

# What is the CRAFT Approach and the 20 Minute Guide?

Community Reinforcement and Family Training (“CRAFT”) is a unique and exciting approach for helping families address addiction problems. **Unique** because it involves working with the loved ones (namely, YOU) surrounding the person with an addiction problem, and works with the assumption that loved ones (again, YOU) can have a significant and positive impact on another person's motivation to change. And **exciting** because there's a lot of research and practical evidence that it WORKS! And by "works" we specifically mean:

1. about 70% of people who use this approach get their loved one into treatment, and
2. family members report experiencing significant drops in depression, anxiety and anger, and increased happiness and a sense of family cohesion.

CRAFT has been studied with various types of addiction problems (alcohol, drugs, and both) and working with different constellations of concerned loved ones (spouses, parents, etc). Research and studies aren't very exciting, but when they all show dramatically the same thing - in this case, that the strategies of CRAFT are very effective - that IS pretty exciting.

A medical example might help in thinking about this... If your child had a serious heart problem, you would want the treatment approach chosen to be one that wasn't simply recommended by friends and acquaintances, but one that had the greatest chance for success based on lots of studies and research. Addiction is as serious and worthy of these expectations as a heart problem!

The 20 Minute Guide we use encapsulates the basics of CRAFT and attempts to both explain and offer practical exercises to familiarize you with the CRAFT approach. The 20 Minute Guide also includes some communication strategies taken from a treatment approach

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called Motivational Interviewing, another evidence-based approach for helping people change. Overall, the Guide is a starting point for thinking about helping in ways you may not be familiar with, but that allow you to stay involved and connected to your loved one, take care of yourself, and help promote real change (whether that's getting them into treatment, or just improving the atmosphere around the house).

When you're family is struggling with substance issues, getting support can be such an important part of helping things change. If other forms of support like Al-Anon groups are helpful to you, there's no reason to give these up while using the CRAFT strategies! Al-Anon does not claim to be effective at impacting change in the person with substance problems (like getting them into treatment) - and indeed, research studies show this is the case, that Al-Anon does not help in that way. Parents in particular can struggle with that aspect of "Anon" support, often wanting more active strategies to help their child. If that is the case with you, CRAFT can offer approaches to help in that way.

Feel free to add to your arsenal of skills and supports by using CRAFT strategies without giving up other things that might be working well for you in other ways. The Guide is intended as a beginning, an invitation to think about this struggle in new ways, a chance to feel more empowered to effect change, and perhaps a jumping off point to getting more help for you and your family.

# On the Road:

## Four Time Zones, Many Guides

### Time Zone #1: Start with Self-Care

- 1A. Taking Care of Yourself: This is Really Stressful: Take Care of Yourself.
- 1B. Taking Care of Yourself: You're Not Alone: Reducing Isolation
2. Collaboration Helps: You, Your Partner, and Your Child
3. One Size Does Not Fit All...One Answer Does Not Fit All

### Time Zone #1: Understanding the Problem

4. Behaviors Make Sense...Even Your Child's
5. Ambivalence is Normal...and It Makes Sense Too!!

### Time Zone #3: The Tools of Change

6. Your Love Matters: Positive Reinforcement
- 7A. Consequences: Allowing Naturally Occurring Consequences
- 7B. Consequences: The 3 C's: Clarity, Consequences and Consistency
- 8A. Communication: The 7 Elements of Positive Communication
- 8B. Communication: Red Light/Green Light Talk: Pay Attention to the Lights!
9. Managing Your Negative Emotions
10. You Can't Get it Right Every Time...Practice, Practice, Practice!

### Time Zone #4: Some Good Ideas

- A Good Idea: Problem Solving Skills
- A Good Idea: Rewarding Sobriety When Your Child is Not Drinking/Using
- A Good Idea: S.M.A.R.T. Goals
- A Good Idea: Practice Good Self-Care

# Time Zone 1:

## Taking Care of Yourself

### Overview and Why it Matters

The four guides in this section center around one of the toughest areas for a family member—especially a parent—of a substance using child: learning to shift from a sole focus on the child to a focus on themselves (including self-care, emotional needs and other relationships). These guides are not a recommendation to “detach”, but rather suggestions that they take care of themselves AND their child. The goal is to increase awareness that it is not an “either/or equation”, and that engaging/focusing on their own self-care will increase the quality of their lives and their ability to be effective with their child and the situation that they face.

