

CLINICIAN SCRIPT BANK: TALKING ABOUT ROLES WITHOUT BLAME ’

Quick Reference for Family-Based Conversations

OPENING THE TOPIC GENTLY

Use these phrases to introduce the idea of family roles without triggering guilt or shame:

- “Sometimes, in families facing addiction, everyone starts playing a role just to get through the chaos. It’s not about blame—it’s about survival.”
- “These roles aren’t good or bad—they’re adaptations. Let’s just notice what patterns may have formed.’
- “Often, people take on responsibilities or step back emotionally in ways that make sense in the moment. We’re here to explore that with compassion.”

SUPPORTIVE REFRAMES TO REDUCE TENSION

Instead of saying:	Try:
“You’ve been enabling them.”	It sounds like you were trying to protect them the best way you knew how.
“It’ sounds like you were trying to protect them the best way you knew.”	“You’ve shown up again and again—it makes sense that you’d want to help in any way you can.”

