

15 Points ...



Helpline 0845 769 7555

15 points for an alcoholic to consider when confronted with the urge to take a drink

The unhappiest person in the world is the chronic alcoholic who has an insistent yearning to enjoy life as they once knew it, but cannot picture life without alcohol. They have a

heartbreaking obsession that by some miracle of control they will be able to do so.

Sobriety, the magnificent obsession,

is the most important thing in your life, without exception. You may believe your job, or your home life, or one of many other things come first. But consider if you do not get sober, and stay sober, chances are you won't have a job, a family, sanity or even life. If you are convinced that everything in life depends on your sobriety, you have just so much more chance of getting sober and staying sober. If you put other things first you are only hurting your chances.

1. Cultivate continued acceptance of the fact that your choice is between unhappy drunken drinking and doing without just one small drink.
2. Cultivate enthusiastic gratitude that you have had the good fortune of finding out what was wrong before it was too late.
3. Expect as being normal, that for a time, perhaps a long time, you will recurrently experience:
 - a The nagging craving for a drink.
 - b The sudden impulse to just take a drink.
 - c The craving, not for a drink as such, but for the soothing glow and warmth a drink or two once gave you.
4. Remember that the times when you don't want a drink are the times in which to build up the strength not to take one when you do want it.

5. Develop and rehearse a daily plan of thinking and acting by which you will live that day without taking a drink, regardless of what may upset you or how hard the old urge for a drink may hit you.
6. Don't for a split second allow yourself to think: 'Isn't it a pity or a mean injustice that I can't take a drink like so-called normal people'.
7. Don't allow yourself to either think about or talk about any real or imagined pleasure you once did get from drinking.
8. Don't permit yourself to think a drink or two would make some bad situation better, or at least easier to live with. Substitute the thought: 'One drink will make it worse - one drink will mean a drunk.'
9. Minimise your situation. Others have greater problems, how joyful such people would be if their problem could be solved by just not taking one little drink today. Think gratefully of how lucky you are to have so simple and small a problem.
10. Cultivate and woo enjoyment of sobriety.
 - a How good it is to be free of shame and guilt.
 - b How good it is to be free of the consequences of a drunk just ended, or of a coming drunk you have never before been able to prevent.
 - c How good it is to be free of what people have been thinking and whispering about you, and of their mingled pity and contempt.
 - d How good it is to be free of fear.
11. Catalogue and re-catalogue the positive enjoyments of sobriety, such as:
 - a The simple ability to eat and sleep normally, and wake up glad you are alive; glad you were sober yesterday, and glad you have the privilege of staying sober today.
 - b The ability to face whatever life may dish out, with peace of mind, self-respect, and full possession of all your faculties.

12. Cultivate a helpful association of ideas:
 - a Associate a drink as being the single cause of all the misery, shame and fear you have ever known.
 - b Associate a drink as being the only thing that can destroy your newfound happiness, and take from you your self-respect and peace of mind.

13. Cultivate gratitude:
 - a Gratitude that so much can be yours for so small a price.
 - b Gratitude that you can trade just one drink for all the happiness sobriety gives you.
 - c Gratitude that AA exists, and you found out about it in time.
 - d Gratitude that you are an alcoholic - you are not a bad or wicked person but you have been in the grip of a compulsion.
 - e Gratitude that since others have done it, you can in time bring it to pass that you will not want or miss the drink you are doing without.

14. Seek out ways to help other alcoholics - and remember the first way to help others is to stay sober yourself.

15. And don't forget that when the heart is heavy and resistance is low and the mind is troubled and confused, there is much comfort in a true and understanding friend standing by. You have that friend in AA (Alcoholics Anonymous).

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