

## SETTING LIMITS

1. Drug dependent persons are ill. They suffer from an illness which alters their personalities. Values and behaviors. If severe enough. This illness may cause physical, emotional and social problems for the dependent person. Drug dependent persons are ill, their illness almost always affects their families.
2. Despite their concern, parents cannot control the behavior or attitudes of their drug dependent sons or daughters. Parents are responsible only for their own behavior and attitudes. Parent cannot control anybody but themselves.
3. If parents are to survive, they must set limits on what they expect themselves to do (they are not Gods or Super Heroes.)They cannot prevent all bad things from happening. 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. Dwelling on guilt over past failures only saps energy for current, positive attitudes and actions.
5. It is useless to try to rescue or protect persons who regularly get into difficulties because of their own poor judgment or behavior. Too much rescuing and protecting by parents only leads to irresponsibility and resentment in their children.
6. Abusers usually only desire to give up drugs when their use brings repeated pain and unpleasant results to themselves. 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. It takes exercise and practice to become strong and skilled. Especially when it comes to dealing with drug-related behaviors.
8. Reasoning, Lecturing, Scolding and threatening are methods that seldom work with abuses. Words are weak adversaries of drugs.
9. Accepting promises, excuses, or other manipulating behaviors from abuses only encourages further abuse and denial. Parents of drug abusers are served well by learning to distinguish the form from the substance of responsible behavior. Promises, excuses and "reasons" are never substitutes for responsible behavior.

10. Detaching yourself from the burden of worry and responsibility you carry for an abuser is better for everyone in the long run. This is difficult to do and usually requires peer-group and or professional support. Love often requires a firmness that many parents find hard to deliver.
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. Your home and its atmosphere are yours. Never let them go.
12. Chemically dependent adolescents often need professional services but frequently are unmotivated to benefit fully from it. Parents are often disillusioned when their hopes for an adolescent's quick recovery are unrealized. The ultimate recovery from an illness involves good service, desire and the cooperation of all concerned. Parents can make treatment available to drug dependent children, they cannot force them to benefit from it.

## LETTING GO

Letting go does not mean to stop caring;  
it means I cannot do it for someone else.

Letting go is not to cut myself off;  
it is realizing I cannot control another.

Letting go is not to enable;  
but to allow learning from natural consequences.

Letting go is not to try to change or blame another;  
it is to make the most of myself.

Letting go is to admit powerlessness;  
which means the outcome is not in my hands.

Letting go is not to care for, but to care about.

Letting go is not to fix, but to be supportive.

Letting go is not to judge,  
but to allow another to be a human being.

Letting go is not to be in the middle arranging the outcome,  
but to allow others to effect their own destinies.

Letting go is not to be protective;  
it is to permit another to face reality.

Letting go is not to deny, but to accept.

Letting go is not to nag, scold, or argue but instead  
to search out my own shortcomings and correct them.

Letting go is not to adjust everything to my own desires,  
but to take each day as it comes and cherish myself in it.

Letting go is not to criticize and regulate anybody,  
but to try to become what I dream I can be.

Letting go is not to regret the past,  
but to grow and live for the future.

Letting go is to fear less and live more.