### The Four Guides

- 1A. This is Really Stressful: Take Care of Yourself
- 1B. You're Not Alone: Reducing Isolation
2. Collaboration Helps: You, Your Partner, and Your Child
3. One Size Doesn't Fit All... One Answer Doesn't Fit All

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## 1A. This is Really Stressful: Take care of Yourself

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *The “oxygen mask”*

- Normalizes stress of being a parent to a child using substances or engaging in other risky behavior
- Introduces self-care as an important idea and action for a parent to consider
- Suggests that self-care is critical for:
  - The long haul that this problem can be
  - Being as effective as possible as a helper
- Suggests beginning self-care and using SMART goals structure to plan

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Talking calmly on the phone
- Sounding clear, thinking clearly, explaining things clearly
- Remarking on any maintenance of normalcy (going to work, eating, making meals, caring for other family members)
- Making note of this being a long haul, recognition that a single back-step is not the whole story
- Talking about any self-care efforts (exercise, nails/hair, movie, reading, hobbies, etc.)

### Potential Red Lights:

- “I don’t have time”. It can be very difficult for people to justify taking care of their own needs when they are frightened, angry, or overwhelmed or feeling guilty.
- Lack of skill. Some callers will have never really taken care of themselves (exercised, eaten well etc). They don’t have the habit or the skill and will need to invest in learning new things themselves
- Lack of awareness. Some people don’t even know they are neglecting themselves...because it has become such a habit.
- “While my child is struggling...how can I possibly focus on my needs” (e.g., feeling like any self-care is selfish or neglectful)?

### Green Light Strategies:

- Encourage parent to start small. Finding even 15 minutes a day can really help.
- Increase their awareness of easy options (i.e., going for a walk, while you talk on the phone to a friend can accomplish two goals). And make point that walking counts as exercise, people often minimize this...and it’s an easy thing to incorporate more of (park your car at the end of the parking lot, stairs etc).
- Help them identify simple things they can track and say yes to (e.g., sitting on edge of bed and breathing slowly for 5 minutes before you go to bed and before you get out of bed).
- Read up! Suggest finding something motivating and educational that gets them thinking of new things to do (health mags, a new cook book, online resources).
- Impart the value of doing these things as a way to increase one’s ability to cope. Listen for ways they are breaking down emotionally (losing temper, crying when talking to loved one) and suggest that a little self-care might keep on even keel.
- Impart the value of doing these things as a role model to their loved one.

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## **1B. This is Really Stressful: You're Not Alone: Reducing Isolation**

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *"You Are Not Alone!"*

- Normalizes desire to isolate in response to family/child struggles
- Introduces getting support of others as a research-supported and important idea and action for a parent to consider
- Validates feeling exposed/embarrassed with sharing family struggles with others, and suggests doing that in a thoughtful way
- Suggests that support is critical for:
  - Developing and maintaining resilience to deal with the issues
  - Being as effective as possible as a helper
- Suggests establishing goal of 1X week social support activity

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Accepting help (even in small ways like others doing chores, etc.)
- Mentioning talking to someone about real things (therapist, friend, family)
- Mentioning participating in any kind of group setting (church, book group, family gathering, self-help group, therapy group, community group)

### Potential Red Lights:

- Significant amount of shame and embarrassment about the problem.
- Lack of social supports due to history of conflict (loved one has caused conflict in family) or withdrawal from others (others have pulled away or rejected)
- Lack of support due to social anxiety and/or shyness
- "I'm too busy"
- Lack of interest or energy to devote to this area of life ("at the end of the day I just want to be alone and quiet").

### Green Light Strategies:

- Good opportunity for appropriate self-disclosure around your own previous feelings of shame etc. and ways that you coped or have changed
- Validate and acknowledge that conflict with others (family and/or friends) often comes along with a substance problem. Encourage them to identify "safest" person to connect with and start there. No need to dig into repairing big issues, start small.
- If anxious person, encourage them to explore options where they are comfortable. Ask how they have coped in the past.
- Impart value of taking time (points made in session 1a).
- Discuss resilience and ask if there are other things that they have dealt with in their life where they allowed social support.
- Remind that getting support does not require spilling guts.

