

Prairie Sky Recovery Centre Inc.  
**FAMILY INFORMATION  
PACKAGE**



Dear Family Member,

Thank you for choosing Prairie Sky Recovery Centre Inc. We are here to support you as your loved one prepares for admission into our residential program. We have created this collection of information and forms into one package which we call the Family Information Package. This package is designed to assist you in this time of transition.

The information enclosed summarizes our collective experience on how you can effectively communicate with your loved one while they are in treatment, especially during the early stages – weeks one and two of their stay. It is very important that you read this immediately and call us if you have any questions.

Additionally, we have enclosed a family “Tool Kit”. We refer to the skills learned in Recovery as “tools” that can help you in your journey of healing from the impact of your loved one’s addiction.

While the information enclosed in this package is a good start, I strongly encourage you to make arrangements to attend our next Family Care Enhancement Program. This program is generally held over an extended weekend, monthly. The program starts Friday evening, runs all day Saturday and Sunday, with an optional availability to continue into Monday if extra time is needed. Benefits of this program include a well-grounded foundation in the disease of addiction, the effects of addiction on the addict and their family and give you the opportunity to meet other families affected by addiction. The fees for one seat in this program are included in the residential fees paid for your loved one, and additional seats may be purchased as available. This is an important aspect of treatment and probably the most important contribution you can make to your loved-ones long-term recovery journey. Please refer to the registration information included.

There are many other resources available and I encourage you to visit [www.PrairieSkyRecovery.ca](http://www.PrairieSkyRecovery.ca) for further information.

Yours truly,

Johann DeWolfe  
Executive Director  
Prairie Sky Recovery Centre Inc.

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## **CONTACT GUIDELINES FOR FAMILY MEMBERS:**

### **How you can help while your loved one is in treatment:**

Entering treatment can be a time of great opportunity. It can be an occasion for much anxiety. People with addictions may fluctuate in their commitment towards recovery. Many alcoholic or chemically dependent people enter treatment with a secret wish that they will learn how to drink or use drugs without experiencing severe consequences. Such individuals have not come to terms with the fact that they have a potentially life-threatening fatal illness. Furthermore, alcoholic or chemically dependent people usually go through a “grieving process” over the loss of their relationship with intoxication or addictive substances. Family members and loved ones need to understand that such grieving – accompanied by bargaining and a rollercoaster of emotions – is a normal part of the healing process. There will be times when people in treatment will want to leave; there will be other moments when they experience incredible hope for the future. Loved ones need to keep in mind that a person’s acting on a desire to “pull the pin” may well prove counterproductive – especially if what they are thinking or feeling is a natural part of early recovery.

### **Helpful Support:**

- Understanding people’s fluctuations in commitment to recovery.
- Listen and be supportive without judging.
- Do not panic and make hasty decisions. Give the treatment process time.
- Do not assume that because an individual is not happy in treatment that they are having problems with the style of therapy. This may be part of a natural process of finally accepting the addiction.
- Do not feel like you have to rescue an individual from their own upset feelings during treatment.
- Give an individual time and space to come to terms with their own recovery program.
- Do not try to make an individual feel guilty for being in a recovery program even if they are unable to help out with responsibilities at home.
- Ask the staff if you have any questions about the recovery program.
- Do not try and solve their problems, allow the time necessary for them to take responsibility for their choices and consequences.
- Learn about ways to start your own healing process.

### Unhelpful Support:

- Joining with the upset individual without understanding the full situation. Remember that you may be hearing only the part of a story the person wants you to know to justify them leaving treatment.
- Minimizing the addiction problem and accepting that the individual will just get help at home if they want to.
- Distracting an individual from their recovery process by needing constant attention and assurance of being loved.
- Demanding answers to past unresolved issues without using the help of a mediator or counsellor.
- Feeling jealous about the time an individual is spending focusing on recovery. Remember that with a recovery program an individual can become a better person in life. Therefore, treatment is an investment for the future.
- Assuming that an individual in recovery is trying to be someone else or is under some “cultish” influence. There are new words that individuals will learn as part of their recovery that will help them remember to stay away from mood-altering substances. Take the time to learn the recovery language instead of feeling threatened by such changes.

