

# INTRODUCTION to the WORKBOOK

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## Objective

1. To educate the public about alcoholism
2. To assist in identifying the disease in its early stages
3. To present a practical definition of alcoholism
4. To show the biochemical difference between alcoholics and non-alcoholics
5. To discover the early stage clues to alcoholism, mental and physical, as well as middle and latter-stage clues
6. To encourage friends and family to take action in helping the alcoholic toward sobriety.
7. To motivate friends and family of an alcoholic to face the problem and do an "educated something" about it
8. To debunk the idea that alcoholics are weak or immoral and encourage identification and treatment of the disease before tragedy occurs

This workbook is an aid to help the reader identify alcoholism in its early stages and learn how to intervene. This will increase the odds of stopping the progression of the disease before an all-too-common tragic end. This is an educational tool and not a substitute for treatment or consultation. This workbook takes the position that the sooner alcoholism is addressed, the better. The question is,

**What are you waiting for?**

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## Why Do We Wait?

We would not wish to cause pain in the life of someone we love. In fact, we try our best to prevent painful experiences or at least try to ease the hurt. But stop and remember, “How have I learned many of **my** life-lessons? What did I learn from my mistakes?” Often, we learned from the **consequences** of those mistakes. It’s what’s called, “learning the hard way.”

### “Pain is the addict’s best friend”

Seeing a loved one’s crisis as an **opportunity** frees us to truly help them. Are you providing a safety net for an addict that prevents him/her from getting hurt? When you do, you **rob** him or her of the opportunity to experience the **consequences** of mistakes. By allowing a crisis to occur, you can intervene earlier in the progression of the disease. Intervening can prevent tragedy for the alcoholic, yourself or others with whom he/she comes in contact. This takes courage, but it may be the most loving and selfless act you ever do.

### You are not alone.

This workbook from the PrevenTragedy Foundation provides you with the **support** you need to identify and confirm likely alcoholism and to intervene.

## Now, let's begin.

## Part 1.

## Redefining Alcoholism

### A. Myths of Alcoholism

#### Eliminating The Stigma That Keeps Us From Intervening

#### READ

Alcoholism is misunderstood. Myths about alcoholism have resulted in a stigma that makes us unwilling to even suspect the disease before tragedy occurs. For example, alcoholism is said to require loss of control over use, which makes it sound more like a character flaw than a disease. Yet, such loss of control generally does not occur until the late stages. Dispelling this and other myths about alcoholism can help us choose a more effective response in dealing with alcoholics.

#### PRE-TEST

Use the following exercise to discover whether what you believe is truth or myth. Each pair of statements contains one myth and one truth. Put a check mark beside each statement that you consider **true**.

1.  Brain damage occurs only in obvious drunks.  
 Brain damage occurs long before it's obvious.
2.  The average age at which alcoholism is triggered is 30.  
 The average age at which alcoholism is triggered is 13.
3.  Alcoholism is a spiritual (moral) disease.  
 Alcoholism interferes with one's spirit.
4.  Since alcoholism is a disease, the afflicted should not be held responsible for behaviors.  
 Alcoholism, though genetic, must never be used as an excuse for bad behavior.
5.  She never looks drunk, so she must not be an alcoholic.  
 An alcoholic may never appear drunk to most people.
6.  Anyone with a BAL (blood alcohol level) of .15% is obviously drunk.  
 An alcoholic may appear sober at a BAL of up to .24%
7.  Too much drinking causes hangovers.  
 Many alcoholics never have hangovers.
8.  Every user is a potential alcoholic.  
 Educating those who have inherited alcoholism to drink safely does not work.
9.  We need not be concerned with Xanax, since it's a prescription drug.  
 Xanax, for the addict, is as dangerous as alcohol.
10.  An alcoholic will always experience severe physical withdrawal symptoms.  
 Withdrawal symptoms may not occur until there is decades of addictive use.
11.  Drinking causes addiction in non-alcoholics  
 Alcoholism occurs when people who are genetically predisposed trigger the disease by drinking heavily.
12.  Alcoholics always gulp their drinks.  
 An alcoholic knows how to hide heavy drinking.
13.  Alcoholics can't change.  
 Behaviors often improve in sobriety.
14.  Stress causes alcoholism.  
 Drinking brings inner conflict and more stress.
15.  Repeated poor behavior is often found in non-alcoholics.  
 Repeated poor behavior is often found in alcoholics.

**How are you doing?**

Answers: the second statement in each set is true.

**MORE**

- 16.  Most alcoholics are incapable of self diagnosis until they hit bottom.  
 Bottoming out is common for the alcoholic.
- 17.  Some personality styles are more likely to be alcoholics.  
 Personality style affects the kinds of misbehaviors in which alcoholics engage.
- 18.  Women are better at hiding their use.  
 More men than women are alcoholics.
- 19.  Alcoholics can learn to control their behavior during every drinking occasion.  
 Alcoholics often exercise self-restraint in use for periods of time.
- 20.  The trouble is, s/he drinks too much.  
 The trouble is biochemistry that causes misbehaviors when she drinks.
- 21.  Half the children in fatal crashes are in a vehicle driven by an intoxicated adult.  
 Even an alcoholic will not risk a child's life by driving under the influence. (DUI)
- 22.  S/he's too successful, too smart, too charming to be an alcoholic.
- Alcoholism can drive achievement, makes no exception for intelligence and may compel the afflicted to exude great charm.
- 23.  Many alcoholics never miss work.  
 S/he can't be an alcoholic, s/he never misses work.
- 24.  Pupil size or a glassy look are better clues to alcoholism than red eyes.  
 Alcoholics have red eyes.
- 25.  S/he's in too good of shape, looks great and has it all, so can't be an alcoholic.  
 Early-stage alcoholics may be in great shape, and "having it all" does not inoculate against alcoholism.
- 26.  People would know if a top professional is an alcoholic.  
 The loftier the position, the greater the enabling and the less likely outsiders are to know the secret.
- 27.  An alcoholic can be reasoned with.  
 Alcohol damages reasoning powers.

(Answers: 16,18, 21, 23 and, 24, the first statement is true. For the others the second statement is true.)

**How did you do? What myths did you think were true? What surprised you?**

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## WRITE

One phrase we often hear when someone is hesitant to intervene is this “fill in the blank” statement:  
“S/he can’t be an alcoholic, s/he’s just\_\_\_\_\_.

Circle each reason below that might be used to “prove” that someone is not an alcoholic. “S/he can’t be an alcoholic, s/he’s just.....

**a great liar, angry, crazy, a jerk, a big talker**

**unhappy, accident-prone, a bad driver**

**needs to escape, a victim, shy, insecure**

**a person with a poor upbringing, irresponsible**

**lacking in impulse control**

**Or These Statements:**

He never drinks alone

He never gulps his drinks

She never misses work

He never slurs his words

He never stumbles

He never drinks hard liquor

He never drinks before 5 pm

She’s never been arrested for DUI

All these statements are used as “proof” but the fact is s/he may very well be an alcoholic. Alcoholism takes many forms because of its biochemistry.

## B. A Matter of Biochemistry

### READ

Almost all Americans drink alcohol at one time or another, but only about 15% end up alcoholic. The question has been asked for generations: “Why can’t s/he drink like the rest of us? Why does s/he lose control?”

**It is because the body of an alcoholic reacts differently to alcohol than does the body of a non-alcoholic.**

### ILLUSTRATION

This concept is easy to understand when we consider different individuals and their reactions to bee stings. Some people have an allergic reaction to bee stings.

bee illus.

- When a person who is allergic to bee stings gets stung, his/her body **responds differently** than when a non-allergic person gets stung. When an alcoholic drinks, his/her body **responds differently** than the body of a person who is not an alcoholic.
- We do know that allergies are hereditary. We also know that alcoholism runs in families.
- There is no cure for bee sting allergies. In fact the allergic person will avoid bees since another sting could be fatal. **There is no cure for alcoholism except to completely avoid alcohol. That next drink could be fatal.**
- There is **no stigma** to having an allergy to bee stings. **There still is a stigma to being an alcoholic!** This stigma prevents people from admitting there is a problem and getting the help they deserve.
- Scientists are studying the differences in the body of the person allergic to bee stings compared to the person who is not allergic. Scientists are also studying the differences between the bodies of alcoholics and non-alcoholics.

