

# STAGES: WHEN A LOVED ONE HAS A SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER



There are many stages that may occur when discovering that a loved one has a Substance Use Disorder.

## SEARCH



Search for reasons:

Why this happened.

Why the changes occurred in the friend or family member.

Question the possibility of substance use.

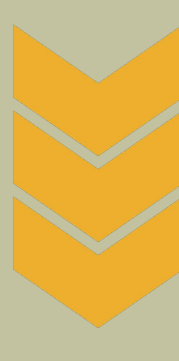
Wishful Thinking: Question the friend or family member & accept the answer that they are NOT using.



## DENY

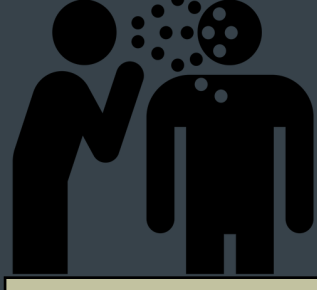


Deny that substance use is occurring or that their substance use is a problem.



Experience shame of family situation with outsiders.

Grieve for the loss of the dreams we had for our loved one.



## COMMON FEELINGS



**FRUSTRATION/ANGER**

*Mad at your loved one or yourself*



**FEAR/AFRAID**

*Fear of what the future holds for your loved one*



**GUILT/SHAME**

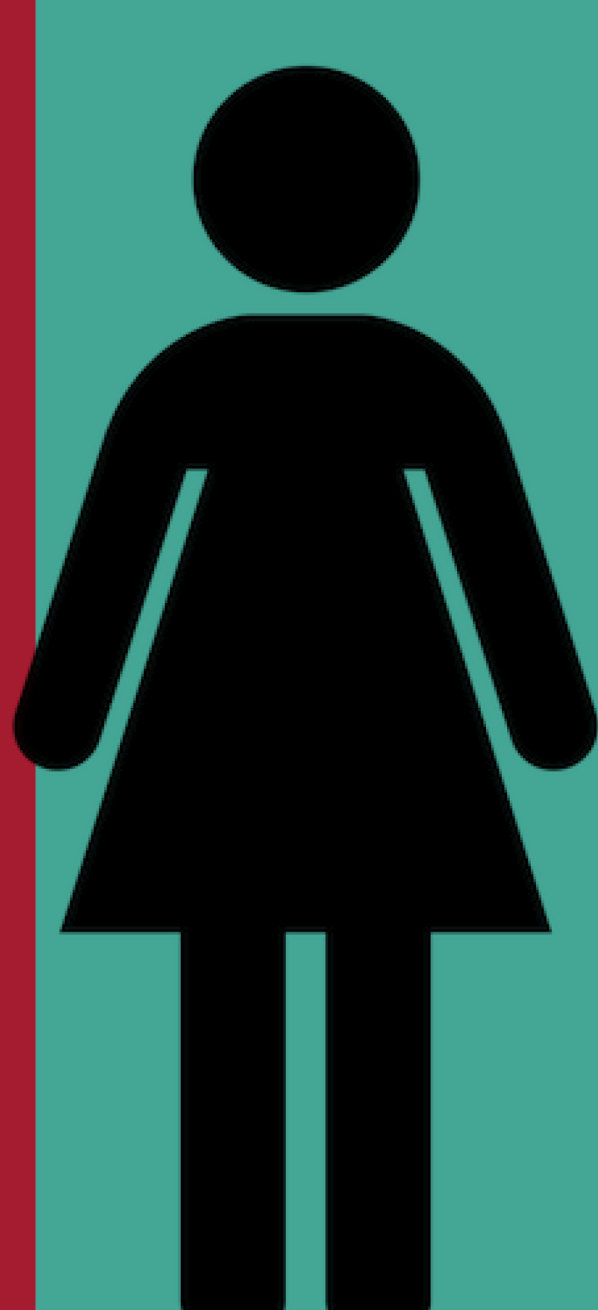
*For not realizing earlier*



**GRIEF/SADNESS**

*Feel like a failure as a friend or family member (self-blame)*

## ACCEPT



Accept that substance use is the cause of the observed changes in the friend or family member.

Understand that the friend or relative will take their own action & we can only provide guidance.

### REALIZING:

One does not have to accept unacceptable behavior.

## LEARN



**Learn to distinguish the difference between the behaviors related to the disease & the friend or relative themselves.**

Learn not to blame oneself.

Understand that our friend or family member will take their own action & one can only provide guidance.

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

[www.recoveryanswers.org](http://www.recoveryanswers.org)

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