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LEADER'S GUIDE:

A Way Out of No Way by Carmen Caban

My daughter and I keep trying to connect despite termination.

TODAY WE'LL TALK ABOUT:

Repairing a relationship with a teenager

INTRODUCTION

Children whose parents have long struggled with addiction often become fearful of trusting anyone. As children move from home to home, witness relapses, deal with false promises, or go through painful experiences without their mommy or daddy to lean on, they can begin to feel like they can't count on anyone. Most times, children blame themselves. Children do not understand that a parent's addiction is about the parent. Children convince themselves that they must be unlovable or unworthy of love. Even children who rage and tell you, "Everything is your fault" usually blame themselves deep down.

When you are ready to reconnect, your children may not be. Out of anger, fear, and shame, your children may shut you out or go down destructive paths that may look all too familiar. The two-steps-forward, one-step-backward dance of reestablishing trust with a hurt teenager can be infuriating and devastating. You and your child will struggle with painful feeling of rejection and abandonment. But repair is possible if a parent's remains committed to rebuilding a relationship. Let's read Carmen's story about trying to reconnect with her daughter.

READ AND DISCUSS STORY

Let's take turns reading the story out loud. Who wants to start?

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE STORY:

- What feelings and behaviors does Carmen see in Destiny that remind her of her own painful past?
- How does Carmen feel when Destiny's pain and anger lead her to act in self-destructive ways?
- How does Carmen communicate her own pain, anger, and distrust to her daughter? What negative impact might this have on Destiny?
- What is positive about the limits Carmen sets with Destiny?
- What ways does Carmen continue to reach out?

JOURNAL TIME

Let's look at the worksheet called "My Reflections." Take 5 or 10 minutes to write down your answers on the worksheet and then we'll share. (*Wait until most people are finished.*)

- Who wants to share some responses?

ENDING THE GROUP

Now turn to the "Recovery Journal" worksheet. Take a few minutes to write down your goal for this week. You can answer the "reflection" questions at the end of the week, before our group meets again.

We'll begin our next group by talking about your goals. I look forward to hearing from everyone about how you tried to meet your goals!

STARTING NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

Let's talk about your goals for the week:

- Who tried to meet their goal?
- How did it go?
- Will someone share a moment they are proud of?

Thank you for sharing.

NAME:

DATE:

My Recovery Journal – A Way Out of No Way

GOAL: Take time to journal this week about the ways your older children express their pain and anger about the past. Write your feelings on a separate piece of paper.

What's one way that you can show your love and commitment to your teen?

Share your journal with someone if you feel comfortable.

REFLECTION: Reconnecting with a hurt teen will be an up-and-down process. What will give you the strength to keep trying? Who can support you in continuing to try to reconnect?

What's something you did this week that you feel proud of achieving?

NAME:

DATE:

My Recovery Journal – A Way Out of No Way

Dear Journal,