

1. Drug dependent persons are ill; suffering from an illness which alters their personalities, values and behaviors. If severe enough, it causes physical, emotional and social problems for the person.

Focus: *A drug dependent person is ill and that illness affects the f _ _ _ _ _ .*

2. Despite their concern, parents cannot control the behavior or attitudes of their drug abusing son or daughter. Parents are responsible only for their own behavior and attitudes.

Focus: *The only person I can control is myself.*

3. If parents are to survive, they must set limits on what they expect themselves to do. They are not gods or supermen. They cannot prevent all bad things from happening.

Focus: *Parents have a right and responsibility to manage their homes the way they see best.*

4. It is useless and destructive to dwell on your past failures or inadequacies. Parents don't choose to have their children use drugs.

Focus: *Dwelling on g _ _ _ _ over past failures only saps energy for present positive focus.*

5. It is useless to try to rescue or protect persons who regularly get into difficulties because of their own poor judgment or behavior.

Focus: *Too much rescuing & protecting by parents leads to irresponsibility and r _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ in their children.*

6. Abusers usually only desire to give up drugs when their use brings repeated pain and unpleasant consequences to themselves.

Focus: *Painful experience is a good teacher ... especially when it is connected with drug abuse.*

7. Rescuing and protecting routines by parents and others only make abusers more dependent, irresponsible and resentful.

Focus: *It takes w _ _ _ and practice to become skilled when dealing with drug-related problems.*

8. Reasoning, lecturing, scolding and threatening are methods that seldom work with abusers.

Focus: *W _ _ _ _ are weak adversaries of drugs.*

Gem to share:

When you ask for help, be specific.

"I will consider it, but I will need some time."

"Please check back with me ..."

Set a time frame that's best for you.
"Please check back with me after work."
(... in the morning ... on Friday ... this evening.)

9. Accepting promises, excuses or other manipulating behaviors from an abuser only encourages further abuse and denial.

Focus: *Promises, excuses and "reasons" are never substitutes for responsible behavior.*

Gem to Share

10. Detaching yourself from the burden of worry and excessive responsibility you carry for an abuser is better for everyone in the long run. It's difficult to do it without peer group and/or professional support.

Focus: *Love often requires a firmness that many parents find h _ _ _ to deliver.*

"I love you unconditionally, but at this time my involvement with you has conditions."

Note to Myself

I can set firm boundaries and consequences with my loved one, yet still love unconditionally.

11. Parents need to set clear, firm guidelines about what is acceptable behavior in the home. Giving in to unreasonable demands only encourages bad behavior and more unreasonable demands.

Focus: *Your home and its atmosphere are yours. Stand firm.*

12. Drug abusers often need professional help, but are often unmotivated to benefit fully from it. Parents are often disillusioned when their hopes for an abuser's quick recovery are not realized.

Focus: *Parents can make treatment available to drug abusers, but cannot force them to b _ _ _ _ _ from it.*

13. Drug abusers often take years to recover from their illness. Recovery is almost never immediate and almost always involves a continuing daily process, requiring a "one day at a time" philosophy on the part of all concerned.

Focus: *Love hope, faith and patience are as vital today as ever, especially for parents.*

**Adapted from "Setting Limits" by William L. LaFountain.
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