So far the **exact** differences between the alcoholic and non-alcoholic have not been clarified. Several ideas are being tested, such as differences in the receptor sites of the neurons in the brain, or differences in the process of metabolism of alcohol.

The important point is that alcoholics have no more control over how their bodies respond to alcohol than those allergic to bee stings can control their body’s reaction to a bee sting.

Unfortunately alcohol produces a good feeling that is sought by most in American culture. The alcoholic drinks along with everyone else, not realizing that, unlike their non-alcoholic drinking buddies, alcohol is reacting differently for them than for their non-alcoholic friends. This reaction to alcohol can lead to destructive behaviors and eventually to death.

What are the results of alcoholics continuing to drink?

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- Most felons are alcoholics
- There are distortions of perception and memory
- Euphoric recall causes the addict to remember everything s/he does in a self-favoring light...always right, never wrong
- Because alcoholics act as if they are right all the time, god-like behaviors result. These behaviors provide our best and most numerous clues to early-stage alcoholism. These behaviors even occur in-between drinking episodes, providing vital clues when the alcoholic is not drinking
- Almost all early-stage alcoholics develop a grandiose view of self, which leads them to have a need to wield power over others. They wield such power by:

Abusing others emotionally

Abusing others physically

Abusing others financially

Acting recklessly

Over-achieving

**The Grand Paradox of Alcoholism:**

**The early-stage, highly tolerant, functional alcoholic who may find great success.**

Almost unrecognized at this stage, these persons often go undiagnosed and untreated for decades. Friends, family, constituents and even, at times, law enforcers protect them from the consequences of their addiction. The question is:

**WHY ARE WE WAITING?**

Let's counteract alcoholism in its early stage!

Illus.

## REVIEW

**Euphoric Recall** - allows the alcoholic during a drinking episode to remember everything said and done as good and right, viewing him/herself in a self-serving light.

**God Likeness** - Since only God is always good and right, this makes the addict appear to think s/he is god-like.

**Inflated Ego** – A sense of god-likeness leads to the development of an inordinately large sense of self-importance. Almost every alcoholic exhibits this early in his/her drinking/using career.

**These clues to early-stage alcoholism occur both during and in-between drinking bouts.**

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**WRITE (this may be moved elsewhere)**

Write a sentence or more for each category below describing the price of alcoholism, both the price paid by the afflicted and by you, the victim or enabler.

The Alcoholic		Me
	Emotional	
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
	Physical	
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
	Financial	
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
	Social	
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
	Legal	
_____		_____
_____		_____
_____		_____
Other Comments		_____
		_____



## C. Alcoholism Redefined

### READ

One reason we wait to act is because our beliefs are often determined by our definitions. If the definition is flawed our thinking is affected. In our society, labeling someone an “alcoholic” is like calling a person a leper, or worse. Because it implies a character flaw or lack of willpower, we think we give the benefit of the doubt by assuming anything but alcoholism. The commonly held definition utterly fails in describing early stage symptoms and, therefore, is useless in helping us identify the disease in its early stages.

### The commonly Accepted Definition of Alcoholism

Alcoholism/Chemical Dependency is a primary, chronic disease with genetic, psychological and environmental factor influencing its development and manifestation. The disease is often progressive and fatal, and is characterized by continuous or periodic:

impaired control over drinking/using

preoccupation with the drug

use of alcohol/drug despite adverse consequences

distortion in thinking, most notably “denial” (book illus.)

Let’s look at this definition piece by piece:

- The term “**dependency**” suggests a physical dependence on the substance that may not occur for decades.
- “**primary, chronic disease**” is true and it is the cause of other conditions.
- “**with...factors influencing its development and manifestation**” is correct to a point. It fails to say that alcoholism is triggered when the pre-disposed person first starts using the drug.
- “**progressive and fatal:**” We agree, but often the disease is damaging and fatal to *others* long before the addict dies.
- “**continuous and periodic**” may keep us from suspecting alcoholism since we do not know what the alcoholic is thinking (distortions, euphoric recall, etc.), nor are we able to watch the alcoholic at all times.
- “**impaired control**” occurs in later-stage alcoholism.

- “**preoccupation with the drug**” is not observable to others until the terminal stage when the drug is always flowing through the veins.
- “**use of alcohol/drug despite consequences**” and “**adverse consequences**” are not useful terms for helping us identify early-stage alcoholism. Enablers often protect the alcoholic from such consequences.
- “**distortion in thinking, notably ‘denial’**” is not the most notable; euphoric recall is. It makes the early-stage alcoholic believe that nothing is wrong with them. One cannot be in denial about something s/he cannot see.

This description provides little help in identifying a person with early-stage alcoholism. The key flaw is the idea of loss of control over use, which usually occurs only as a result of long- time use or of a drug more addictive than alcohol. Constant craving does not occur in the early-stage, but **loss of control over BEHAVIORS**, particularly destructive conduct, does, at least some of the time.

## A New Definition

The following definition takes into account the differences in how the bodies of alcoholics and non-alcoholics react to alcohol. These differences cause observable symptoms (such as destructive behaviors) in alcoholics that are not evident all the time. Although the clues are often irregular and subtle, this makes it possible to identify alcoholism long before obvious later-stage symptoms appear. It gives us a chance to intervene and prevent tragedy, rather than react to it.

Alcoholism is a genetic disorder that causes the afflicted to react to alcohol in such a way as to cause that person to engage in destructive behaviors at least some of the time.

Once we know what to look for, early-stage signs and symptoms may be obvious long before we actually see excessive drinking. The best and earliest clues to addiction are behavioral. Though some behaviors apply to a certain stage of alcoholism, many symptoms cross boundaries. They are not set in stone.

### RECALL

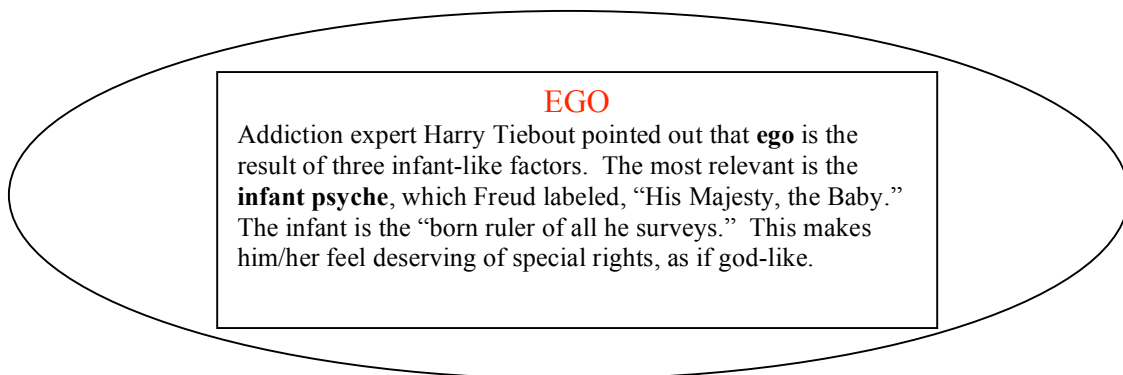
Looking at your own situation, does this new definition of alcoholism help you identify more people who might have this disease? \_\_\_\_\_

What points seem relevant to you as you read the comments on each aspect of the “usual definition” of alcoholism? \_\_\_\_\_

Why is an understanding of the alcoholics’ reaction to alcohol so important in spotting the alcoholic in your life? \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 2. Early Stage Clues

### A. Supreme Being Complex



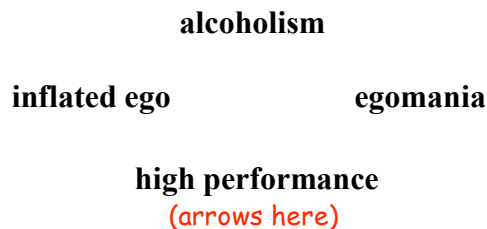
## READ

Early Stage Clues include a Supreme Being Complex, Signs of Invincibility and Physical Signs. The following are clues for recognizing early stage alcoholism. **Not all will apply to each person.** Though these behaviors generally apply to the early stages, many cross boundaries into the latter ones. They are not set in stone.

