

Behavior Patterns in Addictive Disease

Some personality traits of the addict can be (these are characteristics that occur in most people, but in the addict they are exaggerated and uncontrolled:

- **Low frustration tolerance = they cannot stand feeling uncomfortable for any length of time**
- **Anxiety = may have nameless fears and dreads**
- **Grandiosity = may think the world revolves around them, that they are “better than” others; this is to hide feelings of low self-esteem**
- **Perfectionism = sets impossible goals with inevitable failures**
- **Wishful Thinking = arranging to do what we want to do and then making it appear reasonable**
- **Isolation = deep insecurity which deprives people of the real generosity needed to make close, enduring friendships**
- **Sensitiveness = the occasional snub not necessarily meant by another person is something we dwell upon until it becomes a resentment**
- **Impulsiveness = “I want what I want when I want it”.**

People use defenses to hide or avoid their own feelings, to protect themselves from painful truths about oneself, about one’s behavior or about events, or to manipulate others:

- **Rationalizing = justifying, explaining**
- **Projection = blaming, accusing**
- **Intellectualizing = analyzing, explaining, generalizing, theorizing**
- **Arguing = debating, sparring**
- **Evading = dodging, switching the topic of conversation**
- **Joking = may be laughing when afraid**
- **Comparing = “I’m not as bad as...” or “I’m different”**
- **Questioning = interrogating to take the focus off self**
- **Agreeing = to avoid being “found out”**
- **Silence = the silent treatment**
- **Minimizing or denying = making things seem less important**
- **Being smug, arrogant, or superior**
- **Threatening = anger, shouting, glaring, staring, intimidating**
- **Seduction = get what I want in dishonest ways**
- **Playing dumb = not taking responsibility**
- **Acting “fragile” = “I’ll fall apart if you tell me...”**
- **Phony tears**

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol – that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

RECOVERY....

- is a process
- cannot be done alone
- is painful
- means changes in how we feel, how we act and in what we believe
- means getting out of our roles
- means recovering our choices
- is a relearning process
- is allowing ourselves to experience the truth

CONFIDENTIALITY...

- is essential for a person to feel trust in a relationship
- **REFRAIN** from telling the names of the persons in this program to anyone else
- **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES** is it all right to share any specific information about any of the women in this program

AN OPEN LETTER TO MY FAMILY

I am an alcoholic. I need help.

Don't allow me to lie to you and accept it for the truth, for in doing so, you encourage me to lie. The truth may be painful but get at it.

Don't let me outsmart you. This only teaches me to avoid responsibility and to lose respect for you at the same time.

Don't let me exploit you or take advantage of you. In so doing, you become an accomplice to my evasion of responsibility.

Don't lecture me, moralize, scold, praise, blame, or argue when I'm drunk or sober. And don't pour out my liquor; you may feel better, but the situation will be worse.

Don't accept my promises. This is just my method of postponing pain. And don't keep switching agreements. If an agreement is made, stick to it.

Don't lose your temper with me. It will destroy you and any possibility of helping me.

Don't allow your anxiety for us to compel you to do what I must do for myself.

Don't cover up or abort the consequences of my drinking. It reduces the crisis but perpetuates the illness.

Above all, don't run away from reality as I do. Alcoholism, my illness, gets worse as my drinking continues. Start now to learn, to understand, and to plan for my recovery. I need help from a doctor, a counselor, or a psychologist, a recovering alcoholic, from God. I cannot help myself.

I hate myself, but I love you. To do nothing is the worst choice you can make for me.

Please help me,

An alcoholic