



BalanceWorks® Newsletter

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Battling an Alcohol Addiction

An alcohol addiction is a serious and sensitive problem that is difficult to realize and address. You or someone you know may be facing an addiction to alcohol, and need help to fight this destructive need. Dealing with an alcohol addiction can be confusing, frustrating, stressful, and sad. To begin helping someone with this addiction, it is necessary to first recognize the telltale signs of alcoholism.

Symptoms

- **Craving-** A craving is a strong need or compulsion to drink.
- **Loss of control-** Alcoholics are unable to limit their drinking at any occasion.
- **Physical dependence-** When alcohol use is stopped after heavy drinking, alcoholics experience physical withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety.
- **Tolerance-** Alcoholics have built a high tolerance of alcohol from excessive drinking, and need to drink greater amounts of alcohol in order to feel its effect.
- **Denial-** Not believing they have a problem, alcoholics will continue heavy drinking.

Alcoholism interferes with all aspects of a person's life, and causes pain and stress on family members, friends, and

coworkers. Answering "yes" to any of these questions highly suggests an alcohol problem. Ask yourself or a loved one to examine these questions to help determine and realize possible alcoholism.

- Have you ever felt that you should minimize your drinking?
- Have you ever felt bad or guilty about your drinking?
- Have people annoyed you by criticizing your drinking?
- Have your friends or family ever suggested that you cut down on your drinking?
- Have you ever had a drink when you get up in the morning to steady your nerves, or get rid of a hangover?

Treatment

Treatment for alcoholism varies based on the level of alcoholism, and what treatments are available within your local community. Usually, an alcoholic must begin by detoxing to remove all alcohol from the body. Individual and group counseling is common, and alcohol support groups such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). Doctors may also prescribe medications that help prevent relapse. Alcoholism can be treated, but does not yet have a cure. This is why complete sobriety and a mix of treatment methods are necessary to encourage full recovery.



For more information or advice about Battling Alcoholism, contact the work/life experts at BalanceWorks® by calling

1.800.327.2255.

eni's BalanceWorks® program is a confidential 24/7 service provided by your employer to help achieve work/life balance.



Coping with an Alcoholic



Alcoholism does not only affect the alcoholic; family members and friends also suffer when their loved one is battling this disease. Coping with the pain, anger, and hopelessness that you may feel if your family or friend is an alcoholic can take its toll on your mind and body. It is important to understand that however much you desire to help, the only person that can make a change is the alcoholic. Make

sure to avoid situations that would encourage the alcoholic's behaviors. It is necessary for your loved one to have your support, but try to help the person seek treatment instead of enabling them.

DO NOT:

- Purchase alcohol for the alcoholic
- Take the alcoholic places with available alcohol
- Make excuses for the alcoholic's behavior
- Drink around the alcoholic
- Cover up behavior, missed work or events

DO:

- Support your loved one in their efforts to get help
- Talk with the alcoholic about their drinking problem
- Do what you can to help the alcoholic find the right treatment
- Encourage your loved one to join a support group, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)
- Set limits for the alcoholic's behavior, and follow through with consequences
- Organize an intervention with family and friends

Key Things to Remember:

- 1. Accept the situation.** Accept the fact that your loved one is an alcoholic and has a serious problem. Only the alcoholic can change his/her situation and you can only encourage them to find the help they need.
- 2. Get in tune with your feelings.** Meet with a therapist to sort out your emotions and help yourself before you attempt to help your loved one.
- 3. Avoid danger.** The alcoholic may be your spouse or parent and has become abusive. Take yourself out of a dangerous environment, and call 911 if necessary.
- 4. Join a support group.** Let others support you in groups for family and friends of alcoholics.
- 5. Organize an intervention.** If your loved one is not attempting to get help, or acknowledging your encouragement to seek help, it may be time to have an intervention with your family and their close friends.

Coping with a loved one who is an alcoholic is emotionally draining and painful. If your continued support helps the alcoholic recover, then the emotional reward is powerful and rewarding. Continue to support your loved one, but stand your ground and set boundaries. Allowing the alcoholic to get away with inappropriate behavior will enable them and hinder the hope of recovery. The journey of an alcoholic is long and hard; do everything that you can to be there for your loved one at the end of the road.

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