### 1. Over-achiever, particularly one with a need to win at any price

The root cause of most bad behavior is substance addiction. How then can we explain successful people who are alcoholics? Alcoholism causes egomania and a need to control others. High performance in a business, professions, government, entertainment, or sports may inflate the ego and facilitate such control, which then seems to feed on itself. Successful ego inflation appears to slow down the progression of the disease and reduces the odds of diagnosis. Many top entertainers, athletes, writers, CEO's, lawyers and politicians are alcoholics. While over-achievement does not mean that one has alcoholism, the odds may be higher, particularly in those exhibiting a need to win at any price.

Since **we don't find alcoholism unless we look for it**, we need to open our minds to the possibility.



### 2. Regularly uses foul language

Non-alcoholics may curse and swear but it is **very** common among alcoholics. Screenwriters get it right when they portray heavy drinkers or other drug users swearing. Foul language is a method of showing one's importance, especially when used to put down another person or class of persons.

### 3. Smokes Cigarettes

Although tobacco does not distort perceptions, it can be a clue to alcoholism, particularly as the percentage of people who smoke declines.

**Here's Why:** Alcoholics comprise 10% the U.S. population illus.  
90% of alcoholics smoke  
About 25% of Americans smoke.  
Approximately 1/3 of smokers have alcoholism  
which means that smokers in the U.S. are over three times more likely to  
have the disease of alcoholism than nonsmokers.

### 4. Extraordinarily charming

Remember Al Pacino's character in the movie, *Scent of a Woman*? He displays the reckless behavior and grand sense of invincibility of an alcoholic. He was blinded while drinking and juggling hand grenades, one of which exploded. Though blind, he exhibits a charm so bedazzling he sweeps a young lady onto the dance floor and teaches her the Tango. Inflation of the ego is so multifaceted that it mocks the common view of the alcoholic.

#### **Q. Are people in committed relationships with alcoholics sick themselves?**

Many alcoholics are talented and charming, which makes them sexually attractive. Children of alcoholics, since they are used to erratic behavior, often develop relationships with alcoholics. The idea that opposites attract may also be a factor.

#### **YOUR COMMENTS**

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**Alcoholics in recovery tell us they often triggered their addiction in the teen years, at an average age of 13. Since alcohol acts quickly to inflate the ego in alcoholics, behavioral symptoms of the disease are usually observable shortly after.**

### 5. Occupational choices

Career choices that allow for a **wielding of power** over others such as fans, voters, patients, thugs, employees, followers in a cult, etc. often attract alcoholics. The question of why so many successful actors and athletes have alcoholism is a perplexing one until we understand that extraordinary success in certain professions facilitates ego inflation.

- |                       |                         |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Medical Personnel  | h. Athletes             |
| b. Military Personnel | i. Pharmacists          |
| c. Law Enforcers      | j. Politicians          |
| d. Prison Guards      | k. Writers              |
| e. Incentive Sales    | l. Construction Workers |
| f. Terrorists         | m. Clergy               |
| g. Entertainers       |                         |

#### **Which of the above provides....**

Easy access to the drug? \_\_\_\_\_

Wielding of power? \_\_\_\_\_

Freer schedule? \_\_\_\_\_

Ego inflation? \_\_\_\_\_

If stress caused alcoholism  
we would all be alcoholics

### Incredible But True: Blackouts

Blackouts are period of time during which events do not enter the memory banks and, therefore, cannot be remembered. Some doctors in recovery report that they have performed entire surgeries during blackouts. Recovering pilots admit to having flown 747's and "come to" in mid air, wondering where they were headed.

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## 6. Engages in risky behavior

Excessive risk taking can be a clue to early-stage alcoholism. A God-like sense of self leads to a sense of invincibility which can lead to excessive risk-taking. Some risk taking behaviors benefit mankind but others can cause great harm, such as driving recklessly or having unprotected sex.

Risk taking can be a  
very good clue, especially  
combined with other clues.

**FACT:** Early-stage alcoholism drives achievement and can actually improve performance. This reinforces the ego, which leads to more risk taking. Excessive risk taking can be a very good clue, especially combined with other clues.

**Name some of these risks.**

1. Drinking and driving
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been frightened by one of these behaviors? \_\_\_\_\_ Describe the situation \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Has a "rules don't apply to me" attitude

Alcoholics often violate established rules and excel at manipulating others into thinking that it's ok. Creating special privileges for oneself or other favored person is very ego inflating, especially if successful. Those with personality styles having an innate aversion to rules become far more rebellious once alcoholism is triggered. Practicing alcoholics do not "grow out of it," which explains adults with adolescent mind-sets.

## 8. Compulsive gambling

Alcoholism causes brain damage to the neo-cortex, which allows the lower brain centers to control behaviors. Impulses and instincts are unrestrained by logic and reason. Compulsive behaviors are one of the results. Those who are compulsive without the aid of a can become far more so when addicted.

dice

Remember these two facts:

- A. Due to euphoric recall, alcoholics remember few of their bad behaviors .
- B. They often flip into other compulsions in early abstinence, which can be overcome only with a strong program of ego deflation.

### Recovery Requires

Stopping the drug use

(I had stop sign with these words)

Deflating the ego.

*Abstinence does not, by itself, deflate the ego. The inordinately large sense of self-importance that slowly develops does not instantly disappear with abstinence. Simply "not drinking" accounts for the millions of "dry drunks" who are really just between drinking episodes. They are as capable of engaging in bad behaviors as are practicing alcoholics.*

## 9. Compulsive Spending

Another method of inflating the ego is overspending. Addicts may spend recklessly to show others how much they can "afford" by picking up the tab for everyone in a restaurant. Filing for bankruptcy despite a large income can be an excellent clue to addiction. Children of alcoholics also may engage in compulsive misbehaviors as adults in an effort to compensate for psychological abandonment experienced as children. Such behaviors often include compulsive spending.

## 10. Pontificates

Being dogmatic and acting superior to others is a common behavior of many addicts. This bombast consists of high-sounding language without meaning. As with many of these clues the more extreme the misbehavior, the greater the likelihood of alcoholism.

## 11. Lies

An alcoholic can control others by lying.

### Why do addicts lie?

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1. To control others
2. To save their reputation
3. See whom they can con

- 4. To protect or hide their source of the drug
- 5. They may not remember the truth due to euphoric recall, blackouts or memory repression.

**12. Uses twisted logic to get his/her way or to win an argument**

Alcoholics may attempt to turn logic upside down.

**EXAMPLE:**

A bill for services is presented to a client. Prior to payment, additional services are required. After the second round of services a revised bill is provided. Several months later the client responds to a past due billing with, "I did not use your services and, therefore, owe you nothing." After further attempts to collect, the client writes, "At no point did I agree to pay you for this work." Addicts engage in **doublethink**, in which wrong is right and right is wrong.

**The addict is not rude.....YOU are!**  
**He or she is not insane.....YOU are!**  
**He or she doesn't lie.....YOU do!**

Yet, addicts do not always engage in such Orwellian doublespeak. This unpredictability can result in controlling others by keeping them off-center, always guessing and make them unable to focus on the real problem: the addict's behavior. Intellectuals may use such mind-games in an attempt to appear smarter than others, using a twisted and contorted thread of logic that only they can follow. No wonder the argument makes no sense upon further scrutiny.

**WRITE**

Can you think of examples how an alcoholic in your life pontificates, lies, or uses twisted logic?