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## 2. Collaboration Helps: You, Your Partner, and Your Child

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *United We Stand*

- Normalizes difficulty of “getting on the same page” with co-parent at times, especially under duress
- Validates feeling that at times that the other parent is the uncooperative one
- States that there will be increased positive feelings if collaboration improves
- Gives permission to still disagree, but to work together even when there are disagreements

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Mention of speaking with partner collaboratively
- Mention of communication with partner that went badly, but insight about how this isn't good
- Mention of taking care of the partnership in some way (with normal recreation/time together or specifically to work on their collaboration for this issue)

### Potential Red Lights:

- Fully polarized relationships with lot of hurt and anger in the way of collaboration
- Strong differences in opinions about child rearing practices or thoughts about substance use problems
- Overwhelmed dyads (i.e., multiple jobs, other children, taking care of elderly parents etc) where there is little time to communicate
- Non-traditional arrangements where multiple caretakers are involved (e.g., nannies, grandparents, neighbors etc)
- Divorced or separated relationships where child is moving between parents or there is history of conflict and lack of communication between parents

### Green Light Strategies:

- Ask about the impact of not collaborating. Get them talking about ways that it is not working and how it is affecting their child. Most people are aware of poor outcome and this can be good hook to encourage that they try to find at least one small place to start collaborating.
- Brainstorm with them “points of agreement”...and start there! If there are big differences, try to get them talking about ways that they connect with their partner in other areas (finances, hobbies, life goals). It will help cool them off and remind them of points of connection.
- Encourage a specific 10 min a day check-in about all things related to addressing the problem as a united front. Discourage “right before bed”. Brainstorm about opportunities to talk (over lunch break, driving to work etc).
- Validate difficulty communicating when there is distance or conflict in a relationship, but highlight ways it could help.
- Discuss the importance of consistent communication between caretakers and encourage them to find structured time to do this.

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## 3. One Size Does Not Fit All...One Answer Does Not Fit All

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: Many Paths to Change AND Many Voices Advising

- Conveys the idea that there are many positive pathways to change, and that success will be made more likely by understanding the uniqueness of their child and family
- Normalizes difficulty of hearing advice and opinions of many, including professionals with strong black and white opinions
- Strongly encourages parent to stay involved, not believe ideas that they need to step away, detach or otherwise let their child fend for themselves

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Mention of hearing different expert opinions of what they should do
- Notation of an aspect of their situation that makes it more difficult/impossible to pursue a path of action others might take (child has a psychiatric diagnosis as well, child has been unresponsive to rewards/consequences in past, etc.)
- Mention of how they feel pressure to take a course of action but misgivings about their situation being a good fit for that path

### Potential Red Lights:

- Parent has been exposed to very black and white suggestions or treatment in the past
- They may have significant amount of guilt (e.g., due to their own substance use history or behavior) or concern about things that their child has been exposed to (e.g., abuse, neglect) that they think are causing the problem. All leading to self-doubt
- Reflect on the power of anxiety and fear. That is causes people to want quick fixes and clear answers. That while understandable, responding to this fear too quickly can often create more work or more problems down the road
- They may have few resources in community

### Green Light Strategies:

- Good opportunity for appropriate self-disclosure if you have had similar feelings or experiences. Offer ways that you coped
- Validate that black and white/all or nothing suggestions from others can feel powerful as they seem to fix the problem quickly
- Listen for specifics about child and family (both strengths and vulnerabilities) that you can reflect back as examples of “individual” issues that need to be addressed or recognized
- Educate that it is important to ask for feedback...but encourage a “scientific approach”. Gather the evidence and then step back and see what seems like best fit for your child and your family. No need to immediately accept of any one suggestion.
- Make note of online community resources if living in more isolated situation (e.g., rural environments)

## Time Zone 2:

# Understanding the Problem

### Overview and Why it Matters

The two guides in this section are meant to introduce the main behavioral idea in CRAFT and all other behaviorally-oriented treatments: people do things because they are rewarded/reinforced for those actions. This applies across behaviors “good” and “bad”, not just related to substance use. Knowing this is a powerful tool in then competing with these rewards through other behaviors, and makes substance use more understandable, predictable and less personalized. Ambivalence (wanting to change AND not wanting to at the same time) then makes sense, because change requires giving up something you like, as well as trying new (and maybe difficult) things in place of that behavior. The guides normalize these reactions, which helps parents not personalize either the substance use or the ambivalence and struggle with change. Ambivalence is also tied to the type of conversations you have with your child, including getting “red lights” about changing as well as “green lights”. Also discussed is the idea that arguing with ambivalence is a losing proposition, and that before learning new communication strategies, allowing ambivalence to be expressed is a good start.

