Steps to Take and Actions to Avoid
When Addressing Addiction

Living with someone who has a drug or substance use disorder can be difficult for family members and friends that are around them. It is important to keep in mind what steps you should take and what actions you should avoid when dealing with those who are under the influence.

Steps to Take:

• Support your loved one while they go through treatment.

• Have open conversations with your loved ones about their troubles and triumphs.

• Be understanding when they relapse or have setbacks.

• Become educated on drug abuse issues and share that information with others.

• Develop and establish support networks among family members and friends.

• Remember to take care of yourself physically and emotionally.

Actions to Avoid:

• Do not argue with your loved one while they are under the influence.

• Do not expect your loved one to stop using when you want them to.

• Do not try to make them feel guilty.

• Do not take on your loved one’s responsibilities.

• Do not lie or make excuses for negative behavior.

• Do not lecture, make threats, ultimatums, or bribes with your loved one in order for them to stop using.

Adapted from the Massachusetts Substance Use Helpline.