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**13. Repeatedly makes promises that are not kept**

This is another way of lying but is listed separately because the excuses alcoholics drum up are meant to convince close persons that failing to keep promises can be justified, or that promises were actually never

made. To say that the typical alcoholic is manipulative is to seriously understate the point. This is one of those tactics that is designed to keep everyone around him or her unbalanced.

**14. Belittles others**

Another way to inflate the ego is making unkind remarks about others. Saying in effect that, "I'm better than you or that other person," is often an early first clue to alcoholism or impending relapse. Many alcoholics alternate putdowns with just enough charm to keep the object of abuse off guard, accounting for the fact that many people put up with it for years!

**15. Gets others to play the "blame game"**

Some highly functioning, early stage alcoholics may enlist family, friends or followers to support them in inappropriately assigning blame to other people or classes of people. Controlling others to the point at which they engage in personal vendettas or political activity marked by scapegoating can be very ego inflating to the alcoholic. Some examples of well-known alcohol or other drug addicts are:

- Jim Jones - Jonestown, Guyana*
- Charles Dederich-founder of Synanon*
- D.C. Stephenson - Ku Klux Klan leader*
- Adolf Hitler*
- Josef Stalin*

**16. Makes false accusations**

There are few ways by which to wield greater power over another than to falsely accuse. While the results of such accusations vary, a measure of ego gratification occurs.

**WRITE**

The Salem Witch Trials, along with other "witch hunts" may have been fueled by alcoholism.



Give some examples of instances, personal or otherwise, in which it was proven that a false accusation was made. Can you identify other clues to addiction in the accuser?

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**Environment, circumstances, temperament and gender of the addict help determine the method of "attack."**

*Illus.*

### 17. Wields power unpredictably

Ego inflation requires abuse of power. This can take form in a variety of ways.

Check off the behaviors you have noticed in the possible alcoholic(s) in your life.

- Charm\_\_
- Intimidation\_\_
- Erratic behaviors\_\_
- False accusations\_\_
- Prejudicial favoritism\_\_
- Lying to some and not others\_\_
- Alternating abuse and remorse\_\_

### 18. Has betrayed another

Betrayal is yet another behavior found in early stage alcoholics that is rarely found in others. Have you seen any of these phrases "come to life?"

"To seduce and fail to marry"\_\_

"to mislead, to lead astray"\_\_

"betraying a confidence"\_\_

"delivering into the hands of the enemy"\_\_

"a traitor to one's country"\_\_

" a violation of trust"\_\_

Everyday treachery is common among alcoholics. What form of betrayal have you experienced?

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### 19. A need to win regardless of cost

Arguing and fighting for its own sake and winning is an ego-boosting experience. The subject of the dispute is unimportant. Depending on the personality of the alcoholic, some rant and rave while others react in a more passive-aggressive style. Cooperation, compromise and admitting the other is right are not options because they do not serve to inflate the ego. This can also take form in the boardroom, on the playing field and in government, where the addict tosses ethics and fair play out the window.

### 20. Serious problems at home

Only those in close relationships may be aware of an alcoholic's misbehaviors, which are often hidden from public view. The fact that an alcoholic may be successful at work serves only to confuse those who experience the bad behavior privately. Similarly, workers may be shocked to learn about troubles at home. Few have any idea that an inflated ego can cause **both** sets of behaviors.

## 21. Intimidates others

The movie, *Scent of a Woman*, offers a classic portrayal of an alcoholic alternating charm with intimidation in order to get what he wants when he wants it. Ego inflation means winning by any means necessary.

## 22. Engages in “telephonitis”

An alcoholic may try to control others by attempting to force them to talk during all hours of the day or night, at hours selected by the alcoholic. The source of the behavior that compels one to constantly use a cell phone while driving, for instance, can make such use an excellent indicator of addiction, especially if other dangerous behaviors are evident.

## 23. Reverse telephonitis

The addict also controls by hanging up abruptly. This evokes a high sense of self-importance, especially when the addict initiated the call. Accompanying profanities, rude comments and yelling are commonplace.

## 24. Engages in serial Don Juanism or adultery

Don Juanism, having sex with scores, if not hundreds of sexual partners, is prevalent among those with alcoholism. Unfortunately, beauty and good looks, after money, is the alcoholic’s biggest enabler. There is often no more effective way to wield power than by using them sexually or by offering sexual favors. For the same reason, adultery is also more common among alcoholics than others.

## 25. Hatred, racism and prejudice

Since an alcoholic feels she or he is blameless for anything that goes wrong, someone else must be at fault. Often, scapegoats are found....and hated. Those of other races, the opposite gender, members of a particular religion, business owners or government may be the objects of such hatred.

### Write

What classes of people or organizations has a possible alcoholic in your life chosen to scapegoat or hate?

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## 26. Verbally abuses others

Most alcoholics do not serve jail time because they do not commit physical violence. Instead, they verbally and emotionally mistreat others, a relatively “safe” way to inflate the ego. Abuse such as yelling, belittling and rancorous sarcasm may be your first clue to alcoholism.

## 27. Physically abuses others

A recent study found that alcohol or other-drug addicts commit 85% of domestic violence. Assaults often occur between drinking and using episodes or as the effect of the drug wears off. Often, such offenders are forced into “anger management” classes, which treat only symptoms of an underlying substance addiction.

## 28. Commits evil crimes

While most alcoholics never commit heinous crimes, such crimes are usually committed by alcoholics.

Alcoholics commit 85% of all felonies

## B. A Sense of Invincibility

### Read

Recovering alcoholics inform us that **their** emotional growth stopped the day they triggered alcoholism: average age is 13. Therefore, the grown-up alcoholic is an **emotional** adolescent. **They have** a child's sense of invincibility: "look what I can do!" Success reinforces this and further fuels the ego, which can result in increasingly reckless behaviors, **risking** family, friends, finances, other drivers on the road and **even** innocent children.

**Let's look at three key clues to help us recognize the possibility of alcoholism.**

### 1. Involved in an accident, especially multiple mishaps

While poor judgment takes its toll in middle and late-stage addiction, the feeling that one cannot be caught or subdued can lead to a high rate of accidents among **early-stage** alcoholics. Behavioral symptoms of this mind-set include:



**Tailgating (50% probability of DUI)**  
**Making obscene gestures (60%** keys  
**Almost striking an object or vehicle: 60%)**  
**Not yielding the right-of-way (45%)**  
**Excessive speeding (35%)**  
**Illegal passing, straddling the line, driving on the shoulder,**  
**abruptly swerving, drifting, unnecessary braking,**  
**backing into traffic (45% for any one behavior)**

**Almost 50% of fatal accidents are caused by DUI**

**And there's more:** **Drowning (70%)**  
**Fire (90%)**  
**Accidents in the workplace (50%-90%)**

### 2. Drives while Under the Influence

Many recovering alcoholics tell us they would drink beyond the legal limit, drive, have a scare and vow, "never again." Yet most repeatedly broke the vow before entering recovery.

**a. He or she drinks. b. Blood alcohol level rises. c. Euphoric recall sets in: "I can do no wrong."**  
**d. Drives an average of 80 times per year in a compromised condition.**

Early-stage alcoholics can pass standard sobriety tests with a blood alcohol level (BAL) as high as .24%. In one study, 79% of traffic violators with BALs exceeding .10% were not identified as being under the influence. Unfortunately, passing sobriety tests that non-alcoholics might easily fail increases the alcoholic sense of invincibility, upping the odds of repeated offenses.

## It's in the eyes

A conviction for DUI may be the **single most effective way** to coerce abstinence and force alcoholics into a program of sobriety.

Eye illus.

A simple test could be given to all traffic violators that would dramatically increase the odds of arrest and conviction.

### The Horizontal Gaze Nystagmus Test

The head is held straight while tracking a finger from side to side. The angle of deviation from straight ahead at which point an involuntary shaking of the eyeballs begins to occur is a function of blood alcohol level. Why this method? Any trained officer can determine BAL within .02 % in 30 to 60 seconds.

