
ADDICTION & RECOVERY

Addiction and Your Marriage

When substance use, compulsive behavior, or dependency is in the picture.

Boundary Agreement Resource Library

Dr. Hines Inc. | boundaryagreement.com

This guide is a coaching resource, not therapy or counseling.

IMPORTANT: If you or your partner are in active crisis related to substance abuse, contact SAMHSA's National Helpline at 1-800-662-4357 (free, confidential, 24/7).

Addiction Is a Family Disease

Addiction does not happen to one person. It happens to the entire family. The addict is consumed by the substance or behavior. The partner is consumed by the addict. Both are trapped in a cycle that neither can break alone.

You did not cause it.

Addiction is not your fault. You did not drive them to drink, use, or act out. Releasing that guilt is the first step to your own recovery.

You cannot cure it.

No amount of love, patience, or sacrifice will fix addiction. Recovery requires professional intervention: therapy, programs, accountability, and often medical support.

You cannot control it.

Pouring out bottles, monitoring their phone, and issuing ultimatums are understandable responses but they do not work. You are managing symptoms, not treating the disease.

Boundaries are not abandonment.

You can love someone and refuse to enable them at the same time. 'I will not have substances in this house' is a boundary. 'I will not pretend this is normal' is a boundary. Boundaries protect you and the family.

Get help for yourself.

Al-Anon, Celebrate Recovery, individual therapy. The partner of an addict needs their own recovery. You have been affected too.

Know your line.

What are you willing to live with? What would make you leave? Have that conversation with yourself before you need it. Write it down.

EXERCISE: The Clarity Questions

For the partner of someone struggling with addiction.

What substance or behavior am I dealing with?

How long has it been going on?

Is my partner willing to get help? What evidence do I have?

What am I currently doing that might be enabling?

What boundary do I need to set that I have been avoiding?

What is my non-negotiable? The line where I protect myself and my children?

Who is my support system right now?
