



November 2023: Learning to Support Your Loved Ones



“Try to be the rainbow in someone's cloud.” – Maya Angelou

Welcome to the November 2023 edition of ***TotalWellbeing***, your guide to the ***8 dimensions of wellbeing***. This month we will explore the profound journey of supporting our loved ones during challenging times and the path to recovery. Life can present us with hurdles, and being there for those we cherish is a gift beyond measure.

Life's ups and downs can be daunting, but the power of a strong support system is immeasurable. In the pages that follow, we'll explore the profound significance of standing by those we hold dear in their moments of need and aiding them on the path to recovery. Join us as we uncover the art of compassion and resilience, equipping you with valuable insights to be a steadfast pillar of strength for your loved ones. Together, we'll celebrate the bonds that grow stronger in the face of adversity and the inspiring stories of those who find their way to healing.

Please remember that your EAP is here for you if you need to address support needs, caregiving stresses, or just need to talk to someone. You have access to free and confidential counseling, wellness coaching, trainings, unlimited work/life referrals to save you time, and more. Plus, an online resource library full of proactive self-help tools! Visit [PersonalAdvantage](#) for helpful articles, health assessments, personal development tools, budget sheets, and more!

To your total wellbeing,
The MINES Team

This Month's Focus

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Allyship: Becoming an Accepting and Supportive Person

It's a good idea to occasionally self-reflect on our own beliefs and actions, as well as how they affect those around us. As the Greek philosopher Socrates once said, "An unexamined life is not worth living." Though we should always treat others with respect and kindness, we might fall short at times or not realize how exactly to show support. If you would like to work on being an accepting and supportive ally, here are some points to consider.

Individuality Makes Us Human

It takes all different types of people to make the world go round. As long as one's actions don't harm others, no one should be shamed or threatened for expressing their uniqueness. You can still respect and support someone else even if you don't agree with everything they believe or do.

Expand Your Horizons

Try being more receptive to new people. If you tend to interact with the same people in your daily routine, challenge yourself to say hello to someone new. Maybe it's someone you cross paths with on a regular basis but have never really talked with. Could you be more open to having dialogue with people who have different beliefs and points of view? Think of it as an opportunity to grow and expand your own perspective. Make sure to be respectful when engaging in dialogue with others, even if your points of view differ.

Be Mindful of Your Own Judgments or Assumptions

We all make judgments, and sometimes it can feel like an automatic process in our brain. If you notice that you jump to immediate judgments about others, practice shifting your brain to simply making observations.

Also, avoid making assumptions about others. We might do this when we are out in public observing strangers or with people we know in our daily lives. However, we can never know the inner workings of someone else unless they tell us. As Don Miguel Ruiz wrote in his book *The Four Agreements*, "It is always better to ask questions than to make an assumption."

Take the Time to Listen

Challenge yourself to truly listen when conversing with others, rather than just waiting for your turn to talk. As the Dalai Lama once said, "When you talk, you are only repeating what you know. But when you listen, you learn something new."

Ask Others How You Can Support Them

Don't be afraid to be direct and ask your friends, family, or others in your life how you can best support them.

Show Your Support on Social Media

You could show your social media network that you are an ally through your posts, as well as hashtags. For example, during Pride Month, research which hashtags are trending and join in the conversation. Some examples are #pride, #pridemonth, and #lgbtq.

Not Everyone Will Agree on Some Things

Try not to let others' opinions and beliefs affect you negatively. Instead, focus on what you can do. Continue to spread positivity and maintain an open mindset even when others are not. If you see someone getting bullied or harassed at school or in the workplace, offer your support, help them get to a safe space, and report the behavior through the appropriate channels. Remember to stay in control of your emotions, as this can help de-escalate the situation.

Helping the Mind and Body Recover from a Chemical Dependency

If you or a loved one is chemically dependent, the first step to recovery is accepting that there is a problem and making the decision to get help. From there, the journey has just begun. Being addicted to a substance affects the body and the mind, and in order to fully recover, you'll have to address all of the physical, behavioral, and mental patterns that have developed over the course of your addiction.

Given that taking the first step is always the hardest, once you decide to seek help there is hope; success can be achieved through determination. When you restore your physical and mental self, you will get more of your life back, chemical-free. Read on for information on how you or a loved one can make a full recovery.

Treating the Body Right

When quitting a substance, it will take time for the body to adjust back to life without the substance. Your doctor will know if you should have medical help while quitting the drug, or if it is safe to quit "cold turkey" without any medical assistance.

Exercise can be a valuable part of recovery. Engaging in exercise helps to release stress and also to strengthen and return your body back to health. Endorphins are released through exercise; these natural chemicals generate positive feelings that can further assist your recovery. When you begin an exercise routine, start small and

build up from there. Be careful not to overwork your body limits; use exercise to release stress, not build up stress.

In addition to exercise, good nutrition is important. Make sure you have plenty of fresh vegetables, fruits, and whole grains in your diet. Work to remove processed foods, additives, refined sugar, caffeine, and high-fat foods. Note that sugar and caffeine can actually increase cravings for drugs or alcohol.

Eating right and exercising will help you sleep better during this difficult time. Make sure you take time to rest, as it will be an essential part of your recovery.

Healing the Mind

Oftentimes, chemical dependency develops as a means to cover or numb the emotional pain one is feeling. When the substance is no longer part of their unhealthy coping mechanisms, people may feel the emotions they have masked for the first time. This is when the person has to put their energy towards learning healthy coping skills to work through and manage the emotional pain. Below are some activities that can help restore the mind to a healthy state:

- Write down situations or people in your life that trigger you to take the substance. Avoid them the best you can.
- Seek out a therapist who specializes in addiction and recovery.
- Surround yourself with people who respect and support your sobriety.
- Develop a routine of meditation, visualization, or other relaxation techniques.
- Meet and communicate with others at a 12-step program. The phone book or your employee assistance program can help you find groups in your area that can support you on your journey.

If you or a member of your household needs assistance or guidance on any of these wellbeing topics, please call MINES & Associates, your EAP, today for free, confidential, 24/7 assistance at 800.873.7138.

To access past issues of *TotalWellbeing* please visit our [newsletters page](#). This newsletter is aimed at providing helpful information about various aspects of your wellbeing and then connecting it all back to important and relevant parts of everyday life. If you have any thoughts, questions, or content you would like to see covered here please get in contact with us. You can email us directly by clicking [here](#).

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