### 3. Has Committed a Felony

Again, this comes from the need to inflate ego by wielding power over others. The media rarely relates criminal behaviors to alcoholism. Yet, recovering addict ex-cons feel that 90% of their fellow convicts were alcoholics.

- White-collar alcoholics are often protected from consequences by enablers who could lose power and prestige if the truth is made known. However, there is no reason to suggest that the rate of alcoholism is any less among white collar convicts than among violent offenders.
- The vast majority of prisoners are undiagnosed and untreated alcoholics whose misbehaviors are driven by their addiction. Intervening near the onset of the disease could greatly reduce the number of alcoholics who eventually commit criminal acts. Studies have shown that the rate of re-incarceration is greatly reduced among prisoners who enter a program of sobriety and remain clean and sober.

*If you don't look for it, you won't see it!*

### RECALL

List some of the behaviors of an early-stage alcoholic that would serve to fool judges and juries into thinking he or she couldn't possibly be the type to have committed the crime.

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### WRITE

What do you think is an appropriate consequence for a first time DUI offense?

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What should the consequence be for a repeat offender?

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## C. Physical Signs of Early-Stage Alcoholism

### 1. Has an ethnic background with a high risk of alcoholism

Did you know that one's family tree is a factor in alcoholism? Evidence shows a correlation between percentage of alcoholism and the time period during which our ancestors have had access to large quantities of alcohol. Those with ancestors who have had access to alcohol for thousands of years have low rates of alcoholism and include Greeks, Jews and Southern Italians. Those such as Russians, Scandinavians, Irish and Africans, with access for 1,000 to 1,500 years, have higher rates of alcoholism. People who have had alcohol available for only 100-400 years, such as North American Native Americans, seem to have almost zero immunity to alcoholism.

**These rates vary from roughly 5% to as much as 75%. To suggest that alcoholism is caused by a lack of willpower or by misbehaviors is to disparage entire classes of people. It's high time to treat alcoholism as a biological disorder that affects some ethnicities to a far greater degree than others through no fault of their own. This is not about good guys and bad guys. It's about changing the way we think about alcoholism and exposing the myths that prevent early detection, which is essential to recovery and improved behaviors.**

### 2. Has a parent or child with alcoholism

Children of alcoholics have a rate of addiction about four times that of children of non-alcoholics regardless of whether or not they are raised by the biological parents. The fact that some children in large families develop alcoholism while others do not supports the idea that alcoholism is not learned.

**Alcoholism in the extended family also appears to increase the odds of alcoholism in the family lineage.**

**On the next page is a diagram of a family tree. Mark the relative(s) you know or suspect are (or if deceased, were) alcoholics.**

### *A Family Tree*

### 3. Drinks champagne, carbonated or mixed alcoholic beverages

- Addicts often excel in finding ways to get the drug into the system faster.
- Carbonation results in a quicker increase in blood alcohol level by opening the pyloric valve into the small intestine more quickly, accelerating absorption.
- Mixed drinks may hide far more than a single shot of liquor.

### 4. Drinks heavily on an empty stomach

Drinking on an empty stomach also helps quicken assimilation into the blood stream. Many recovering alcoholics tell us they drank before eating from the get-go. As the disease progressed, some report getting most of their calories from alcohol by eating less or hardly at all.

### 5. Parties a lot

Parties increase opportunities for use without too many questions. They also provide occasions for inflating the ego through displays of sexual prowess. The alcoholic may invent social occasions as an excuse for drinking. Any excuse, however, will do.

**NOTE**

An individual who drinks despite the fact that his religion or culture frowns upon it is more likely to be an alcoholic than someone who does not put drinking ahead of his or her beliefs. Such an alcoholic may hide the use or simply make up an excuse to leave the group.

- The BAL of a 120 lb. person increases by .03% per drink
- This person needs only 3/4 an ounce of liquor, 2.5 oz. of wine or 6 oz. of beer per hour to maintain the BAL

## 6. Gulps his or her liquor

If someone wants to get drunk there is no better way than to gulp a few shots of hard liquor, often before a social engagement or as an “eye opener” before work. Since we may not see this “pre-drinking,” we are unlikely to suspect alcoholism based on observable consumption. If we do see any drinking, it is often only sipping, which serves to maintain a blood alcohol level that would put a non-alcoholic on his face.

## 7. Has high tolerance

The non-alcoholic isn't trained to quantify another person's consumption, but doing so often helps confirm or disconfirm alcoholism. Early-stage alcoholics don't **develop** high tolerance; because of their body chemistry **they are born with it**. Such alcoholics may not *show* the classic signs of inebriation until their BAL is as high as .24%

**Example:** Henri Paul, who drove himself and Princess Diana to their deaths, had a BAL of .178%. While this is usually enough to knock out a non-alcoholic, he appeared sober in the hotel video prior to the tragedy. As is all-too-common, his alcoholism was revealed when it was too late.

NO ONE SEEMED TO KNOW HIS LITTLE SECRET!

So let's do the math!

$$2 + 2 = 4$$

Once a person reaches a particular BAL it takes very little additional alcohol to stay at that level.

- The body assimilates the drug at about .015% per hour

## The Bottom Line Is:

**An alcoholic may not appear to be drinking enough to alert an observer to possible intoxication and, therefore, alcoholism. However, when behavioral symptoms become apparent we should attempt to confirm alcoholism by determining the BAL of the drinker. The higher the BAL, the more likely the subject has alcoholism. If the person has consumed other drugs are used, even at low BALs alcoholism is likely.**

*Illus.*

### *Alcoholics are like Icebergs*

*90% of what's really going on lies beneath the surface, behind closed doors. We see 10 % of the problem from our vantage point only, while others may observe a different piece of the puzzle. It often takes sharing of information and a unified effort on the part of several family members, co-workers and friends to determine the true extent of the problem*

*iceberg illus.*

It is absolutely essential to understand that we are dealing with a chemical, not a person

## RECALL

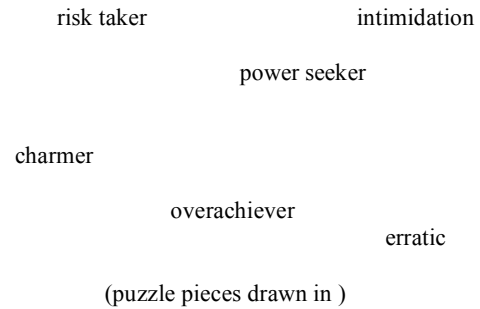
### True or False

1. \_\_\_ In order to diagnose alcoholism, the person(s) you are concerned about must exhibit ALL the listed behaviors.
2. \_\_\_ A few incidents of poor conduct may point to alcoholism.
3. \_\_\_ Alcoholism is caused by a lack of morality.
4. \_\_\_ Bad conduct results in alcoholism.
5. \_\_\_ A person drinks alcoholically because something bad was done to them.
6. \_\_\_ The average age at which alcoholism is triggered is thirteen.
7. \_\_\_ Alcohol usually destroys the brain's ability to produce "feel good" transmitters in the early stages of the disease.
8. \_\_\_ Alcoholics process alcohol differently than do non-alcoholics.
9. \_\_\_ The commonly accepted definition of alcoholism is useless in diagnosing the disease in the early stages.

10. \_\_\_ The best and earliest clues to addiction are behavioral.

Answers: 1, 3, 4, 5 and 7 are False.

## The Puzzle of Early-Stage Alcoholism



## WRITE

Understanding that we cannot *reason* with chemistry, in what ways might you change your approach to helping the alcoholic toward recovery?

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## Part 3. Middle to Late Stage Clues

### A. Poor Judgment

#### READ

Most alcoholics are not identified as such until well into the progression of their disease. It may take years for those closest to the alcoholic to begin thinking, “maybe she *is* an alcoholic,” and even longer to share this concern with outsiders. While few are identified up to this point, the middle-stage clues listed here will help resolve any doubts.

#### 1. Under-achiever

The opposite of over-achievement may be a great clue to late-stage alcoholism or multiple-drug addiction. After decades of use (or far fewer if a poly-drug addict), the brain’s inability to produce its own neurotransmitters results in an obsession with obtaining the drug. As other interests gradually go by the wayside, underachievement may result. Many of the following symptoms are also a by-product of this biochemistry.

