



How to Talk to Someone About Seeking Recovery

It's important to first understand why they can't stop using substances such as heroin.

People who are struggling to quit substances like heroin most likely have a health condition called Opioid Use Disorder (OUD). This disorder affects their brain structure, reducing their ability to stop themselves using opioids. OUD is a medical condition, just like diabetes and heart disease, and needs medical treatment.

Know that recovery is possible.

People with OUD can and do recover, but every journey is different. There are many pathways to recovery, and people considering recovery must choose the path that best suits their needs and situation. It's important to realize you can't force someone to go into recovery. They have to choose this for themselves. However, when they are ready, there are ways you can support them.

Learn what can help support recovery.

One option is Medication-Assisted Recovery, which are medications that help reduce craving and withdrawal symptoms, often paired with behavioral counseling, to help people reach a sustained recovery. This is over twice as effective as other ways to stop and is the only doctor-recommended method.

How to Approach a Conversation About Recovery:

- **Be kind**
 - Speak with kindness and understanding. There is a lot of stigma surrounding people with OUD, and showing compassion can help a person be compassionate with themselves and seek recovery.
- **Listen more than you speak**
 - You don't have to agree with all that is being said, but listening without judgment can be a helpful way of showing your support. Keep in mind that you don't want them to feel like they are being checked up on. They are still a person with opinions, wants, and needs, and recovery doesn't have to be the only conversation starter.
- **Help them find support**
 - Recovery can only occur if the person with OUD makes the choice to begin the process.
 - Listen to their perspective on their OUD. Every person is different, and there are many routes one can take to recovery, so it's important to allow your loved one to choose the path that could work best for them and their situation.

Guiding Questions

- **Starting the conversation**
 - I've noticed you've been acting differently lately, and I'm wondering how you're doing.
 - I've been worried about you.
- **After the conversation has started**
 - When did you start feeling like this?
 - Have you thought about getting help?
- **Other questions to ask during the conversation**
 - Would it be helpful if I found some information on how others have quit heroin?
 - Would it be helpful if I found someone local you could talk to?
 - Would it be helpful if I found a doctor who specializes in helping people to stop?
- **Words of support**
 - I am here for you and want to help you in any way that I can.
 - I may not be able to understand exactly how you feel, but I care about you and want to help.
 - I want you to know that you are not alone—even if that's how it feels.
- **Keep in mind:** The best thing you can do is listen. Guiding questions can keep the conversation going when necessary, but it's crucial to allow your loved one to talk freely about what's going on in their lives.



For more information and resources about how
Medication-Assisted Recovery works, visit RethinkRecoveryIL.com.

