

# Family Huddle Newsletter



## **Mental Health and Substance Use Family Support Services**

**Tips and resources for people who want to be more effective in supporting adults with mental health/substance use concerns.**

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### MESSAGE FROM YOUR HOST



Thanksgiving is around the corner, and it will be the first of the family holidays. For some families, it is a time of excitement and fun anticipation. For others, the thought of a family gathering creates feelings of anxiety and sadness. The anxiety and sadness may be about not knowing if your loved one will attend, or if they do, what their mood will be like. Or, how will they interact with the rest of the family? These are just a few examples of what some families worry about when planning a family gathering.

If your loved one decides to come to a family gathering, I encourage you to practise mindfulness about your own expectations you have for the day. So that when your loved one does attend, you won't need them to show up in any particular way, that will make it easier for you to accept your own disappointments if expectations are not met. i.e. needing them to show up and participate in the family conversations, needing them to show up in ways that are acceptable by you (i.e. clean clothes, showered), needing them to arrive on time, needing them to socialize after the meal. This is you being clear about your emotional boundaries.

It will also be an opportunity for you to practise Radical Acceptance. To accept your loved one for whom they are in that moment, with no need for them to be any different in that moment. A hard thing to do, I know, but watch what happens when you practise this skill.



### What is Radical Acceptance (RA) ?

Radical Acceptance is accepting something completely and totally, from the depths of your soul, with your heart and your mind. With RA, you stop fighting reality. When you stop fighting, you suffer less and it gives space for change. It's tough to practice RA because it leads to feelings of loss.

Here's the hope, you only need to radically accept your reality.

RA is about **NOW**, not 5 minutes from now and not tomorrow, the future is not reality.



### **Radical Acceptance ...**

Is accepting with no judgements

Is accepting your reality. Only what you know to be true. You do not know what will happen in the future

Is a process of loss and grief because you are letting go of trying to change something

Is opening up space for change.

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## 4 Responses to a painful situation

1. Solve the problem
2. Change the way we feel to and feel about the problem
3. Accept the problem
4. Stay miserable

Information adapted from Sashbear Foundation



## How does it relate to your loved one's recovery?

Practicing Radical Acceptance helps your loved one's recovery by sending them the message that we accept them for who they are. By you radically accepting, it helps to open up space to connect with your loved one because you are no longer spending your energy fighting them on the things that you need them to change. It allows you to be more present in your mind when you are in communication with your loved one.

# RESOURCES

## WHAT IS RADICAL ACCEPTANCE

<https://www.mindfulnessmuse.com/dialectical-behavior-therapy/how-to-practice-radical-acceptance>

## RADICAL ACCEPTANCE VIDEO

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OTG7YEWkJFI>

## RADICAL ACCEPTANCE WORK -SHEET

<https://www.therapistaid.com/worksheets/dbt-distress-tolerance-skills.pdf>



## Reflective Box

Take the challenge and think of one behaviour that your loved one engages in, and tolerate that behaviour, at least for a period.

Notice what happens...

Do you feel a sense of loss? It is natural to feel loss when you are letting go of something. By letting go, you create opportunity for something else to happen. You create opportunity for change-change for self and the relationship



There are no current updates

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# CONTACT

Mental Health and Substance Use Family Support Services  
Monday-Thursday  
9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
(hours may vary to include evenings)

**1 (833) 898-6200**

## Are you in a crisis?

Call the Fraser Health crisis line:

**604-951-8855** or  
**1-877-820-7411** (toll free)

Trained volunteers provide emotional crisis support, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.



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