



Partnership to End Addiction

Online Support Community

Lapse vs. Relapse

8/18/21

Relapse – no one path

Might be disastrous



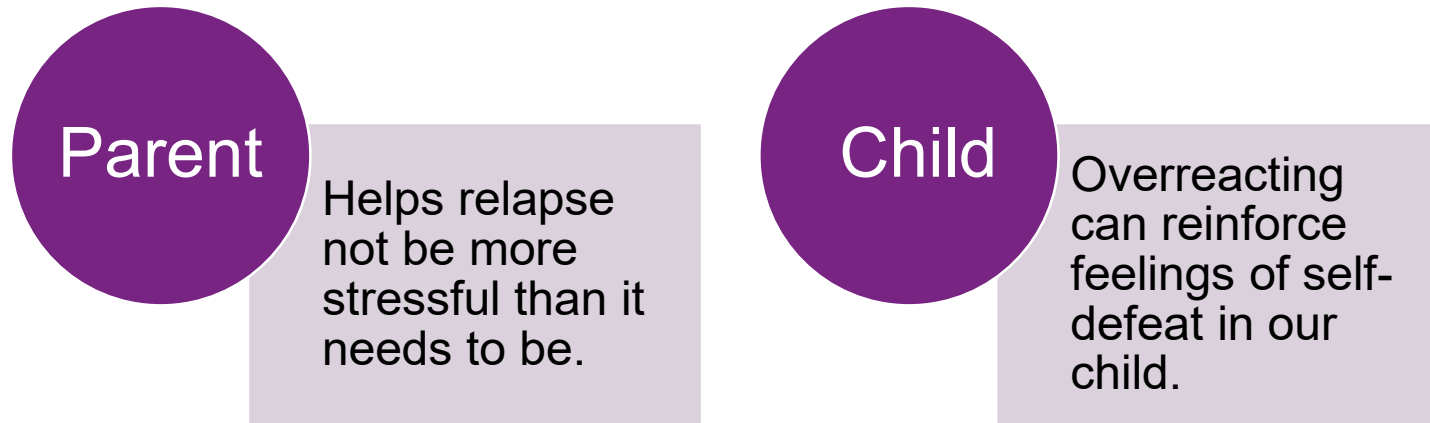
More likely part of learning to live differently

- Long term return to active addiction
- Overdose

- Doesn't necessarily mean our child isn't making progress
- Doesn't necessarily mean a return to treatment

Keeping our feelings in check

- Understanding relapse is **NORMAL** makes it less scary. This is important for our sake as well as our child's:



Not just in the eye of the beholder

Objective Measures (signaling a “lapse” rather than a “relapse”)

- Contained within a short period of time.
- Risk to safety is low.
- Child is making an effort to learn from it (to understand what can be done to avoid it in the future).

Reminder: Look at the overall trajectory of the event

- Was it shorter than before?
- Was there more time between setbacks?
- Was there less damage?



The parallel process between child & parent

Child

“This is who I am”
“I am weak”
“I have no willpower”



Contributes to feelings of shame and hopelessness



“I’ve blown it....I might as well keep using”

Parent

“My child doesn’t care”
“My child is an addict/alcoholic [label]”



Contributes to feelings of shame and hopelessness in us



Our own relapse



Conversely, if we focus on progress made...

- Despair is less likely within our loved one.
- Self-defeating attitudes will be reduced.
- Defense of the negative behaviors will be reduced.
- Our own stress will be diminished.



We can support our loved one
in their efforts to get their recovery back on track.



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