### Tips to Remember

- Loved ones enter treatment in a state of **Active Addiction** but leave in **Remission**. This process takes time and is gained as they learn and practice precept upon precept. It is a process.
- The disease of Addiction affects particular areas of the brain and thinking processes – improvement will continue to happen over time if the management suggestions are followed. Being in and through treatment is not a “cure”.
- Practicing and using the “tools” learned in treatment on a daily basis is the prescription needed to fully develop and enjoy a life in Recovery.
- It is vital that your loved one be allowed the opportunity to learn and manage their own disease and journey. You cannot do this for them.

### Understanding the Ebb and Flow of our Treatment Program

- As with any identified disease, what follows are treatment options. At Prairie Sky Recovery our treatment program combines evidence-based practices (such as DBT, CBT, MI, Art, Equine and Recreational Therapy) in a social/relational setting. We believe that addressing the active part of addiction is important (our steps program) as well as identifying and addressing what is fuelling the addiction (our emotional wellness program).
- Individuals arrive at Prairie Sky Recovery in different places. Some are involved in Supervised Detox, Social Detox or Pre-program readiness stages.

- Regardless of the length of time individuals are with us, each one shares in a 5-week group therapy component. During this period, individuals experience some common themes. Understand this flow may assist loved ones on what to expect.
- In week one, individuals feel very unsure of themselves, they may pack and unpack several times. Emotions are high, anxiety, agitation and fear may be raging. This is usually coupled with continued detoxing. It is a tough time for settling in. It is during this time that we restrict telephone usage – we allow the individual to work through these emotions and begin to self-regulate without outside interferences. We know that they can successfully get through this, they just may not.
- Week two is marked by a distinct settling. It is as if the individual says, “I’ve got this!” Anxiety is decreased; individuals have started bonding with their recovery mates, begin to feel more comfortable talking about their struggles honestly, and accept they are not being judged.
- Week three – anxiety may return, emotional work and the “Tough stuff” begins. It is at this time that emotions run high; individuals often feel they are on an emotional rollercoaster, are beginning to “feel” emotions again and having to cope with these feelings without their substance of choice. There are varying degrees of realization of the things that they have put loved ones through while in their active addiction state and they eat twice as much food.
- Finally, week four – “Freedom”. The tough emotions are replaced with a sense of strength and moving forward. Individuals often experience a sense that they can conquer the world! It is – from our perspective – the most critical time in treatment. Individuals have worked through much of their difficulties but are ill equipped to manage a life in recovery.
- Week five begins with the realization how much work is ahead to remain in recovery. This is a critical week in treatment. Individuals learn all the relapse prevention strategies, safety planning and how to organize their lives in recovery – to remain in remission. During this week individuals complete their individualized Recovery Maintenance Action Plan (R-Map). One vital component is sharing this with a loved one. This booklet is organic in nature but is the culmination of what has been learned and how to plan and implement the necessary strategies and tools in their daily life after treatment.

**Telephone calls:**

- Keep calls positive and encouraging. This is your opportunity to express your ongoing support of the loved one’s courage to seek treatment

**Onsite Visits:**

- Visitation is just that. The opportunity to spend time together. This is not a time to rehash differences, make demands or conduct business. Care packages of goodies are always a welcome surprise.
- Visitors are immediate family or significant others only. ID will be required to confirm that visitor is on an approved visit list.

- Remember that electronics and cell phones are **PROHIBITED. Please refrain from bring them on the premises. Leave them locked in your vehicle if necessary. No pets allowed on premises or in vehicles. Please leave them at home.**

**Other contact:**

- Individuals may receive mail via Canada Post C/O Prairie Sky Recovery, Box 535, Wilkie, SK. S0K 4W0. Please remember we are in a rural area and therefore it is snail mail. It is always nice when individuals receive a card or letter while in treatment. We receive mail 2 or 3 times per week.
- No email contact received or sent can be accommodated.
- No telephone messages will be taken – this is a strict protocol of our confidentiality policy. In the case of an immediate emergency requiring action to be taken by the loved one in treatment, you may contact the Director.
- Lastly, please be mindful that at any given time we may have as many as 30 individuals in residence. This equates to between 30 to 90 family members waiting. We understand this may seem like a hardship at times, however, our time is better utilized meeting the day to day needs of your loved one – being successful in Recovery. We understand that family is important and an important part of the recovery journey, however our focus and goal must remain on the individual and their treatment and recovery needs first and foremost. We thank you in advance for your grace in allowing us to do what we do best!

