

## Family Healing Guide: What To Say, What To Avoid

When a loved one comes home from prison, communication can feel uncertain. You may want to help, but not know what to say. This guide offers real-world examples of what supports healing—and what might unintentionally cause harm. Speak with clarity, compassion, and boundaries.

### ◇ What to Say

- "I'm proud of how far you've come."
- "You don't have to go through this alone."
- "I don't have all the answers, but I'm here to listen."
- "What do you need from me today?"
- "It's okay to feel overwhelmed—we'll take it one step at a time."
- "Let's figure it out together."

### ◇ What to Avoid

- "You're home now—just move on."
- "Why are you still acting like you're locked up?"
- "You're being too sensitive."
- "You're lucky I stuck around."
- "I did everything for you, what else do you want?"
- "Hurry up and get your life together."

### ◇ Quick Tips for Healing Communication

- Speak from your own experience using "I" statements.
- Validate their feelings, even if you don't fully understand them.
- Don't try to fix everything—sometimes, just listening is enough.
- Set boundaries kindly and clearly.
- Remember: growth takes time. Stay patient, stay steady.