#### 2. Plays the “blame game”

Euphoric recall compels the alcoholic to remember everything in a self-favoring light. If everything s/he says and does is good and right, how can s/he be to blame for anything? A person who uses scapegoats is far more likely to have addiction than a person who accepts responsibility for his or her actions.

**Example:** Someone suing a bicycle manufacturer for injuries sustained while riding at night without lights.

#### 3. Has unreasonable resentments

illus.

This is among the character defects mentioned at AA meetings.

Blaming leads to resentments on both a personal and societal level.

This may account for exaggeration of social divisions by those who pit poor against rich, labor against business, etc.

#### 4. Makes repeated promises to never do “it” again, whatever “it” is

“It” includes negative behaviors such as drinking and abusing the family or drinking and driving. The addict may promise to stop, but these promises cannot be kept while active in the disease.

#### 5. Has a poor reputation

Only when an alcoholic is in recovery can the question, “Is drinking affecting your reputation?” be answered truthfully. Such disgrace cannot be seen by someone who “can do no wrong.” The behaviors are simply rationalized away and the negative consequences that result *must* be someone else’s fault.

#### 6. Has loose sexual morals

This can be serial Don Juanism run amuck. Many prostitutes are addicts as are many porn stars. If not an addict themselves, they are often children of alcoholics. As the addict becomes less attractive, s/he may have fewer sexual partners except for other addicts.

#### 7. Has been married/divorced several times

Divorce is often a result of financial difficulties, abuse or adultery. All these problems are, of course, terrific clues to alcoholism in one spouse or the other (or both). Those who have married multiple times have a rate of alcoholism several times that of the overall population.

#### 8. Has serious problems at work



While most alcoholics are employed, they can be less productive and make more errors than sober co-workers, increasing the odds of being laid off or demoted. Numerous job changes may also be a clue to alcoholism even without knowledge of work related troubles since problems may be hidden from friends and family.

**9. Has recurring financial difficulties**

While there are many legitimate reasons for financial problems, alcoholism increases the odds of slipping up. Repeated overspending, carelessness with finances, a sudden decrease in income or failure to file income tax returns may be a sign of poor judgment rooted in alcoholism. Sober individuals are more likely to avoid repeating errors and recover quickly from financial calamities. illus.

**10. Out-of-control children**

Having a well-behaved child can be one way an addict inflates his or her ego. Stories abound of children pushed to excellence by an alcoholic parent who inflates the ego by living vicariously through such success. On the other hand, if alcoholic parents display out-of-control behavior, so might their children. A lack of boundaries and courtesy toward others is symptomatic of parental alcoholism.

**11. Is careless of the family’s welfare**

As alcoholism progresses, the addict begins to concentrate more on the drinking than on inflating the ego. Important obligations may go by the wayside. The addict may be “out of it” or become involved with a bad element, even subjecting family members to unnecessary risk and danger.

Taking action when early-stage clues become obvious can prevent many of these tragedies. The question again is, “What are we waiting for?”

**WRITE**

Why **do** we wait? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**B. Apparent Mental Confusion**

illus.

**1. Suffers from a short attention span**

Apparent ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) in a child may be a codependent reaction to a parent’s addiction, and may continue into adulthood. However, some adults appear to have ADHD due to biochemical

changes resulting from long-term addictive use. Authors James Milam and Katherine Ketcham in their book, *Under the Influence*, describe the cause of such problems in late-stage alcoholism. "As soon as the blood alcohol level begins to descend, the brain cells, or neurons, become excited and agitated. The entire brain is affected as the sensitive neurons send out highly disorganized and chaotic distress signals." The brain is, in a sense, short-circuiting and as a result creates profound mental confusion and memory defects, observable symptoms of which include short attention span and related confusion. As the description suggests, **such symptoms can worsen as the BAL declines.**

## **2. Cannot multi-task**

This can be due to confusion resulting from agitation of the brain cells described above, a very high BAL relative to the stage of the disease, or multiple drug addiction.

## **3. Is constantly misplacing or losing things**

This could be the sign of a blackout, or again, confusion resulting from the brain short-circuiting.

## **4. Is often tardy or absent**

An early-stage alcoholic may get to work on time every day. On the other hand, a worker who is often absent or tardy may provide management with their most obvious clue to addiction, although by then the disease is probably in the late-stages.

## **5. Engages in erratic behavior**

Again, this is due to the effect of chemicals on the brain as described translating to behavior that may appear erratic.

## **6. Appears to have a Personality Disorder or mental illness**

**Alcoholism mimics many mental illnesses and disorders including** Depressive, Narcissistic, Borderline, Bi-Polar, Schizophrenic and Anti-Social (sociopathic) Personality Disorders, often making it impossible to determine whether there is a true Disorder. After three months of sobriety, 70-80% of what appeared to be Personality Disorders or mental illnesses can no longer be identified as such. The underlying problem is usually alcoholism, with the mimicked Disorder(s) varying by drug(s) and the Psychological Type of the addict.

**RECALL** Though Personality Disorders may exist independently of alcoholism, they may be symptoms of **or** triggered by addiction.

## **WRITE**

The following are manifestations of Personality Disorders or other mental illness. Check those that correspond to behaviors and symptoms of alcoholism.

1. A pattern of disregard for and violation of the rights of others\_\_
2. Mood swings and erratic behavior\_\_
3. Lives in his or her unreal world\_\_
4. Unstable personal relationships\_\_
5. Lacks self-esteem\_\_
6. Extremely impulsive\_\_
7. A grand sense of self-importance\_\_
8. Preoccupation with fantasies of success, etc.\_\_
9. Belief that he/she is special\_\_
10. Need for excessive admiration\_\_
11. Takes advantage of others\_\_
12. Lacks empathy\_\_
13. Envious of others\_\_

14. Arrogant and haughty attitude \_\_\_  
Do you see a connection?

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## 7. Has attempted suicide

Though euphoric recall, memory repression and blackouts prevent alcoholics from remembering accurately or too much at one time, these protective devices can fail. The resulting emotional shock can trigger attempts at suicide. Middle to late stage alcoholism may include repeated attempts to control one's drinking or even quit due to moments of clarity between drinking episodes, when the alcoholic begins to connect problems and use. Failure to adequately control the use or to quit can lead to suicide. One study found that the suicide rate for women was 9 per 100,000, while for alcoholic women it was 207 per 100,000. (provide reference)

## C. Physical and other Observable Signs

Illus.

### READ

#### 1. Has a poor diet

Some latter-stage alcoholics rarely eat because they satiate themselves by drinking. Because many alcoholics suffer from low blood sugar (as many as 40% according to some studies), they often consume empty carbohydrates and sugar when not drinking. (provide reference) By merely observing mood swings, it may be difficult to distinguish an alcoholic from a non-alcoholic with hypoglycemia. However, inattention to proper diet in someone exhibiting volatile mood swings strongly suggests that alcoholism is at the root of both problems. The mood swings of a "dry drunk" may result from the habit of bingeing on sweets and simple carbohydrates continuing into sobriety.

2. There is drug paraphernalia (whether or not a "friend's") This is an excellent clue for loved ones of suspected multiple-drug using addicts.

#### 3. Suffers from numerous illnesses at middle age

Alcoholism causes, increases the risk of, or aggravates 350 secondary diseases and disorders. These include pancreatitis, pneumonia, hepatitis, diabetes, cirrhosis, jaundice, ulcers, diarrhea, cancer and heart disease. On the other hand, some alcoholics fake illness in order to obtain more drugs.

#### 4. Has a sexually transmitted disease

Since alcoholism may result in unnecessarily reckless behaviors, which can include unprotected sex, there appears to be a strong link between alcoholism and sexually transmitted diseases. These include AIDS, syphilis and hepatitis.

#### 5. Sleeps on the job

Amphetamine addicts and mid-to-late-stage alcoholics often sleep at inappropriate times or for extended periods after a multi-day binge.