**FAMILY TOOL KIT**

Helping families as well as partners start their own healing journeys...

(Excerpt by Cathy Patterson-Sterling, MA, and RCC)

**Does Someone You Love Have an Addiction?**

At this time, you may have someone in your life struggling with alcohol or drug use. This individual may be contemplating getting help, preparing to go to treatment, or has entered a treatment program. You may be overwhelmed with all kinds of emotions ranging from relief, sadness, as well as anxiety. Such feelings are not uncommon, and you are not alone in this process. Many family members of people with addictions (Substance affected families) feel like they have just gotten off an emotional rollercoaster after dealing with someone else's substance abuse problems. Frequent substance affected families experience an enormous amount of stress because they have just witnessed people, they love self-destructing with alcohol or drugs. Possible reactions to this stress can include worry, anger, fear, resentment, embarrassment, etc. Often family members will find that they are experiencing a state of emotional burn-out whereby they are physically and emotionally exhausted from dealing with the turmoil of an addicted person's problems. If you are a substance affected family member with these circumstances, then take a moment to pause because you deserve to take time for yourself as you absorb what has just happened to you. Often, we, as a society, focus on the individuals with the identifiable problems (i.e. people with substance abuse issues) and we forget that there is an entire group of individuals that are also impacted by others' addictions.

### **Creating a Tool Kit**

Now that your loved one has entered treatment; you will need that extra time to heal from the stress or any feelings of emotional burn-out that you may have experienced. Not all people are able to admit that they have problems with substance abuse so the journey towards finding recovery and/or treatment can be a long road with all kinds of twisting turns. You were likely a passenger alongside someone on this road to recovery and even as a witness to watching someone self-destructs with drugs or alcohol you can experience tremendous stress. Often loved ones of people with addictions will ask themselves what they should do or not do in order to be helpful individuals during early recovery.

The following is a list of skills or what is commonly referred to as a “Tool Kit”. When individuals go through treatment, they will learn valuable skills or “tools”. At the end of treatment, individual shall decide which skills or “tools” are most valuable for their own journey and personal situation. Individuals are then empowered and asked to reach inside their own toolbox to pull out the skills necessary to deal with a given situation or circumstances. As a loved one of someone with addiction, you can also benefit from a number of skills or tools. Below is a list of tools that families typically find helpful during their journeys of healing from the impact of other people’s addiction.

#### ***TOOL # 1: Emotional Space***

Addiction is a complicated disease as individuals may resist at times, to seek help and treatment. People with addictions will develop a drug of choice. In early recovery, individuals may be quite resistant to giving up their drug of choice because this substance has played a very important role in their life. Furthermore, this substance can be used to enhance or suppress feelings and experiences. Therefore, individuals with addictions will use their drug of choice as a way of coping or as an emotional crutch. Recovery means that such individuals will now have to stand on their own two feet, experience feelings they may have and never confronted before and make changes towards a new recovery lifestyle. Such a prospect can be scary to many people because recovery is uncharted territory. Even if people were not happy in their active addiction state, such an experience was a familiar form of misery. Rather than working through fears, many individuals in early recovery will develop defenses or forms of denial instead of embracing change. Forms of denial include:

- Minimizing: claiming that the impact of the drinking or drug use was not all that bad
- Rationalizing: creating excuses for the drinking or drug use
- Denying: not accepting responsibility for the impact of the drinking or drug use
- Deflecting/blaming not taking responsibility for personal actions and instead blaming other for behaviors’

Your loved one with addictions who is in treatment may need to work through a variety of defenses or forms of denial before they come to terms with the fact that they really do have an addiction. This work is particularly important and there may even be times when your loved one tries to convince you that they are not an alcoholic or that their drug use is not that bad. Loved ones may even ask you to bail them out of treatment. An important way of being supportive is to give your loved one emotional space to work through these levels of defense with their counsellor rather than trying to rescue them from a treatment program by taking them home. Your loved one deserves emotional space in order to work on their issues.