### The Two Guides

4. Behaviors Make Sense... Even Your Child’s
5. Ambivalence is Normal - and Makes Sense Too!

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## 4. Behaviors Make Sense – Even Your Child's

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *There is an explanation*

- You child is not likely crazy, bad, irrational, or trying to torture you!
- Introduces idea that behavior (including substance use) is motivated, not random or “bad” (though the effects are often bad)
- Knowing this can allow a number of positives:
  - Lets you learn other ways to reward/help him to compete with rewards of use
  - Lets you not take his behavior as personally... it's about the rewards, not you
  - Increases you empathy for his behavior and him
  - Increased empathy increases collaboration in both directions

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Any insight noted about why child using or wants to use
- Recognition of patterns/predictability to child's using
- \*\*Special mention = effort to find ways to encourage/reward the alternative/non-using behavior that serves the purpose s/he thinks substance use is serving!

### Potential Red Lights:

- Anger and judgment about substance use or behavioral choices resulting in difficulty with concept
- Lack of understanding about the effect of substances
- Estrangement or distance from child and not really knowing child well enough to be able to think about reasons he/she might be using

### Green Light Strategies:

- Validate anger but talk about importance of this strategy in finding ways to compete with use
- Make note that reinforcement builds self-esteem around healthy constructive behaviors
- Encourage parent to read up...educate themselves about effects of drugs so that they have better sense of what child might be getting from use
- Encourage parent to ask child questions, be curious. You can be curious and not condone use all at the same time!

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## 5. Ambivalence is Normal – and Makes Sense Too!!

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *Even when it Doesn't Seem to!*

- Explain ambivalence as another part of reinforcement: your child uses for a reason, and will be giving that up in changing, which produces ambivalence/reluctance to change
- Describe ambivalence as normal part of changing *any* behavior, normalizes this
- This ambivalence comes out in conversations, what we call “red light” and “green light” talk, and needs to be listened for to reduce fights and struggles.
- Suggest upcoming communication suggestions will be helpful, but that not arguing with ambivalence is helpful for now

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Recognition that mixed feelings are normal, predictable, or understandable
- Describing communication that expresses a validation of ambivalence
- Describing communication that doesn't fight with ambivalence (eg, not “taking the bait” of arguing on the side of making changes if child expresses ambivalence)
- Recognition of understanding and empathy for ambivalence in the process of change for the child

### Potential Red Lights:

- Anger and judgment resulting in low tolerance for ambivalence
- Anxiety or fear resulting in desire for quick fix
- Lack of understand of how habits change...thinking of substance use as something “different” (moral or simply bad judgment problem)

### Green Light Strategies:

- Validate feelings and desire for quick behavioral change
- Suggest that the parent think of a behavioral change they have made in the past (breaking a habit or starting a new one) and think through all the steps it took to successfully make the change
- Suggest that they think of times that they felt backed into a corner by someone and how they responded (both outwardly and inwardly).
- Encourage them to think through recent conversations where they took a black and white stand and collect the evidence on how that went...did it move convo along or shut it down?
- Good opportunity to use appropriate self-disclosure if you relate to this struggle as a parent...and ways that you see things now

# Time Zone 3:

# The Tools of Change

## Overview and Why it Matters

The seven guides in this section are meant to help parents gather tools for a new tool box. Many of the guides are designed to further increase awareness of alternative ways to positively influence a child (reinforcement vs punishment and confrontation) and ways to improve communication (which is crucial skill for encouraging change) and manage negative emotional states. The section ends with encouragement to practice, practice, practice!

## The Seven Guides

6. Your Love Matters: Positive Reinforcement
- 7A. Consequences: Naturally Occurring Consequences
- 7B. Consequences: The “3 C’s”: Clarity, Consequences, and Consistency
- 8A. Communication: The 7 Elements of Positive Communication
- 8B. Communications: Red Light/Green Light Talk. Pay Attention to the Lights!
9. Managing Your Negative Emotions
10. You Can’t Get it Right Every Time... Practice, Practice, Practice!

