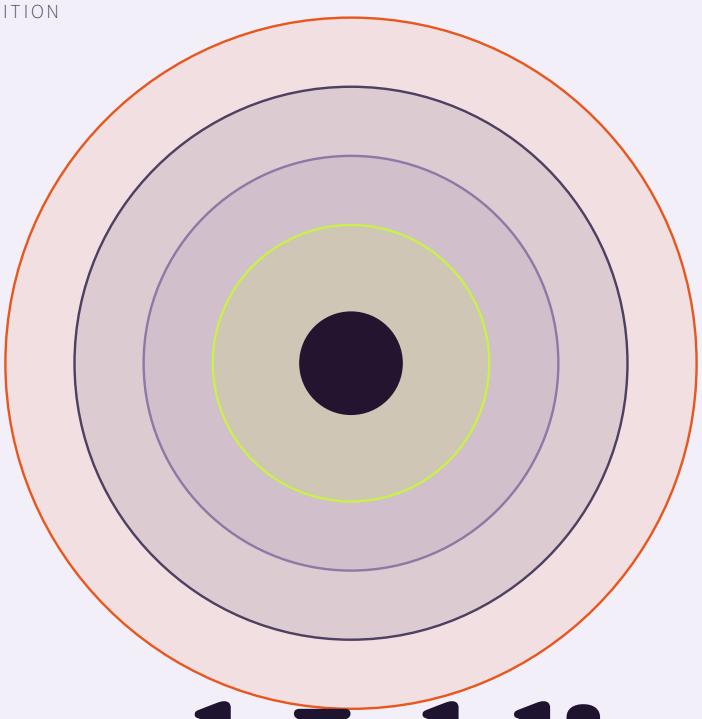


Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change

A reading of the book by Jeffrey Foote, Carrie Wilkens and Nicole Kosanke, with Stephanie Higgs (2014)

1. ACTION BOOK

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ABOUT THIS EDITION

This is HourLife's reading of Beyond Addiction: How Science and Kindness Help People Change, in our own words. It is not a substitute for the book.

BEFORE YOU START 01

The book in a minute

Jeffrey Foote, Carrie Wilkens and Nicole Kosanke are clinical psychologists who founded the Center for Motivation and Change in New York, and they wrote this book with Stephanie Higgs for the family and friends of someone with a substance problem. They argue that the familiar advice to confront hard, or to detach and wait for rock bottom, often backfires, and that research supports a kinder approach. Their method draws on CRAFT (Community Reinforcement and Family Training) and motivational interviewing. Families learn to understand what the substance does for their person, reward non-using behaviour, step back and let natural consequences land, and talk in ways that lower defences. The book treats mixed feelings and setbacks as a normal part of change, and asks readers to look after their own wellbeing as part of helping.

Below are the 9 ideas HourLife readers vote up most, each in our words with a note on what it asks of you, and then the steps that put them to work.

WHAT READERS KEEP

The takeaways

1

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

You do not have to wait for rock bottom; a family can help someone change long before then.

The authors push back on the idea that a person must lose everything before they are ready. Waiting can mean years of harm to everyone involved. Research on CRAFT found that family members who learn its methods can help a loved one move toward treatment.

2

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Kindness is not enabling: you can be warm to the person and still refuse to make the use comfortable.

Families are often told that any warmth rewards the drinking or drug use. The book separates the two. Warmth goes to the person and to their sober moments, while the use itself gets no help, no cover and no attention.

3

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Substance use makes sense to the person using, so find out what it does for them.

People use because it works for them in some way: it eases anxiety, numbs pain, fills an evening or makes a party easier. Seeing those benefits plainly is not approval. It shows you what any healthier option has to compete with.

4

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Reward the moments you want to see more of.

Behaviour that is rewarded tends to come back. When your person is sober, make that time pleasant: notice it, say something specific and kind, or do something together that they enjoy. Small, steady rewards matter more than big speeches.

5

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Stop cushioning the fall, and let the natural costs of use reach the person who is using.

Calling in sick for someone, paying their debts or cleaning up after a binge keeps the costs of use away from them. Stepping back lets those costs do their work. The book means allowing consequences, not adding punishments of your own, and never at the expense of anyone's safety.

6

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Mixed feelings about change are normal, not denial.

Most people want to change and want to keep using at the same time. Motivational interviewing works with both sides instead of arguing. Pushing hard on one side tends to make the person defend the other.

7

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

How you say it decides whether they can hear it.