#### 6. Pupils are dilated or constricted

Pupil dilation and constriction are clues to stimulant (methamphetamine, cocaine) or opiate (heroin, Oxycotin, Vicodin or morphine) use.

### 7. Has “glassy eyes” look

This may be the only physical clue. If you look closely at the hotel video of Henri Paul prior to the Princess Diana tragedy, you might be able to detect glassy eyes.

eyes

### 8. Eyes are red, glazed or tired looking

Red eyes are a result of heavy alcohol use in some and marijuana use in others. Stimulants can result in a glazed or tired look.

### 9. Has a puffy face, bags under the eyes, signs of premature aging or reddening of the facial skin

### 10. Has “rules” for using

Includes the type of drink, when, how much, not drinking alone, not drinking before driving with kids in the car, etc. Non-addicts don’t need to create rules regarding use because when or how much they drink is not an issue. Alcoholics need rules but frequently break them and then quickly create new ones.

### 11. Hangs out with obvious addicts

Many alcoholics have drinking buddies. This makes his/her use more acceptable and serves as a cover for the problem. It’s also an excellent clue for identifying young multiple-drug addicts.

### 12. Takes extreme measures to insure that the substance is always available

This even includes refusing to go where there is not continuous access to the preferred drug. Stashes of the drug may be found in the workplace, car and travel bag.

### 13. Hides the odor

Alcoholics are known to reek of perfume, cologne, gum, or mouthwash. “Ladylike” alcoholics learn to mix as few as two or three drinks † with pills to achieve the desired high.

### 14. Pulls a geographic (moves suddenly or often)

Some early-stage alcoholics move to create excitement. Some latter-stage alcoholics move in a vain attempt to improve their situation....a geographic cure. Unfortunately, they bring the drunk with them. The great composer Beethoven was an alcoholic and is said to have moved 71 times in 35 years.

### 15. Hides the liquor

This is the classic sign that everyone knows to look for. Unfortunately, hiding the drug usually occurs long after the alcoholic has left behind a trail of ruined relationships and destroyed lives.

## REVIEW

Fill in the blanks using these selections:

odor    multiple-drug    pancreas    low blood sugar    liver    diet  
heart    rules    constricted    inappropriate    red  
small intestine    dilated    glassy    glazed    extreme    alcohol

1. \_\_\_\_\_ causes a craving for alcohol and sweets.

2. Improving \_\_\_\_\_ can help increase the odds of staying sober.
3. Drug paraphernalia is a clue to \_\_\_\_\_ use.
4. Alcohol damages the \_\_\_\_\_ where enzymes aid digestion.
5. Alcohol also damages other organs such as the \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Mid-to later stage alcoholics may sleep at \_\_\_\_\_ times.
7. \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ eyes is a good sign of a high blood alcohol level.
8. \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ eyes are a good sign of other-drug use.
9. An alcoholic has \_\_\_\_\_ for using.
10. An alcoholic may take \_\_\_\_\_ measures to insure availability.
11. Late-stage alcoholics try to hide the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_.

## Part 4

## What Can I Do?

### A. How to Stop Enabling

The highest form of humanity we can offer alcoholics  
is to lovingly subject them to the consequences  
of their misbehaviors.

This workbook has given you the tools to quickly identify likely addicts and protect yourself. The alcoholic cannot connect the dots between his/her use, misbehaviors and problems he has created in his life, as well as the lives of others. By imposing consequences the stage can be set for a build-up of crises in the life of the alcoholic, which are a necessary pre-condition for successful intervention.

Pain is the addict's best friend  
and illus.  
You may be his/her best hope

### READ

#### Key Points:

- The initial desire to get and stay sober is a rare event in the life of a practicing alcoholic because he cannot see the drug as a problem, blames any problems he may see on others and, therefore, sees no reason to stop drinking or using.
- You need to protect yourself by avoiding personal or professional relationships and disengaging from any you may already be in.
- The degree and type of pain needed to instill in the addict a need to seek recovery varies tremendously. The alcoholic needs help to connect the dots between use of a drug, misbehaviors and the need for recovery.
- Logical Consequences offer motivation for sobriety.
- Your job is to assist in experiencing proper consequences, which includes forcing the addict to take responsibility for misbehaviors.
- Watching the addict experience the consequences will be harder on you than it is on the addict, who can numb her pain with the drug.
- End the code of silence. Every time we cover up use and misbehaviors, we decrease the odds of sobriety.
- While earlier interventions are better, it's never too late.

Exercise: List the reasons you hesitate to identify alcoholism in the early stages.

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### Using Crisis

1. **If closely involved** with an alcoholic who has been accused of misbehaviors, refuse to protect him.

2. While one-on-one intervention rarely works, there are occasions when it's the only option. Use the opportunity of crisis to urge the addict to get help. Be ready with phone numbers and addresses of counselors and meetings, and even offer to be his driver.
  
3. Educate others. Those who are close to the alcoholic will fill your shoes as enabler unless they also learn the ideas in this workbook.

Try to organize a structured, formal intervention. See below.

### A Dozen Ways We Enable (Kill With Kindness)

illus.

- make excuses
- fail to confront
- attempt to argue or discuss
- buy into manipulation that you are responsible for the addict's problems or use
- fall for emotional blackmail
- fail to intervene because the addict is "fragile"
- help maintain the "Code of Silence"
- lend him money
- drink with the alcoholic
- solve problems related to his use
- "adjust" around the drinking
- fail to recognize the behavioral symptoms of alcoholism

### RECALL

Beside each point in the list above, put a check mark for each that applies to you as an enabler. Which did you do or attempt over and over again? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

What were the results? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Are you ready to stop enabling? \_\_\_\_\_

## B. Interventions

### Personal Intervention

Your first attempt at intervention may need to be one-on-one. If you have observed behavioral symptoms of alcoholism, discuss the behaviors and lovingly state your concerns. This is the time to begin offering "tough love."

### Tough Love Means...

TOUGH =

- no rescuing
- saying "no"
- seeing crisis as opportunity
- no enabling

- stating consequences
- staying the course

## LOVE =

- educate
- inform
- watch, keep current
- refer

## HOLD ON TO HOPE

### A Checklist For You

As you proceed, place a check mark in the blank beside each step you have taken.

1. Talked to informed person(s)\_\_\_
2. Studied the workbook\_\_\_
3. Talked to possible alcoholic about behavior, without arguing\_\_\_
4. Laid out concerns and observations\_\_\_
5. Confirmed, you don't want alcohol to destroy your life.\_\_\_

## Formal Interventions

### REMEMBER....

1. A **united front** is needed when the family decides to confront the alcoholism.
2. **The legal system** should require abstinence whenever possible as a condition of freedom, parole or driving privileges.
3. **Official sanctions** can sometimes take the place of intervention if the family doesn't "get it." Examples: expulsion from school, blood and urine tests on the job or as a condition for keeping one's drivers license, etc.

Alcoholics are seldom apprehended because they do not appear drunk with BALS at which non-alcoholics would be flat on their faces. One study shows that police officers identified only 21% of traffic violators who later proved to be under the influence, even though the officers were close enough to smell the breath.

**4. Consequences for Driving Under the Influence are one of the most effective tools we have.** The typical practicing alcoholic engages in this potentially lethal behavior an average of 80 times a year. Recovering addicts often report that they got sober, at least in part, because of DUI.

Practicing alcoholics drive while under the influence an average of **80 times a year!**

**5. Drug testing** and a guarantee of **consequences** is a powerful tool. In our private lives we can require sobriety or terminate the relationship. Therefore, we must do everything possible to inspire in him a need to get sober.

