

In the Church’s Addiction Recovery Program, you are not assigned a sponsor or a support system. Deciding when and whom to ask for help is a personal decision. Prayerfully consider those around you who you feel most comfortable asking for help, or who would be the most helpful for you. Generally, the more people you have as a support, the better your chances are of achieving recovery. Once you identify those who you would like in your support system, it can be humbling and scary to ask for their help. However, as you do, you may be surprised at the amount of love and acceptance you feel. The more you connect with others, the more opportunities you will have to receive love.

When choosing people to support you, realize they must be extremely trustworthy. Some of the most effective people to support you are those who have a current connection to you (parents, spouse, family, Church leaders), want you to be successful, are fully active in the Church, and understand or have a desire to understand the exact nature of the challenge you face. Someone who has overcome his or her own challenges often has greater empathy for the challenges others experience. Those with similar challenges often have a greater ability to empathize with your struggle.

As you begin the process of change, you may be physically, emotionally, and spiritually vulnerable. Be cautious to not develop an inappropriate relationship with anyone who supports you.

