

# Hope for a family in crisis

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Does your family feel stuck because a loved one is spinning out of control? Here are some things you can do to help your whole family.

## Is this a crisis?

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Families dealing with addiction or behavioral health problems may become accustomed to the chaotic situation. Until a crisis hits, you may be in denial about what's happening or build a tolerance to the behaviors taking place. It might take an outside viewpoint to recognize behavioral health dysfunction in your family. Here are some things to remember:

### Hitting bottom.

Not everyone in a family hits their bottom at the same time. What's a crisis for one member of the family might not be a big deal to another. Oftentimes, family members will experience a crisis about a behavioral health issue before their loved one who has the issue does. It's important to acknowledge that this is a crisis situation for at least some members of the family, even though not everyone might see it that way.



### Surrender is not defeat.

For anyone hitting their bottom, surrender often feels like defeat. And yet, letting go of control allows you to see the situation in a different light. You're forced to step into uncertainty and start to think creatively about solutions.

### Ask for help.

Whether it's you or your loved one reaching a crisis, it's important to seek outside help. It's difficult to untangle and unpack your own history in a way that's effective—and do it quickly, which you usually need to do in a crisis. We encourage any family that's facing a crisis—even if your loved one with the behavioral health issue is not recognizing it as a crisis—get some help. You can't do this alone.

## Dynamic family services can help.

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When a family in crisis decides to seek help, it's usually because they feel stuck. They've tried everything that makes sense to them and the situation hasn't gotten better. The primary concern is getting the person with the issue the help they need. But the family also needs help. Here are some things a family should keep in mind as they face a behavioral health crisis:

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### Dynamic family services aim for a solution.

“Why?” isn't a particularly important question to answer. Many families need help understanding addiction and behavioral health issues. But the real education comes when families understand that it doesn't matter why the problem exists. That allows us to focus on the solution instead of swimming in the problem.

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### Your whole family is the focus in dynamic family services.

When a family is in crisis, they're often preoccupied with the person who has the behavioral health issue. And while it is important to get that person outside help, family members also need help understanding how to provide appropriate support. Probably the best outcome for a family who's reached out for help is for everyone to realize they have their own work to do.

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### Been there done that? Don't give up.

Many families have been through treatment multiple times. That's a frustrating and scary place to be. Even families that have been through several family programs at treatment centers often don't have a complete understanding of how critical it is for them to focus on and maintain their own recovery. The good news is, what makes treatment different this time might be your involvement with a program that provides family-centric services.

# What to expect when you seek crisis counseling.

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If your family is in crisis due to a loved one's behavioral health issue, we hope you're ready to ask for help. When deciding whether to work with a recovery consultant, the more you know about the process, the better prepared you will be to start rebuilding your family. Here's what will happen:

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## **It might be different than what you're expecting.**

Our first mission in terms of intervening on the problem is to work with the family. Every family has unique dynamics. You may be surprised about the path we recommend, and we can't tell you what that path is until we have an in-depth conversation and get data from you in order to provide counsel about the situation.

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## **Get ready to learn.**

Understanding how addiction and mental health issues work is one of the first steps for healing and acceptance to begin. Often, the behavioral symptoms exhibited by family members are similar to those of their loved one with the issue: attempts to control, preoccupation, even hiding and sneaking in the form of looking through their cell phone or checking their bank account. Teaching family members how to appropriately deal with conflict, guilt, pain and remorse is a critical step that must be taken together. We help families learn how to deal with their loved one with "calm assertiveness" or the ability to keep a center-balanced point of view when listening and communicating with their loved one, instead of just getting caught up in your own unhealthy behaviors.



## **There's a treatment option for everyone.**

One of the most complicated parts of addiction and behavioral health treatment is deciding on a course of action that is effective and fits with the resources available to the family. There are dozens of types of treatment options available and trying to sort through them by yourself can be overwhelming. Working with a consultancy can help you quickly identify the treatment option that's best for your loved one.

# Answers to your questions as your loved one enters treatment.

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Once a person with substance use disorder or behavioral or mental health issues decides to enter treatment, family members often feel a sense of relief. However, in most families, new issues and questions arise between the decision to enter treatment and their loved one walking through the door of the treatment center. Here are answers to four questions family members often have before their loved one enters treatment:

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## How are we going to pay for treatment?

It depends. Many treatment centers take insurance. Some only take so-called “private pay,” where the total cost is self-funded. Others take government supported programs. Thinking about treatment from a return on investment perspective, getting professional guidance on the best treatment options can save the family money in the long run. A behavioral health consultancy can help guide you toward the right treatment option that fits available resources for your loved one.

## What different types of treatment are available?

Treatment centers typically offer:

- Residential treatment
- Inpatient treatment
- Intensive outpatient
- Regular outpatient treatment

They have varying levels of structure, clinical programming, intensity, time commitment and of course, cost. It’s important for a family to understand the particulars of the treatment center they’re considering to make sure it’s the right fit for their loved one.

## What if we can’t afford the treatment center we want?

Families sometimes struggle with the idea of knowing about facilities that would be a good clinical match but they can’t afford to send their loved one there. A good behavioral health consultant will help the family piece together other resources so that whatever treatment option they choose is a healing, impactful experience for the whole family.

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## How should I talk to my loved one about treatment?

Most family members can’t speak with knowledge and authority on what the experience is going to be like, so it’s important that they don’t try to make predictions or give advice. Treatment can be a very challenging experience. Family members should simply be present and acknowledge that their loved one is facing a lot of scary unknowns, and let them know how courageous they are for taking this potentially life-changing step.

## Minimizing the damage.

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How we handle a crisis is as important as dealing with the issue itself. Of course, the primary aim is to stabilize the situation. That can mean getting someone into treatment, getting them medically stabilized or possibly performing an intervention. But handling a crisis situation in the right way is critical to the ongoing health of a family. Here are three things to consider to minimize the potential impact on your family.

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### **We can't control our loved ones' behaviors and illnesses.**

It's human nature for us to second-guess our actions in the past or believe there's something we can do to save our loved one from themselves. But trying to control the situation can sometimes result in more harm than good. Family members must surrender to the reality that their loved one is having this experience in their own life. We may be able to influence them, but we can't control them.

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### **Everyone adapts to the situation, and not always in healthy ways.**

We all adapt to our environment; it's human nature. When a crisis situation occurs within a family, our adaptive behaviors often become dysfunctional. Regardless of the way in which people adapt to crisis, the key is to recognize that it happens and is unique to each member of the family unit.

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### **Once the crisis is averted, our work toward healing continues.**

Once the crisis situation is diffused, people often assume their job is complete. But a lot of damage has been done. It's formed a wedge people are not even consciously aware of. Yes, averting the crisis is the priority. But that's only the first step. The lasting work comes after that.

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**Get in touch with us today for a consultation.  
We're compassionate and experienced behavioral health specialists  
who help families find the right solution for them.**



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