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## 6. Your Love Matters: Positive Reinforcement

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *You get More Bees with Honey*

- Introduces idea of positive reinforcement, or the rewarding of positive behaviors, as central to behavior change in the household
- Contrasts this with detachment and punishment as less helpful approaches, and distinguishes reinforcement from enabling, which is rewarding (inadvertently) old negative behaviors
- Explains that ultimate goal is establishment of self-sustaining positive behaviors that are rewarding in their own right, and which compete with the rewards of substance use
- Normalizes and validates built up negative emotions that may make it hard to focus on the positives when they occur
- Suggest several practical aspects or tips about using positive reinforcement:
  - Needs to be rewarding to the child themselves
  - Needs to be age appropriate
  - Needs to be both consistent and delivered in a timely manner

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Any recognition that their affection, attention, approval, or praise matters to the child
- Recognition of when child does the “positive opposite” sometimes
- Recognition that (even if difficult or feels impossible to them) giving praise would be a good idea *when child does something positive*
- Raising the issue of the bind child must feel in that if they do the “right” thing it is not praised/recognized because parent is still angry

### Potential Red Lights:

- Long-standing anger that has resulted in breakdown of any positive interactions
- Belief in a lot of “shoulds”
- Belief that their child “does not care about anything” and cannot be rewarded
- Belief that they have “tried everything”
- Belief that rewarding = bribery
- Has had messages to not “enable” in the past and confusion about concept
- Difficulty with compliments, affection, warmth etc.

### Green Light Strategies:

- Validate anger but remind parent of power of positive reinforcement and the need to compete with use. Also note that reinforcement for constructive behaviors can build child’s self-esteem
- Use metaphors that are good examples of how people learn...“you would never expect you child to sit down and play a Chopin Etude right out of the gates...they need to start with figuring out where to put their fingers, read music, practice dexterity, build up strength, learn to be musical etc. etc.” Relate back to what child is “learning” right now and encourage parent to be a good coach
- Validate that they have probably tried a lot but wonder out loud how consistent and/or specific they were with doling out rewards or noticing good behavior. Encourage that they try again and track it.

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- Educate about difference bw rewarding sober, constructive behavior and enabling
- Talk about power of building closeness and warmth wherever possible. That they might feel better too.
- Brainstorm ways to “notice” or “reward” good behavior that match their own personality style.

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## **7A. Consequences: Allowing for Naturally Occurring Consequences**

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**Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide:** *The world is a good teacher if we let it be*

- Introduces flip side of positive reinforcement, which is allowing for naturally occurring negative consequences
- Distinguishes between three responses to negative behavior:
  - allowing for natural consequences (recommended) – allows whatever negative results come from your child's behavior to occur without being blocked or diminished
  - punishment (less recommended) – an external consequence imposed by you the parent in response to their negative behavior
  - “enabling” – (not recommended) rewarding this negative behavior by helping to eliminate any naturally occurring negative consequences
- Validates the emotional difficulty of allowing for negative consequences
- Describes this method as the perfect complement to using positive reinforcement, and as a great way to allow your child to learn to act differently

### **Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:**

- Noting awareness of natural consequences of child's use; recognition with action anywhere on the continuum from unable to allow to trying hard to allow to clearly allowing (perhaps despite distress/discomfort)
- Noting awareness that naturally occurring consequences are worth paying attention to and might have powerful effect, especially outside of parent-child relationship (eg between child and outside world)
- Caller making it clear they understand the difference between applying a consequence and allowing one to happen naturally

### **Potential Red Lights:**

- Lack of awareness and difficulty identifying potential natural consequences.
- Strong identification with caretaking role and difficulty imagining “not doing” everything for child
- Fear that something bad will happen

### **Green Light Strategies:**

- Brainstorm or notice potential natural consequences that parent might be standing in the way of
- Validate feelings about caretaker role but also talk about power and importance of “learning from experience” when it comes to feeling the costs of substance use
- Encourage parent to write down everything they are “worried about” when it comes to letting consequences happen and rule out ones that are unacceptable or unsafe. Remind them that there are small but potentially meaningful ones

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## **7B. Consequences: The 3 C's: Clarity, Consequences and Consistency**

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide:

- Explains importance of 3 ideas related to negative consequences for negative behavior:
  - establishing clear and defined consequences (both positive and negative) for behaviors
  - having clear communication between parents and between parent and child about what those consequences will be
  - consistent and reliable follow-through on those agreed upon responses
- Underscores that consequences must be:
  - ones that parents are willing and able to deliver (not re-thought after the actions)
  - agreed upon ahead of time
  - matched appropriately to level of behavior (i.e. not over or under-consequence)