**6. Always remember** that under the layers and muck of alcoholism, there is usually a fundamentally good person.



## What You Need to Know Before You Intervene

1. If we wait until an alcoholic hits bottom before intervening, she may never get sober. Hitting bottom is often terminal.
2. By lovingly intervening and confronting the reality of the disease symptoms, we are able to initiate the recovery process.
3. Intervention should not be attempted without a competent professional because shame is common in the dysfunctional family and the addict's defenses may overwhelm those in a shame-weakened state.
4. The involvement of friends and work associates is important and may help break the "family secret," as well as provide much-needed psychological support.
5. Respect of the alcoholic by those involved in the intervention is crucial.
6. The family member who initiates the intervention will have previously sought help an average of three times, often from pastors, counselors or family physicians. A formal intervention is often necessary and is far more likely to break the defenses of the alcoholic.
7. When inviting friends and family to the first meeting prior to the intervention, do not ask for a commitment, but rather invite them to receive **education** so they can decide for themselves the role they may wish to play.
8. The purpose of being well-prepared for an intervention is to educate and bypass the defenses the disease creates.
9. It is important that the intervention takes place at a time when the alcoholic has not been drinking, preferably early morning.
10. While an intervention is presented lovingly, it presents the alcoholic the reality of the disease and provides a solution.
11. Educating the family is essential to a successful intervention because individual members can keep the rest of the family sick even if the alcoholic enters treatment.
12. Interventionists present the person as he truly is and compare with the alcoholic that he has become as a direct result of drinking or using. They emphasize the misbehaviors as symptoms of the disease.
13. Each part of the intervention process is a building block for the ultimate goal of long-term sobriety.
14. Advances in intervention methods now make it possible to avoid shouting matches characteristic of those of prior years.

**Over 90% of interventions are successful!** Success means that the alcoholic enters treatment.

Illus.

## What is a Formal Intervention?

**A formal intervention is a meeting where a frank depiction of symptoms of alcoholism are presented** by the most meaningful people in the addict's life with the aide of a professional Interventionist. The presentation must be conducted in a non-judgmental fashion, with an undercurrent of deep concern. The addict is informed in a loving way that he has the disease of alcoholism, which is causing problems for him and for those in his life. He must be told because he is incapable of linking troubles to his use of the substance.

### Exercise:

Fill in the blanks in the following statements using the words listed below.

judgments    pain    surprise    perceptions    crises    solution    defense mechanisms    video  
memory    pleasure    improved behaviors    future    assist    convinced    minimizing    nothing  
opportunity    not drinking    symptoms    family    united

1. Intervention must take place when the addict is most likely \_\_\_\_\_.
2. For maximum effect, interventions should occur when the addict is experiencing \_\_\_\_\_ from crisis.
3. S/he needs to see that the disease, if left unchecked, will adversely affect him/her \_\_\_\_\_.

4. During the intervention do not express \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ when you hear what others reveal about the alcoholic.
5. Share \_\_\_\_\_, not judgments.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ of the disease are emphasized during an intervention.
7. Follow-up therapy may be more for the \_\_\_\_\_ to keep them on a non-enabling track.
8. Early intervention requires the creation of a number of \_\_\_\_\_ as quickly as possible.
9. Friends should \_\_\_\_\_ friends in experiencing proper consequences.
10. Confront with love, concern and a \_\_\_\_\_.
11. Show no \_\_\_\_\_ during the intervention about the addict's drinking.
12. The \_\_\_\_\_ of the typical addict may overwhelm all but the toughest non-addicts.
13. Those who intervene must be \_\_\_\_\_ that the drug is the problem before a formal intervention takes place.
14. Successful intervention requires one to get past \_\_\_\_\_ the problem.
15. Alcoholics have a super-human ability to exhibit \_\_\_\_\_ for awhile.
16. You may choose to use a \_\_\_\_\_ of the addict while she is under the influence to prove that her \_\_\_\_\_ is flawed.
17. Motivation is furnished by the pursuit of \_\_\_\_\_ and avoidance of pain.
18. Close persons need to be \_\_\_\_\_ before the intervention.
19. There is \_\_\_\_\_ in crisis.
20. Expect \_\_\_\_\_ and you won't be disappointed. Just don't give up.

**Never, ever, ever give up!**

Answers:

not drinking, pain, future, surprise, judgments, perceptions, symptoms, family, crises, assist, solution, sympathy, defense mechanisms, convinced, minimizing, improved behaviors, video, memory, pleasure, united, opportunity, nothing,

## Making a Checklist for a Formal Intervention

- Locate possible interventionists, being careful not to contact anyone who might let the alcoholic know what you're up to
  - A/Anon
  - Yellow pages
  - The Internet
  - S
  - s
- Contact each person for whom involvement could be appropriate
- Make a list of the behavioral symptoms of alcoholism from Parts 2 and 3 that you have observed
- Know treatment center options and cost

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## Intervening for Our Children

1. Teach them to identify symptoms of addiction in their friends
  2. Educate them about alcoholism
  3. Help teens understand that one in ten of their friends will ruin their lives and the lives of others because of their drinking
  4. Provide support when they want to help a friend
  5. Teach them to never tolerate inappropriate behavior and to just say no to addicts
  6. Since almost all adolescents experiment with alcohol, inform them of the risks, and explain
7. Tell your children that regardless of intentions, they may be at risk of triggering alcoholism
  8. Explain why moderation only works for non-alcoholics
  9. Be the kind of adult they can safely share with and explain that the "code of silence" helps no one and harms everyone
  10. Let them know that there are consequences for behaviors, both good and bad
  11. Offer positive input regarding choices
  12. Let them know you love them!
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## C. Resources

1. Alcoholics Anonymous World Services 1-212-870-3400 [www.alcoholics-anonymous.org](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org)
2. Al-Anon/AlAteen 1-888-425-2666 [www.AlAnon.org](http://www.AlAnon.org)
3. Christians in Recovery [www.christians-in-recovery.org](http://www.christians-in-recovery.org)
4. Narcotics Anonymous [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)
5. Web of Addictions [www.well.com/user/woa/](http://www.well.com/user/woa/)
6. Google the word “interventionist” and you will find a plethora of options at your fingertips
7. National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence 1-800-NCA-CALL (24 hours a day)
8. National Institute on Drug Abuse 1-800-662-HELP [www.health.org](http://www.health.org)
9. National Drug Abuse Treatment Referral and Information Service 1-800-COCAINE [www.drughelp.org](http://www.drughelp.org)
10. PrevenTragedy Foundation 818-360-0985 [DougThorburn@PTFoundation.org](mailto:DougThorburn@PTFoundation.org)

### Here to Help

In the space below, compile a list of addiction-related organizations in your community and the types of programs they offer.

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# Glossary

acetate-  
acetaldehyde-  
alcoholic-  
addict-  
ADHD-  
assimilate-

BAL-  
blackout-  
biochemistry-  
bombast-  
Code of Silence-

defense mechanisms-  
disable-  
dopamine-  
Don-Juanism-  
dry drunk-

ego-  
endorphins-  
euphoric recall-  
felony-

Horizontal Gaze Nystigmas Test-  
hypoglycemia-  
inducement-  
intervention-  
invincibility-  
isoquinolines-

limbic system-  
memory repression-  
minimizing-  
neo-cortex-  
neurotransmitters-

paradox-  
personality disorder-  
pontificating-  
primary chronic-  
sociopath-  
stigma-  
telephonitis-

Temperament	Core Needs
Artisan SP	Free to act on impulse; enjoy making an impact, be noticed
Guardian SJ	Maintain membership, belonging, obligation, duty, responsibility
Rational NT	Develop power over nature, acquire knowledge, improve
Idealist NF	Find meaning, significance and one's unique identity

Personalities of Drinkers
1. unsocial, egocentric, impulsive, not a "deep thinker"
2. dependent, compliant
3. independent, questioning, self-assertive
4. interdependent, caring, meditative, planner

Temperament	Values	Intelligences
Artisan	Aesthetics, graceful action, skilled performance, excitement, stimulation	Tactics
Guardian	Stability, structure. Hierarchy, rules and regulations, tradition, security and law	Logistics
Rational	Intelligence, logic, ideas, theories, scientific inquiry and progress	Strategy
Idealist	Development of self, ethics and morality, being real, relationships, empathy and	Diplomacy