Likewise, you need emotional space in order to process your own emotional burn-out and to come to terms with your own healing journey. The addiction has not just impacted your loved one but it has had an effect on yourself as well.

Individuals will go through all kinds of phases on their way to maintaining recovery. For example, some people will bargain with their addictions by trying to prove to themselves that they can set limits with their alcohol intake. “I know I am not an alcoholic because I can drink three beers and then stop” or “Go out and do more research” trying to prove they are reformed. They will likely set limits a few times, however in the long term they will resort back to the uncontrollable and self-destructive drinking patterns.

While in treatment you may hear about how your loved one needs to leave treatment because they can now drink smaller amounts of alcohol etc. Such individuals are “Bargaining with their addiction” and this is natural process. The key point is that you allow them their own emotional space and also take time for yourself rather than rescuing them from treatment. There will come a time when you will need to have faith and trust in the fact that the counsellors know what they are doing and with the experience of treating hundreds, sometimes thousands of people with addictions, the staff will support your loved one in recognizing the bargaining, minimizing, rationalizing etc. as defenses and not reality.

### ***TOOL # 2: Self Care***

If you have had the experience of dealing with someone else’s addiction, then you likely have been drawn into the role of being an expert manager over another person’s life which is out of control. Individuals with addictions are self-destructing with drugs and/or alcohol. As a result, such people will frequently neglect responsibilities as they focus all of their energy on obtaining their drug of choice. Loved ones are left to deal with these responsibilities as well as manage the chaos or drama that results from individuals’ self-destructive drinking or drug using patterns. In fact, loved ones are often invited in to try and fix, manage, control or change situations. For example, partners and family members will often pay off drug debts or resolve other issues. Loved ones will fix situations that are out of control before there are even worse consequences for all involved. The problem is that affected partners or families continue to do all this fixing and managing while individuals with addictions keep creating even more drama and chaos related to their drug using or drinking behavior. Often loved ones feel stressed or depleted of joy and their overall quality of life begins to suffer. Substance affected partners and family members often feel consumed by the problems of others with addictions.

Even once individuals with addictions enter treatment facilities, substance affected partners and families may still continue on with old patterns of monitoring, fixing, changing, controlling or managing others who are now in recovery. The focus is always on the person the addiction and how they are doing. Loved ones have learned how to focus their attention outward onto the addicted individuals while frequently forgetting about their own wellbeing. Over time, the totality of the loved ones’ happiness can rest upon whether other individuals used drugs or drank that day. Such loved ones have forgotten about their own self-care at the expense of managing and controlling the addicted persons’ life that is spinning out of control. Therefore, in order to regain personal health, control and happiness substance affected partners and families need to start to re-focus their energies on to increasing their quality of lives. In essence, taking better care of themselves.

Furthermore, individuals with addictions need to learn to stand on their own two feet and not rely on family to carry them through all of their problems. If loved ones continue to manage, rescue or care take then individuals in recovery remain weak and never learn to become self-sufficient. Loved ones may have become accustomed to caring for others with addictions and part of the journey to healing for themselves is to allow others to have the power to work through issues.

If you are a loved one of someone with addiction, you can benefit yourself and others better if you begin to engage in self-care. When you direct all of your energy from managing others back onto caring for yourself then you are giving others their own adulthood back. You no longer need to act as the over-functioning parent who cares for a child. In order to empower others and reclaim your own happiness you will need to focus on self-care.

There are many ways to practice self-care. For example, exercise, participate in your favorite activity, eat delicious food, attend a movie, pamper your body etc. This may seem strange that in the midst of your loved one's addiction and crisis in life that you are going to self-indulge by caring for yourself. The main thing is that you will need to develop a sense of healthy emotional detachment so you can allow others the emotional space that they need to work on their recovery program while also healing from your emotional burn-out.

