

# How to Engage Individuals with Substance Use Disorder



## Individual / Family Member's Role

Objective: Encourage the person with substance use concerns (or a family member) to feel comfortable discussing the issue and considering support options.

<b>Initial Hesitation</b>	"I'm not sure if I'm ready to talk about this. It's something I've been dealing with for a while, but it's hard to bring it up."
<b>Denial or Downplaying</b>	"I don't think it's really a problem. I mean, sometimes I drink or use more than I should, but I can handle it."
<b>Expression of Concern</b> (Family Member Role)	"I'm really worried about my [partner, parent, friend]. I've noticed a change, but I don't know how to bring it up without making them feel attacked."
<b>Shame or Stigma</b>	"It's embarrassing to admit this. People would think less of me if they knew."
<b>Interest in Help</b>	"I've thought about getting help, but I'm scared of what it means, or what my family will think. How do I even start?"

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## Navigator's Role

**Objective:** Initiate a compassionate, non-judgmental conversation about substance use, recognizing the stigma and difficulty of discussing the topic, and offer pathways to recovery.

<p><b>Start with Empathy</b></p>	<p>"I know we're here to discuss your [current health issue], but I noticed something that I wanted to ask about, if it's okay with you. Is there anything else going on in your life that you might need support with?"</p>
<p><b>Normalize the Conversation</b></p>	<p>"Many people face challenges with stress, family issues, or even substance use. It's a lot more common than we might think."</p>
<p><b>Ask Open-ended Questions</b></p>	<p>"Have you or anyone close to you ever found it tough to manage alcohol, prescription drugs, or any other substances?"</p>
<p><b>Listen Without Judgment</b></p>	<p>"Thank you for sharing. This is a safe space. It's okay to feel how you're feeling. I'm here to help, not judge."</p>
<p><b>Offer Solutions, Not Directives</b></p>	<p>"If this is something you'd like to explore further, there are resources that could be really helpful. Have you thought about getting support for this?"</p>
<p><b>Reassure</b></p>	<p>"Seeking help is a brave first step, and there are so many people who've been where you are and have found ways to heal."</p>



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