## TOP TIPS

### What Is Not Helpful

Family members share their experience

When it comes to dealing with a loved one's addiction, there's no one-size-fits-all solution. But family members have a wealth of wisdom from their own experience. Here they share their thoughts on what didn't work so well!

### ENABLING

'It took me a long time to realise that what I thought was helping may actually have made things worse and inadvertently ‘enabled’ her to continue using drugs. It can be counter-intuitive. Taking a step back, saying ‘no’, asking them to leave... sometimes these are the things that actually help in the long run.'

### ROCK BOTTOM

'Being told that he ‘needed to hit rock bottom’ wasn’t helpful for me. Some people don’t come back from rock bottom. I understand that it’s sometimes true but for me it felt too great a risk. I had to do what I could to encourage change in the meantime.'

### REALISTIC

'‘It’s easy to think that solving the substance use will solve everything. Sometimes that’s not the case. In some ways challenges within our family and relationships got harder when he started recovering. The journey is ongoing.’

### DOING IT ALL

'I was trying to do everything and be all things to all people. You can’t be Superwoman/wife/mum/therapist! Getting professional support for myself helped me get a different perspective and take a step back. Trying to take responsibility for everyone and everything ultimately didn’t help anyone.'

### PLEADING

‘When someone is in the thick of an addiction it’s difficult for them to see things from anyone else’s point of view. Begging and pleading for them to get help just drains you and can push them further away.’

### ARGUMENTS

‘It’s easy to get into an argument when they’re under the influence but it’s never constructive. I’ve learnt to walk away and discuss whatever needs to be discussed at a better time. They often can’t take in what I’m saying anyway and may not even remember it the next day!’

### EXPECTATIONS

‘I’ve come to see that some of my expectations of him – that he would keep his job, help with the finances, finish his studies – were unrealistic at that time. It was difficult and painful to come to terms with that, but I’ve had to adjust my expectations.’

Adfam wishes to thank family members in Greenwich for offering their time and words of expertise.