

“Friends’ Experiences”

Episode Overview

In this episode I talk about friends’ experiences. First, I talk about friends’ experiences of witnessing an overdose, including some important context. I also look at people’s decision-making about using Naloxone and calling emergency services. Then I discuss the various outcomes people describe after witnessing a friend’s overdose, including their complex grieving process, mental health struggles, and substance misuse.



- People who use drugs are highly likely to witness—at a rate of between 65% and 84%—the overdose of one of their friends.
- Most people obtain their drugs from friends and family members, highlighting how drugs circulate within peer networks.

TAKEAWAYS

- ✓ Most friends are trained in overdose reversal and are willing to use naloxone but hesitate to call emergency services for fear of legal repercussion.
- ✓ After a friend’s overdose, people navigate complex grief, survivor’s guilt, post-traumatic stress, suicidal ideation, and increased drug misuse.

References & Future Reading

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