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Recognition that sending mixed messages to child has been/is a problem
- Noting that message to child about consequence plan ahead has not been clear in the past
- Noting that message about consequence plan in past has been made more as threat, not followed through consistently
- Recognition that “consequence” to positive behaviors has not been made clear
- Note that consequences for child’s negative behaviors are important (despite how difficult or unplanned they’ve been)

### Potential Red Lights:

- Belief that “nothing matters” to their child and that they have tried giving every consequence and nothing has worked
- History of difficulty collaborating with other caretakers involved
- Being overwhelmed and having hard time with consistency
- History of making big threats (“I’m going to kick you out” or “cut you off”) without holding to them, loss of credibility with child

### Green Light Strategies:

- Validate previous efforts. Wonder out loud where things broke down (was consequence too much to hold in place over time? Was it meaningful to child but was not implemented consistently?)
- Refer back to importance of collaboration and ways to achieve
- Encourage tracking (e.g., “maybe you could create calendar so that if you give a consequence you can keep track that you stick with what you say”).
- Validate impulse to make big threats in effort to get child to change (fear, desperation, anger...all drive this impulse and are understandable). Make note that it is ok to change course and if parents starts sticking to consequences, credibility with child can be brought back.
- Reflect that kids actually crave structure in spite of what they say. That they need it and don’t actually know what they are doing...even though they want to look like they do. Encourage parents to trust themselves and stick to structure that they think is best for their child.

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## 8A. Communication: The 7 Elements of Positive Communication

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide:

- Introduces idea that communication is a core skill in relationships, and is likely to suffer badly when stress and/or conflict is high
- Learning skills to communicate more effectively in this context is very powerful in helping to move forward positively, as well as in all areas of life
- Describes 7 steps of positive communication that are geared toward maximizing the chance that the other person will hear and consider what you are saying (not necessarily agree!)
- Suggests a number of practical tips including:
  - Timing your communications
  - Practicing them ahead of time
  - Start small...don't tackle the toughest communications first

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Noting that communicating when in the midst of strong emotions is usually not productive
- Noting that choosing best moment (good timing for child and self) makes a positive difference with how communication goes
- Noting that bringing up the past usually doesn't help
- Noting that harping on the negative in communication usually doesn't help
- Noting the problem with all communication being about negative stuff or rule-bound issues
- Specifically asking for help on how to best communicate to child/recognition that communication is an important issue

### Potential Red Lights:

- Anger and resentment...difficulty understanding what we mean by "positive"
- Difficulty being brief or specific because there is laundry list of things they are upset about
- Difficulty identifying understanding statements due to lack of awareness of child's reasons for behavior
- Difficulty taking partial responsibility due to lack of awareness or anger

### Green Light Strategies:

- Educate about the power of these skills in all areas of life
- Validate difficulty learning this as a new skill
- Educate on importance of breaking things into small, digestible chunks. That their child will simply stop listening to them if they go on too long or about too many things. That their child's developing brains can only take in so much at a time.
- Refer back to "behaviors make sense" as way to increase awareness for understanding statements
- Good opportunity to talk about own progress/changes in communication using these skills...examples of the way you have used to good effect etc.
- Validate difficulty taking partial responsibility but talk about power of defusing tension and also acting as good role model.

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## **8B. Red Light/Green Light Talk: Pay Attention to the Lights!**

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: Drive Carefully!

- Expose and educate about strategies that help lower defensiveness and open up discussions about change
- Normalize “good intentions” and efforts to “talk about things”
- Increase awareness about how wide variety of behavioral changes (e.g., diet, exercise, relationship dynamics) stir up ambivalence...it’s not just about “addiction”
- Increase awareness of strategies that keep loved one engaged, interesting, and not interested in “defending” their position (OARS)
- Increase awareness about conversation strategies that shut conversations down/activate defensiveness (conversational “traps”)
- Highlight potential power of keeping loved one engaged, feeling connected and understood...(i.e., how to win a marathon!)