Lectures, labels and blame raise defences fast. The book teaches a positive way of speaking: short, specific, in the first person, with some understanding of their side. It will not work every time, but it keeps the door open.

8

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

There is more than one road to getting better.

Help can mean therapy, medication, mutual-help groups, or several of these together. No single route suits everyone. A person is more likely to start when they have some say in which road they take.

9

HOURLIFE TAKEAWAY

Looking after yourself is part of helping, not a break from it.

Living with someone's substance use is exhausting, and stress makes it harder to stay calm and consistent. The authors ask families to protect their own sleep, friendships and support. You are more useful to your person, and to yourself, when you are not running on empty.

PUT IT TO WORK

Your action book

Do the setup steps once, then keep the habits going. The setup changes your week; the habits keep it changed after the first good one.

The download puts this whole reading and a printable action book in one PDF: the setup checklist, then a page of real calendar days for each habit, starting on the day you choose.

SET UP ONCE

- [ ] Map when the use happens
- [ ] List what they enjoy sober
- [ ] Pick one thing to stop rescuing
- [ ] Make a safety plan
- [ ] Find support of your own

KEEP UP DAILY

- ◯ Catch one good moment a day
- ◯ Step away calmly when they use
- ◯ Rewrite one sentence before you say it

30 days · Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Part two, after the reading, prints each of these as a page to fill in by hand.

THE LAST WORD

Before you go

Pick one step from the action book and do it today. An idea from a book starts to count once it changes what one ordinary day looks like.

PART TWO

The action book

Change the setup once, then keep it up. 5 setup actions to do once, and 3 habits to mark each day for 30 days.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026

Print it, or write on it in any PDF app.

SET UP ONCE

The setup checklist

Each of these is done once. Do one a day, and check it off when it is done.

- [ ] SETUP 1

Map when the use happens

For the next two weeks, jot down when, where and with whom your person seems to drink or use, and what it seems to do for them.

Patterns usually show up quickly.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 2

List what they enjoy sober

Write down ten things your person likes that have nothing to do with using: a meal, a walk, a film, a game, time with the kids.

Circle two you could offer this week.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 3

Pick one thing to stop rescuing

Choose one thing you do that softens the cost of use, such as covering at work or paying a bill it caused.

Decide to stop, and if you tell them, do it at a calm, sober moment.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 4

Make a safety plan

Know where you would go and who you would call if things ever felt unsafe, and keep your phone charged.

If withdrawal or overdose is a risk, learn the warning signs and where to get medical help fast.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

- [ ] SETUP 5

Find support of your own

Book time with a therapist, ideally one who knows CRAFT, or try a family group such as SMART Recovery Family & Friends or Al-Anon.

Pick the one that fits you, not the one you were told to try.

MY VERSION

DONE ON

DAILY HABIT 1 OF 3

Catch one good moment a day

When your person is sober, say one specific, warm thing or join them in something they enjoy.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
9 ○	10 ○	11 ○	12 ○	13 ○	14 ○	15 ○
16 ○	17 ○	18 ○	19 ○	20 ○	21 ○	22 ○
23 ○	24 ○	25 ○	26 ○	27 ○	28 ○	29 ○
30 ○						

December 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
	1 ○	2 ○	3 ○	4 ○	5 ○	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 2 OF 3

Step away calmly when they use

When they are drinking or high, leave the room or the outing with a neutral line, such as saying you will talk later.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP

DAILY HABIT 3 OF 3

Rewrite one sentence before you say it

Before a hard talk, turn a blaming line into a positive, first-person one that shows you see their side.

Nov 6 - Dec 5, 2026 · 30 days · circle each day you do it

SMALLEST VERSION

CUE

WHERE

November 2026

MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
						1
2	3	4	5	6 ○	7 ○	8 ○
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December 2026

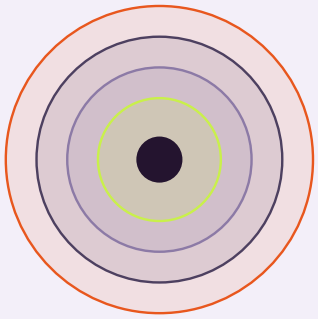
MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
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EACH FRIDAY

WHAT HELPED

WHAT GOT IN THE WAY

ONE CHANGE TO THE SETUP



Be warm to the person, clear about the use, and gentle with yourself. Change grows best in good moments.

HOURLIFE NOTE AFTER FOOTE, WILKENS AND KOSANKE