### ***TOOL # 3: Managing the Worry Monster***

There is an inevitable intensity in being in a relationship with someone else who has an addiction. Substance affected partners and families may find themselves living in a constant state of panic or worry. For example, when the phone rings, they may feel tense wondering if the call is the police – is the addicted individual dead or in jail or....

Such worries do not end once individuals with addictions enter treatment. The What If... creeps in. What if they leave treatment, what if they relapse, what if they don't follow their program, What if I begin to trust and they slide or relapse? There is a never-ending series of What If... questions. The main point is to recognize that worrying is like a bottomless pit with no end in sight. Loved ones need to learn to manage their own "worry monsters" for the sake of their own sanity and personal happiness.

Recovery is fluid and not stagnant. It is not complete but organic and grows with time. Individuals with addictions may feel maintaining sobriety is so hard that they are holding onto the edge of their seats waiting to get through their cravings. Then there are other times that it seems effortless. If family members and partners keep worrying rather than flowing with certain events, then they will feel like they are riding an emotional rollercoaster. If they do not want to feel exhausted, then they need to start managing their own patterns of anxiety. Also panic energy from family members can be a distraction to individuals in recovery. Sometimes clients will feel the anxiety of loved ones and then begin to second guess their own abilities in recovery because family members appear uneasy. Remember substance affected partners and families cannot manage the addict's recovery journey. It is theirs alone.

### ***TOOL # 4: Boundaries***

We all have the right to be treated with respect and dignity. When individuals have addictions, they are pre-occupied with their drug of choice. As a result, they often become selfish, disrespectful and disregard others' needs. Individuals with addictions will often treat their partners or family members as a nuisance who is distracting them away from time spent using more drugs or alcohol. People in active addiction are not always the nicest of individuals. Consequences of use include arguments with family, missed time at work, health difficulties, legal problems and more. People with addiction problems need to experience these problems in order to recognize that they really do have a problem. The problem is that substance affected partners and families will often try to make things better by giving money or help of some kind. Sometimes it is easier to give addicts and alcoholic's money or help than to listen to the screaming or arguing that may ensue.

One of the most important tools or skills is the ability to set boundaries. Substance affected partners and family members do not have to be held hostage by others who threaten temper

tantrums etc. Instead of giving in or enabling (helping the problem in getting worse) loved ones can set boundaries. A boundary is a firm stance along with an expectation. For example, you could say “It is not okay for you to yell at us and use drugs in this house. You will no longer be permitted to live here if you continue on with this behavior”. If the addicted person does not accept the conditions, then they will have to leave.

Substance affected partners and family members should not have to compromise their values by giving away money to support other people’s drug habits or live in fear of other’s reactions if they do not provide financial support. One of the biggest reasons partners and families have difficulty setting boundaries is FEAR. They fear all the possible negative consequences from ill health, homelessness to death. The reality is that people with addictions have negative consequences occurring that relate to their decision to continue to use drugs and/or alcohol. If family members keep saving them from such consequences by bailing them out of trouble, then these individuals with addictions will never feel the need to change. Often individuals need to experience the pain of their decisions in order to be inspired to change toward a positive direction.

#### ***TOOL # 5: Progress not Perfection***

Whether individuals are setting boundaries, learning self-care, or healing their own emotional burn-out, they need to remember that they have their own journeys to travel to heal. People do not wake up one day being completely healed from years of destructive patterns. Instead there is a natural process that occurs, and individuals benefit when they begin to enjoy the journey along the way.

When substance affected partners and families start to implement these tools, the initial phases may feel awkward. The development of any new skill can feel a bit strange and clumsy. Be patient with yourselves, comfort and mastery come with time and practice. Remember progress is more important than perfection. Accept this as an opportunity to learn and grow as you become a better, stronger person as a result of the process.

## FAMILY CARE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET

### PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Prairie Sky Recovery Centre Inc. appreciates the difficult circumstances that have prompted you to consider a residential recovery program for a loved one. Whether your family member is entering treatment voluntarily or as a result of a court referral or intervention, we are here to make the process as simple as possible. Our Family Care Enhancement Program is also here to assist you in the recovery journey and finding your own peace.