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Noting awareness of child’s signals in communications (green light/red light talking distinction)
- Noting they are using/trying to use any of the OARS strategies
- Demonstrating even an awareness that in communication with him/her the child reacts defensively and this dynamic is not helpful
- Specifically asking for help in how to communicate without making child defensive (shows recognition they might have a role in changing this)
- Noting they are Not (or trying hard not to): demean child’s ideas/perspective as stupid or crazy or tell child s/he should have no input

### Potential Red Lights:

- Difficulty recognizing the powerful pull to “educate” and lecture
- So much emotional distress that they have difficulty “unplugging” from conflict
- Tendency to be impulsive or anxious

### Green Light Strategies:

- Use self-disclose if appropriate and give examples of your own struggles with “red light/green light” moments
- Notice and reflect back ways that they have said their child has responded to their communication efforts (e.g., “I tell them need to quit using and they tell me I am the crazy one”, “he tells me I worry too much”)
- Validate how hard it is to keep your balance and perspective in conversations where you are anxious or angry
- Steer back to self-care efforts to build resiliency and ability to “roll with” ambivalence

# CMC ◦ PARENT'S 20 MINUTE GUIDE : A SYNOPSIS

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## 9. Your Love Matters: Managing You Negative Emotions

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide:

- Normalize negative emotions in reaction to child's behavior/situation ("of course you feel angry", "it's completely normal to feel hurt")
- Normalize unspoken guilt and shame about situation ("what if it's my fault," "what will people think")
- Increase awareness of impact of acting out, expressing negative emotions too much (e.g., getting negative response back, increasing defensiveness, increasing distance/conflict)
- Increase awareness that they can be calm and non-emotional AND effective and clear about expectation.
- Teach potential coping skills to manage negative emotions (anticipate and plan, identify alternatives, taking time outs etc)

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Willingness to express negative feelings (how angry/irritated/annoyed/frustrated/disappointed/depressed, etc. their child makes them) \*\*note, coach can praise the ability to recognize the feeling (even if negative) as a strength AND eventually note that the expression TO CHILD is not so helpful
- Recognition of how own or partner's negative feelings are valid, understandable
- Mention of how important it is to not express the negative feelings
- Discussion of how difficult it is to not express the negative feelings
- \*\*Special mention = noting how child should not be made to feel guilty for having these problems/issues or how child should not feel responsible for parent's disappointment about child having these problems

### Potential Red Lights:

- Too much anger or anxiety to resist acting on emotion (e.g., lack of control over emotional expression...losing temper, falling apart into tears)
- Difficulty understanding reasons for their child's use/behavior or low empathy
- Poor self-care resulting in low resiliency or frustration tolerance

### Green Light Strategies:

- Use self-disclose if appropriate and give examples of your own struggles, ways that you lost your cool, fell apart etc that you think would normalize their feelings
- Notice and reflect back ways that their emotional response to situation has resulted in communication set-backs or escalation in acting out/rebellion behavior from child
- Validate how hard it is to keep your cool when so frightened or angry...steer back to self-care efforts to build resiliency
- Steer toward asking for help and reducing isolation as ways to keep perspective and have outlet for emotional upset

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## 10. You Can't Get it Right Every Time...Practice, Practice, Practice

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: Everyone Needs to Practice

- Normalize and generalize the need to practice skills learned in the maps
- Increase appreciation that their own behavioral changes (e.g., how they communicate, how they take care of themselves) will be new and require focus and consistent attention until a habit
- Increase their ability to relate to their child's change process and the many, many steps it takes to change a behavior
- Educate about the power and positive effect of "keeping track" of behaviors and change across time.

### Potential Caller Strengths Relevant to this Guide:

- Showing tolerance or patience for self that they are trying something new, that it might take another few tries, that it's normal/okay for them to be on a learning curve still making mistakes
- Showing tolerance or patience for partner in trying something new/practicing
- Recognizing getting better at any of the CRAFT skills over time with practice
- Noting practicing (in front of mirror, with a friend, on paper, etc.)
- Noting that these skills don't necessarily come naturally, need adjustment period and practice (to develop greater facility)

### Potential Red Lights:

- Personal traits that get in way of empathy for need to "learn" (e.g., history of things coming easy to them and having child with learning disabilities or issues they do not relate to")
- Lack of awareness of effect of psychiatric issues, learning issues and trauma...on ability of their child to learn or be open new skills
- Tendency to be impulsive or anxious (e.g., the need to get a quick fix)

### Green Light Strategies:

- To increase empathy, identify and work through a behavioral change they have had in their own life (e.g., quitting smoking, starting to exercise etc)
- Use appropriate self-disclosure of some habit you broke and all the steps and practice it took
- Reflect on the negative outcome of assuming something should be fixed quickly and easily (e.g., noticing when loved one says "I can't")

# Time Zone 4:

## Good Ideas

### Overview and Why it Matters

The four guides in this section are meant to help parents gather additional tools for their tool box. The guides include problem solving skills and setting SMART goals which will be useful in understanding almost every other map in the other time zones. They are crucial skills to encourage parents to learn and they are even more powerful because they are skills that can “waterfall” into their home and be beneficial to their children. The other guides are full of suggestions for reinforcement and self-care.

