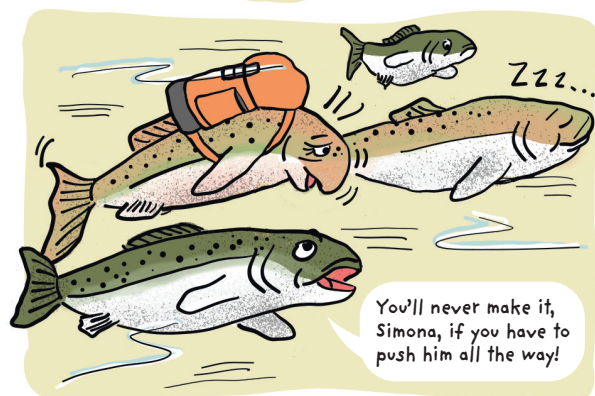
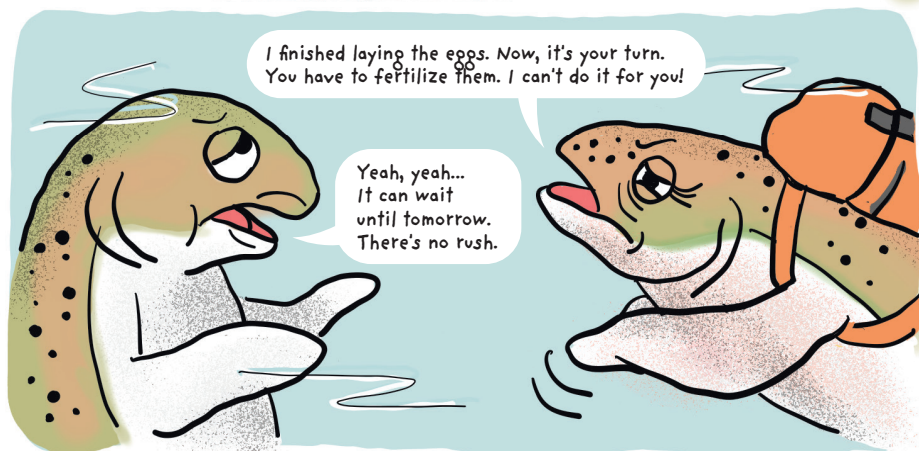
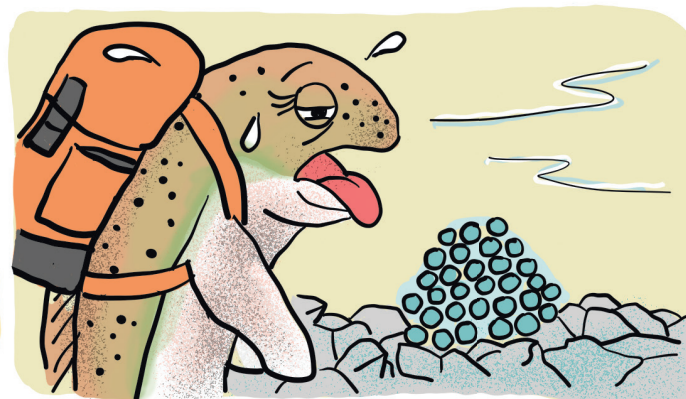
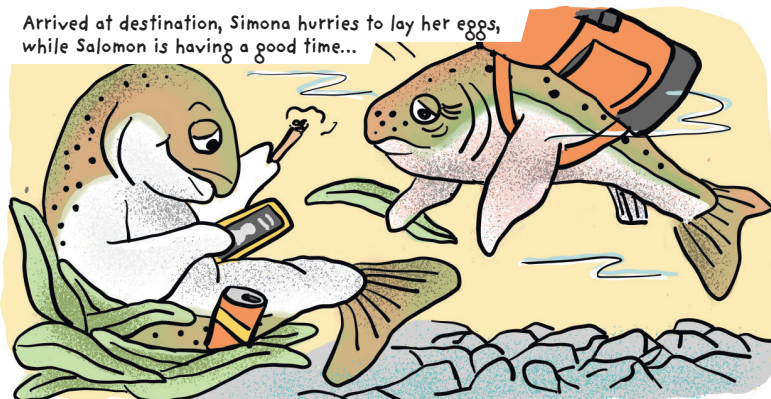


# What are the proper attitudes to adopt with someone who uses substances?



Arrived at destination, Simona hurries to lay her eggs, while Salomon is having a good time...



