

How You Are Enabling a Loved One's Addiction (and how to stop)

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Most people like to help other people, but when it comes to addiction, sometimes help isn't always appropriate. ***Here some ways you may inadvertently be enabling addictive behaviors and keeping a loved one from going down a path of recovery.***

- **Lying:** You might be calling in sick for your spouse when they have a bad hangover. You might also be lying to yourself about the addictive behaviors and saying that things aren't that bad. It's better to face the truth, and let the addict face the result of their own behaviors.
- **Making excuses for the addict's behavior:** Addicts are great at making excuses for their behavior. Don't do the same. You might tell yourself or others that the addict is "going through a rough patch" or "had a difficult childhood" or has "x diagnosis." Stop making excuses and see things as they really are – the addiction won't go away on its own. The addict needs professional help to recover.
- **Sacrificing your own needs for the whims of the addict:** Don't expect an addict to understand or care about your own needs. Whether it is a basic need such as food, housing, or shelter, or other human needs such as trust, fidelity, affection, and honesty – be sure to make sure your needs are met before sacrificing yourself to addictive whims. And don't forget to ask for help if you need it, so you can get the support you deserve.
- **Avoiding confrontation:** It can be quite difficult to confront an addict about his or her addiction. They might be in denial or blame you. However, the more people that confront the addict about his or her addiction, the harder it is for the addict to avoid addressing the issue. Be brave, and remember that confrontation is an act of caring.
- **Giving the addict money:** It's not uncommon for people to suffer bankruptcy, unpaid bills, low credit scores, and other financial disasters all because they gave money to addicts. Money does not help addicts recover. It

only lets them keep going on their path of destruction. Save your money and your financial reputation. Give addicts what they really need – honesty, care, and accountability.

- **Becoming their personal manager:** Addicts introduce a sense of personal chaos in the way they live their lives. It's only natural for others to try to help by organizing and managing everything for the addict, who might seem quite helpless. However, if you start doing things for an individual that they should be able to do on their own, such as paying bills, making sure they arrive at work on time, or eating good meals, you are keeping them from taking control of their own responsibilities. Let them handle basic "adulting" activities without your intervention.
- **Rescuing the addict from the problems they created:** You might be embarrassed by the messes addicts create. You do everything you can to hide the evidence of a problem, from cleaning up liquor bottles from the front yard, washing their dirty clothes, or paying for their bail. Remember, embarrassment might be an uncomfortable feeling, but it won't last forever. Let the addict face the consequences of their actions, rather than trying to hide their addictions. Addictions are a mental disorder, and it's not your fault, so don't try to hide it.

If you are ready to get control of your life, and help your loved one recover from addiction, [contact Renaissance Ranch in Ogden, Utah](#). We're here to help.