### The Four Guides

A Good Idea: Problem Solving Skills

A Good Idea: Rewarding Sobriety when your Child is Not Drinking/Using

A Good Idea: S.M.A.R.T. Goals

A Good Idea: Practice Good Self-Care

# CMC ◦ PARENT'S 20 MINUTE GUIDE : A SYNOPSIS

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## A Good Idea: Problem Solving Skills

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *The “tools”*

- To teach the incredibly valuable skill of problem solving
- Improve flexibility in the parents' approach to problems
- Improve the parents ability to create plan of action
- Improve their willingness to evaluate the process and make adjustments as needed
- To teach a skill that has potential to have a waterfall effect into home, as they can teach and model the same skill to their child

### Potential Red Lights:

- Rigid, anxious thinking process that makes brainstorm difficult
- Desire for a quick fix and impatience
- Difficulty teasing out one specific problem when overwhelmed with variety of very complex ones
- Lack of resources (financial, family/friend support)

### Green Light Strategies:

- Use self-disclosure if appropriate to illuminate your own use of the steps in problem solving
- Participate actively in the brainstorming, throw out suggestions and model creative thinking
- Help parent think creatively about ways to face obstacles and be willing to break problem down to even more specific steps if needed
- Steer back to self-care if overwhelmed with feeling and unable to use skills

# CMC ◦ PARENT'S 20 MINUTE GUIDE : A SYNOPSIS

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## **A Good Idea: Rewarding Sobriety When Your Child is Not Drinking/Using**

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *The “treats”*

- To illuminate wide range of options for positive reinforcement
- To give examples of free, spontaneous rewards
- To give examples of planned rewards that involved some expense
- To give examples of what NOT to do

### Potential Red Lights:

- Anger, resentment, difficulty embracing idea of rewards
- Depression or anxiety that make it difficult to be warm, affectionate or focused on the positive

### Green Light Strategies:

- Give examples you have seen or heard about that reflect the potential influence of positive reinforcement
- Steer parent back to self-care guides to help reduce negative emotional states
- Model brainstorming in order to generate unique list of rewards for their child

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## A Good Idea: S.M.A.R.T. Goals

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *The “tools”*

- To teach the steps needed to create SMART goals
- To give parents skills that reduce feelings of hopelessness and tendency to be overwhelmed (by too many, to big goals)
- To teach a skill that can have waterfall effect into family as they can teach child the same skill

### Potential Red Lights:

- Desire for a quick fix and impatience
- Difficulty teasing out one specific problem when overwhelmed with variety of very complex ones (difficulty finding **S**pecific and **A**ttainable goals)
- High expectations and perfectionism (specifically effects ability to set **A**ttainable goals)
- Lack of resources (financial, family/friend support)

### Potential Red Lights:

- Use self-disclosure if appropriate to illuminate your own use of the steps in SMART Goals
- Participate actively in the brainstorming, throw out suggestions and model creative thinking

# CMC ◦ PARENT'S 20 MINUTE GUIDE : A SYNOPSIS

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## A Good Idea: Practice Good Self-Care

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### Overall Meaning and Intent of the Guide: *The “tools”*

- To offer wide range of examples and ideas for potential self-care goals
- To help parent think creatively about self-care options (i.e., it's not just about going to the gym and eating right!)

### Potential Red Lights:

- Depression and difficulty motivating or finding energy to devote to self-care
- Lack of resources (financial, social support, community, etc.)

### Green Light Strategies:

- Use self-disclosure if appropriate to illuminate your own attempts at self-care, making note of anything seemingly “insignificant” or not obviously “self-care” that ended up having big effect (e.g., I realized that if I sat in my car for 5 minutes, listening to music and breathing, that I could transition from work to my houseful of hungry kids with less tension)
- Participate actively in the brainstorming, throw out suggestions and model creative thinking

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