# My behaviours



Families and friends often do many things to try to help their loved one. Do you recognize yourself in this kind of behaviour? If so, despite your good intentions, some of your actions may be hindering your loved one's motivation to change.

## Without blaming yourself, do you recognize yourself in the following behaviours?

Never	Sometimes	Often		
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Hiding</b>	e.g., My loved one is in no state to work, so I make up an excuse to explain their absence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Minimizing</b>	e.g., I don't want to change the positive image that I have of my loved one, so I convince myself that they don't drink that much. Some people are far worse.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Saving</b>	e.g., I do everything I can to help my loved one. I even sign them up for therapy.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Overprotecting</b>	e.g., My loved one lost their job because of their substance use habits. I pay their bills for them when I could really use the money to buy a new car.

Being supportive of your loved one can help them through a hard time. On the other hand, they also need to experience the negative consequences of their substance use habits in order to start considering making changes in their life. Otherwise, they get the message that you'll always be there to pick up the pieces for them. Being aware of your behaviours that hinder their progress can help you let them take responsibility for their themselves.

## Here are some examples of the consequences of a person's substance use on their family and friends:

<b>Low self-esteem</b>	I feel like I have no worth. Even when I do my best, I feel like I can't do anything right and I constantly doubt myself.
<b>Parentification</b>	I often have to stand in for my parents by taking care of my little brothers/sisters, feeding them and giving them their baths.
<b>Hypervigilance</b>	I never know what to expect with my loved one. I'm constantly on high alert and monitor everything.
<b>Culture of silence</b>	I keep my loved one's substance use a secret. I hide from others how it really affects me and I don't talk about the problems that it causes.
<b>Distrust</b>	I have trouble trusting others. I'm afraid that new people that I meet will cause me the same pain that I experienced with my loved one.
<b>Pessimism and fear</b>	Life is hard. I always see the negative side of things and I'm afraid of what could happen.
<b>Psychological distress</b>	The situation makes me feel anxious and hopeless. Different areas of my life are affected and I don't know what I'm going to do to get through this.
<b>Compensation behaviours</b>	I start to use substances too, eat in a disproportionate way, and take unnecessary risks. I tend to forget my own needs.

If you think that seeking professional help would make you feel better, please don't hesitate to do so.

This project is a work of co-construction involving several people from various Indigenous nations and organizations. The comic book format, the stories and the contents were chosen with the intention of supporting family and friends with compassion and empathy. Thanks to the family and friends of people experiencing addiction, to the students (Eden, Gloria, Kassandra and Marie-Pier), to the caregivers, to the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, and to the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

© Plourde, Laventure, Ferland, Blanchette-Martin, Tremblay, Beaugard & Côté-Dion (V1, 2022)

Original ideas: Ann-Catherine Choquette

Illustrations and graphic design: Patricia Carignan

Inspired by *Vivre avec un proche ayant une dépendance* (Plourde et Laventure, 2019), Bayard Canada.



With the financial support of:



### Resources

#### Hope for Wellness Helpline

1 855 242-3310

[hopeforwellness.ca](http://hopeforwellness.ca)

#### Support group for the family and friends of people affected by addiction

[al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings](http://al-anon.org/al-anon-meetings)

#### Youth Helpline

1 800 668-6868

[kidshelpphone.ca](http://kidshelpphone.ca)

#### Referral line about substance use

1 800 265-2626

[aidedroge.ca/en](http://aidedroge.ca/en)

Health or addiction  
rehabilitation center  
near you