

Helping Strategy

We can contribute in three ways to helping a person become free of a drug dependency:

- Help the individual spiritually, by seeking his or her commitment to Christ.
 - Put him or her in touch with a local drug rehabilitation center, where he or she can begin the process of withdrawal and recovery.
 - Stay with the person in order to offer support and encouragement until he or she has a deeper understanding of what it means to make a commitment to Christ.
1. Do not moralize about the evils of drugs or the person's addiction. Use the Scriptures on sin only as opportunities to do so occur naturally in your presentation of the Gospel.
 2. Be cordial. Be compassionate. Encourage him or her by saying that you are sympathetic and willing to listen and offer help.
 3. Hear the person out, giving ample opportunity for the expression of feelings and opinions. Offer reassurance of God's love. God's grace is sufficient to meet any need in his or her life. (A definition of grace: God loves us with no strings attached.)
 4. The inquirer will need to be faced with his or her responsibility for the addiction. At some point, he or she made a conscious choice to take drugs. He or she has moral responsibility for the behavior which led to the addiction. If there is an effort to lay the blame for the problem at the feet of circumstances, other people, society, etc., always bring the discussion gently back to the issue of personal and moral responsibility: "But each one is tempted when, by his own evil desire, he is dragged away and enticed" (James 1:14, NIV).
 5. At the opportune moment, share "Steps to Peace with God," page 11.
 6. Continue to "Follow-Up Steps," if indicated: Start reading and studying God's Word. Learn to pray. Begin to fellowship with a Bible-teaching church.
 7. The drug-dependent person must abandon the people and surroundings that have tied him or her to drugs. He or she must stop all use of drugs. This will probably mean treatment at a drug rehab center where withdrawal and early rehabilitation can be properly monitored. Around-the-clock supervision is often needed.



DRUG ABUSE

NOTE: You will often need to take the initiative to help the dependent find a center for treatment and check in, or perhaps assist the addict's family in doing this. Indicate that you intend to do this. The addict cannot be trusted to handle this alone. He or she may promise, but never follow through. Both during and following treatment, the helper should be as supportive as possible. Visit frequently. Start the recovering addict in the reading and study of God's Word and prayer. Assist in finding a support group of Christian ex-addicts, if such is available. Get the person involved in the life of a caring, Bible-teaching church. Get him or her in touch with a Christian professional counselor or group experienced in the treatment of addicts. He or she will need ongoing help with those personal problems which led to addiction in the first place.

CAUTION: Do not promise help in finding treatment, only that you will do the best you can.

8. Pray with the drug-dependent person for courage, for commitment, and for the power of the Holy Spirit to be released. All these are necessary in the redemptive process: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind" (2 Timothy 1:7).

Scripture

"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor. He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives. . . . And He began to say to them, 'Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.' . . . So they were all amazed and spoke among themselves, saying, 'What a word this is! For with authority and power He commands the unclean spirits, and they come out!'" (Luke 4:18, 21, 36).

"Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

"In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body so that you obey its evil desires. Do not offer the parts of your body to sin, as instruments of wickedness, but rather offer yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life; and offer the parts of your body to him as instruments of righteousness" (Romans 6:11-13, NIV).

"But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death" (James 1:14-15).

"For you have spent enough time in the past doing what pagans choose to do—living in debauchery, lust, drunkenness, orgies, carousing and detestable idolatry" (1 Peter 4:3, NIV).