Specifically the program involves education on the disease of addiction, written exercises, reading and non-confrontational group discussion. Discussions may cover such topics as the aspects of disease of addiction, the treatment process, enabling – what that looks like and how to use effect boundaries, the relationship between the addict/alcoholic and their drug of choice, and caring detachment – how to care effectively. Other topics include self-care, detaching with love and getting on with your own life.

### WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

Anyone affected by the disease of addiction is invited. You do not have to have a family member in the residential program to participate.

### SCHEDULE:

The program starts Friday evening at 6:30 PM. This program continues through Saturday and Sunday with morning and afternoon sessions, with additional films available in the evening. Optional time is available Monday morning as needed. Time is allotted for breaks, snacks and meals.

Please contact the Centre at (306) 658-4767 for dates of our next scheduled Family program

### REGISTRATION:

Registration can be completed by fax, telephone, email or in person.

### TUITION FEES:

- One seat is allocated in the family program, free of charge for every client or alumni of Prairie Sky Recovery Centre.
- An all-inclusive per person fee of \$150.00 covers program costs, literature, continental breakfast, lunches, refreshment breaks for additional family members or community members at large. For current rates please contact the office (8:30 to 4:00 Monday through Thursday)
- All family program participants must be pre-registered by 4:30 PM Friday, one week prior to program commencement start date.

### REFUND AND CANCELLATION POLICY:

Refunds will be made (less \$50.00 processing fee) if one weeks' notice is given. 50% of the course fee is refundable. If notice is given on or after the start date a refund will not be provided. This includes full forfeiture of allocated seating that is included in client fees.

Prairie Sky Recovery Centre Inc. reserves the right to cancel this program if a minimum number of registrants is not met (generally 4). Customers will be advised in advance if of any cancellation. In the event of cancellation, a full refund will be returned. We encourage you to register early to avoid disappointment.

**LOCATION AND ACCOMODATIONS:**

Location of program shall be at Prairie Sky Recovery in Leipzig.

Confirmation of attendance shall be done on the Tuesday prior to program date.

Accommodation at the Centre is subject to available vacancy at a housekeeping rate of \$35.00 per night. Please be advised that persons staying on site at the centre are subject to the same rules, regulations and guidelines as other clients. This includes no use of electronics, search of personal property, medications stored securely, personal products should be alcohol and sent free.

Alternately there are accommodations available as follows:

- Biggar at the Westwinds Hotel (ask for a renovated room) 306-948-3301
- Unity at the Prairie Moon Inn 306-228-3333 or Armada Inn Motel 306-228-2603

Please note drive/commute time to the centre is approximately 40 minutes from either location.

**CHECKLIST:**

To assist you in preparation for your participation in the family program, we recommend:

Things to bring:

- Comfortable, weather appropriate clothing, a sweater or light jacket is recommended
- Casual attire and closed toed footwear – no flip flops or sandals
- Travel mug with lid

Things not to bring:

- Electronic equipment including laptops, cell phones, palm pilots, pagers etc.
- Cameras or video equipment
- Alcohol or other mood-altering drugs (Including Marijuana or its derivatives)

Other:

- There are cigarette smoking areas on site – vaping or chew tobacco is not allowed

## FAMILY CARE ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM REGISTRATION FORM

PLEASE WRITE IN BLOCK LETTERS. One registration for per person. Please photocopy if more are needed.

Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
First Last

Home # \_\_\_\_\_ Cell # \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Street

\_\_\_\_\_ City Province

\_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code

Name of family member/Partner/Spouse participating in Residential Program:

\_\_\_\_\_ First Last

Any Allergies: .....

Method of Payment (Circle): Cash / Cheque / Visa / MasterCard

.....  
Credit Card Number

.....  
Expiry Date CVV

**FOR OFFICE USE:**

<i>Program Date:</i>	
<i>Client Reference:</i>	
<i>Fees Paid / Due:</i>	
<i>Certificate Issued:</i>	