

SUPPORTING A LOVED ONE THROUGH RECOVERY

(WITHOUT LOSING YOURSELF)

COMPANION TO THE PODCAST AND BLOG BY LAURA
BOOKENDS OF RECOVERY



Introduction

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



You've promised to support your loved one through recovery and now you're figuring out what that really means.

This workbook is your space to explore how to love someone in recovery without losing yourself in the process.

You'll learn how to:

- Stay grounded in your own emotional health
- Communicate with empathy and healthy boundaries
- Rebuild connection without carrying what isn't yours

You don't have to do it perfectly. You just have to keep showing up.



Section 1

LOVED ONE, NOT ACCOUNTABILITY PARTNER

When your loved one struggles, it's natural to want answers or help. But, you can let their accountability fall to their therapist, sponsor, or group while you show support by being empathetic and listening to their needs. This frees you from the responsibility of their recovery.

When your loved one is struggling, what helps you stay in your role as a partner instead of trying to repair things for them?

PROMPT

Write two phrases you can say instead of jumping into rescue mode. Example: "I'm here if you want to talk."

PROMPT

REFLECTION



Section 2

HOLDING SPACE

Holding space means allowing your loved one to have their own emotions without stepping in to manage them. It's a quiet form of love. It says, "I trust you to feel this and work through it." At first, silence can feel uncomfortable, especially if you're used to soothing or problem-solving. But your calm presence can be more healing than any advice.

During challenging moments, you can try saying:

"I can see this is really hard for you."

"I'm here with you."

"Would you like support, or just someone to listen?"

STAY PRESENT

How do you usually respond when someone you love is in pain?

What helps you stay grounded and compassionate while giving them room to process?

REFLECTION



Section 3

EDUCATION

Educate Yourself About Recovery and Relapse Signs



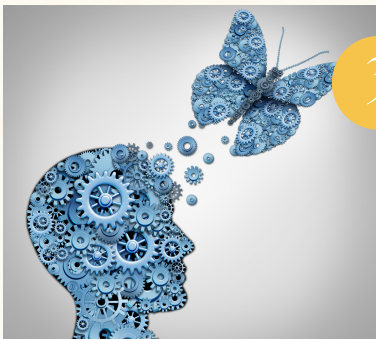
1

Understanding recovery helps you see patterns with clarity rather than fear. You don't need to know every detail, just enough to understand what healing looks like.



2

Be mindful about what information you take in. Some communities encourage balance and growth, while others can feed worry. Choose the ones that build your confidence and peace.



3

Remember: not every quiet moment or grumpy day is a warning sign. Sometimes people just need space to think or rest.



Reflection

ON EDUCATION



What are two healthy ways you can learn about recovery while keeping your emotional balance?



List one book, podcast, or community that brings you peace instead of anxiety.



Reflection:



Section 4

WORDS MATTER

Avoid comparisons, ultimatums, or comments that tie worth to outcomes. Encouragement helps people stay engaged; pressure can shut them down.

Try saying:

- “I appreciate how open you’re being.”
- “That sounds tough, but I’m glad you’re talking about it.”
- “I see how much effort you’re putting in.”

Reflection

Think of a time when someone’s words made you feel calm and understood.

What did they say and how can you bring that same tone into your relationship?

☐

☐

Words have the power to soothe or stir anxiety for both of you.

When conversations feel challenging, choose words that build connection and encourage honesty.





Section 5

SHARED ROUTINES

Recovery can't only be about therapy and triggers, joy and laughter are healing too.

1

What activities make you both feel connected, grounded, or peaceful?

.....

.....

.....

2

List two small routines you'd like to add to your week together.
Examples: daily walk, screen-free dinner, journaling side by side.

.....

.....

.....

3

What obstacles do you need to overcome for these routines to take place? What's a small step you can take to overcome them?

.....

.....

.....



Section 6

PROTECT EMOTIONS

If you know every detail of your loved one's triggers, you can't unknow it. Sometimes not knowing is actually the healthiest choice. Protecting your emotional space allows you to stay balanced, calm, and grounded.

REFLECT

Which conversations or details leave you feeling drained or anxious?

ACTION STEP

Write one boundary you want to set to protect your peace while staying supportive.

Example: "I need to pause this conversation if it feels overwhelming, but we can revisit it later."



Section 7

PROGRESS, NOT PERFECTION

Recovery is a marathon on uneven ground, and there will most likely be setbacks. The question isn't, "Will they relapse?" It's, "How will we respond when life gets hard again?"

How do you define progress in your relationship?

REFLECT

What small changes tell you that healing is happening?

REFLECT

List three examples of growth you've noticed in yourself or your loved one this month.

ACTION STEP



Section 8

LOVE WITHOUT LOSING YOURSELF

Supporting someone in recovery taught me that love doesn't mean fixing. It means standing beside someone with empathy and letting them do their own work. If I always gave my husband the answers, I robbed him of learning to find them himself. The more you understand addiction, relapse, and emotional healing, the less anxious and powerless you'll feel.

What part of yourself needs the most care and compassion right now?

REFLECT

CHECK-IN

Write one thing you'll do this week that's just for you, something that refills your cup.



YOU'VE GOT THIS

Supporting someone through recovery takes strength, compassion, and courage. You're doing the work, even on the hard days.



Remember: you can always revisit this workbook when you need grounding. You are also invited to bookendsofrecovery@duck.com.

If no one has told you today, my friend, you are a superstar. You have a strength within you, you never knew existed, and I am so proud of you. Whether this is your first day, your 100th day, or your 100th first day, you have got this.

BOOKENDS OF
RECOVERY

LAURA 



BookendsOfRecovery.com

www.BookendsOfRecovery.com
facebook.com/BookEndsofRecovery
reddit.com/r/BookendsOfRecovery